

## Press release

**04 November 2017**

### **ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series 2017/18: Audi Cup of China Day Two**

Two-time World Ice Dance Champions [Gabiella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron](#) (FRA) broke the 200 points barrier en route to victory as the competition wrapped up at Audi Cup of China in Beijing on Saturday. Reigning World Pairs Champions [Wenjing Sui/Cong Han](#) (CHN) won in style in front of a home crowd in the Beijing Capital Gymnasium. Mikhail Kolyada (RUS) and Alina Zagitova (RUS) took their first Grand Prix gold medals.

#### **Papadakis/Cizeron (FRA) first to break 200 points in Ice Dance**

France's two-time World Champions [Gabiella Papadakis/Guillaume Cizeron](#) danced to victory and established new highest scores in the Free Dance and overall, becoming the first Ice Dance team to break the 200 points. Two-time World medalists [Madison Chock/Evan Bates](#) (USA) took the silver medal and the bronze went to [Ekaterina Bobrova/Dmitri Soloviev](#), of Russia.

Papadakis/Cizeron effortlessly floated over the ice to Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata', with the high-level elements seamlessly woven into the choreography. The three-time European Champions picked up a level four for their lifts, spin, twizzles and the circular step sequence to score a personal best of 119.33 points which added up to 200.43 points overall. "It was a great performance for us and we are happy with how we performed and with our score," Papadakis told the press. "This is our third time in China and we always have skated well here. It feels like a lucky place for us. Here we won our first Grand Prix a few years ago." Cizeron added: "Our next Grand Prix is in France and we have one week to train in Montreal. We want to take the feedback from the judges and keep improving. We want to stay grounded and continue the consistent work we've done since summer."

Chock/Bates delivered a strong performance to 'Imagine' that was highlighted by beautiful lifts and smooth footwork. The 2015 World silver medalists earned a level four for five elements and a level three for the step sequences. They scored 111.84 points for their Free Dance and totaled 184.50 points. "So far, this week has been amazing," Chock said. "We had a lot of fun and we are so happy that this was our first competition. We put out two great performances and this is a great stepping stone for the rest of the season."

Dancing to 'Oblivion' and Beethoven's 'Five Secrets', Bobrova/Soloviev gave an inspired performance, completing level-four lifts and twizzles as well as a level-four spin. The Russian Champions scored 110.50 points, just below their season's best, and accumulated 182.84 points. "We are pleased with our performances here overall," Soloviev said. "We feel that we did everything in the Short Dance and that the Free Dance was a very good effort as well. Maybe we were holding back a little, because we skated last and that makes you always a bit nervous." With their silver from Moscow, and bronze here in Beijing, the multiple European medalists will have to wait and see whether they qualify for December's ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in Japan.

[Tiffani Zagorski/Jonathan Guerreiro](#) (RUS) came fourth with their dance to ‘Exogenesis Symphony’ by Muse (164.41 points). 2016 World Junior Champions [Lorraine McNamara/Quinn Carpenter](#) (USA) placed fifth in their debut at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating circuit (157.61 points). [Shiyue Wang/Xinyu Liu](#) (CHN) moved up from eighth to sixth on 151.17 points.

### **Zagitova (RUS) vaults from fourth to take Ladies gold in Grand Prix debut**

2017 World Junior Champion [Alina Zagitova](#), of Russia, vaulted from fourth place to first in the Ladies Free Skating at the Audi Cup of China in Beijing on Saturday, winning gold in her Grand Prix debut. Japan’s [Wakaba Higuchi](#) stayed in second place to earn the silver medal while Russia’s [Elena Radionova](#) claimed the bronze.

Performing to ‘Don Quixote’, Zagitova nailed a triple Lutz-triple loop combination, four more triples of excellent quality, and level-four spins and footwork. The only glitch was an under-rotated triple Lutz. The 15-year-old scored 144.44 points and totaled 213.88 points. “To win the gold medal in my first Grand Prix means a lot to me, but I need to continue to work and I cannot rest on my laurel,” the Muscovite said. “I was not pleased with my Short Program but I was pleased with the free (skate) as I did everything. I was a little tight, but I was able to show what I have been training,” she added.

Higuchi’s James Bond routine was highlighted by seven triples including two triple Lutz-triple toe combinations. The two-time World Junior bronze medalist picked up 141.99 points which contributed to 212.52 points overall. “I think I moved very well on the ice today and I am satisfied with what I did here,” the 16-year-old said. “However, I still have a lot of things to improve in future training and competitions. I have a little regret that I am not at the top here, there is still a gap. I think I met my goal to go to the Grand Prix Final and I want to show my best there.”

Radionova produced seven clean triples and difficult spins in her program to ‘Rhumba d’Amour’ to score a season’s best of 136.34 points. The two-time European silver medalist was ranked fourth in the Free Skating but held on to third place with 206.82 points overall. “I am happy with the progress I have made in a short time and that I was able to skate without stupid falls,” Radionova said. “I have worked a lot and I skated with more confidence. But this is by far not the limit and I need to progress with each competition.”

2017 Four Continents Champion [Mai Mihara](#) (JPN) put out a strong Free Skating performance to move from seventh to fourth at 206.07 points. 2017 World Junior silver medalist [Marin Honda](#) (JPN) came fifth (198.32). 2017 World bronze medalist [Gabrielle Daleman](#) (CAN) dropped from first to sixth after two smaller errors on jumps (196.83 points). 2015 World Champion [Elizaveta Tuktamysheva](#) (RUS) went for a triple Axel, but stepped out of it. With 196.68 points, she finished seventh.

### **Kolyada (RUS) wins his first Grand Prix gold at Audi Cup of China**

Russia’s [Mikhail Kolyada](#) skated off with the gold medal, his first at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating. World bronze medalist [Boyang Jin](#), of China, claimed the silver medal and USA’s [Max Aaron](#) (USA) pulled up from fifth place to claim the bronze.



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Skating to Elvis Presley songs, Kolyada fell on his opening quad Lutz but recovered to land a triple Axel-triple toe, quad toe and four triple jumps. The Russian Champion collected a level four for his spins and footwork, but singled an Axel and popped the Salchow into a double. With 176.25 points, the Rostelecom Cup bronze medalist was ranked third in the Free Skating, but overall remained in first place at 279.38 points. “I can’t yet really believe it, but I am happy. Not everything worked out today, I made some major mistakes and this is something I will work on,” the 22-year-old commented. With a gold from China and his bronze from Russia, Kolyada has a good chance to make the Grand Prix Final.

Jin’s program to Star Wars featured a shaky quad Lutz and five solid triples, as well as level-four spins, but the Chinese skater fell on a quad toe and stumbled on two other quads. He was fifth in the Free Skating with a season’s best of 170.59 points, and totaled 264.48 points. “Like yesterday, I did not skate as I had imagined it,” the 20-year-old said. “I did not make many big mistakes, like falls, but a lot of jumps were not clean enough. I still don’t feel so comfortable with my program after some changes to the choreography and I need to do more run-throughs to get used to it.” Jin competes again at Bridgestone Skate America in three weeks.

Aaron’s program to „The Phantom of the Opera“ included a quad toe-double toe, quad toe, quad Salchow as well as four triple jumps. The 2013 U.S. Champion scored a personal best of 176.58 points and won the Free Skating segment. Overall he accumulated 259.59 points. “This is my third time in China and both times I was fourth – at the Junior Grand Prix Final and last year I was fourth again (at the Grand Prix). Now this time in China I got a medal and it feels great. The skates I had were a little bit tough, but I enjoyed every minute of it,” Aaron told the post-event press conference.

2017 World Junior Champion [Vincent Zhou](#) (USA) moved up from eighth to fourth with the second-best Free Skating score (256.66 points overall). [Han Yan](#) (CHN) came fifth at 254.61 points. Spain’s two-time World Champion [Javier Fernandez](#), who suffered from a stomach upset, slipped from third to sixth after a sub-par performance (253.06 points).

## **Sui/Han lead Chinese Pairs to one-two finish**

Reigning World Champions [Wenjing Sui/Cong Han](#) led a Chinese one-two as competition concluded at Audi Cup of China. [Xiaoyu Yu/Hao Zhang](#) took the silver medal, with Canadians [Kirsten Moore-Towers/Michael Marinaro](#) claiming bronze.

Sui/Han delivered an excellent performance to ‘Turandot’, reeling off a quad twist, spectacular throw triple flip and Salchow, as well as a side-by-side triple toe-double toe-double toe combination and innovative lifts. Sui stepped out only of the side-by-side triple Salchow and the pair combination spin was rated a level two. The three-time World Championship medalists posted a personal best with 150.93 points for the Free Skating, and racked up 231.07 points overall to take the title. “We have been competing at the Cup of China for many years, but this is the first time for us to win in front of a home crowd,” Han said. “However, we have higher goals this season than winning the Cup of China. We



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have a few problems that we want to fix and we want to skate better at our next Grand Prix, NHK Trophy in Japan.”

Skating to ‘Star Wars’, Yu/Zhang completed a triple twist, big throw triple loop and Salchow as well as impressive lifts. However, Yu stumbled out of the landing of the solo triple toe and two-footed the triple Salchow. The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Finalists earned 134.17 points for the Free Skating and, overall, received 205.54 points. “We made small mistakes in the Short and Free Program, but I feel happy that we were able to enjoy our performance at the Cup of China. The solo jumps are going well in practice, but we tried the triple Salchow for the first time in competition and I was nervous,” Yu said.

Moore-Towers/Marinaro’s routine to ‘Un Ange Passe’, by Alain Lefevre, featured a triple twist, double Axel-single loop-triple Salchow combination, throw triple loop and Salchow. The Canadians set a personal best with 132.00 points, which helped them to a total of 194.52 points overall. “We feel pretty good about our performance today, definitely a solid step up from yesterday and also from our Senior B (event) that we had earlier this season. We missed some levels and we know we have some space to grow, but we are super excited,” Moore-Towers said. “We are happy to start off the season with a medal at the Grand Prix but we have a lot of work to do in the next couple of weeks, leading into Skate America,” Marinaro agreed.

[Nicole Della Monica/Matteo Guarise](#) (ITA) slipped from third to fourth place, on 190.25 points, while compatriots [Valentina Marchei/Ondrej Hotarek](#) (ITA) came fifth (188.01 points).

Audi Cup of China concludes Sunday with the Exhibition Gala. Audi Cup of China is the third of six events of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating series that culminates in the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in Nagoya (JPN) in December. The top six skaters/couples in each discipline qualify for the Final. The global prize money for the Grand Prix is US\$272,000. A total of 57 skaters/couples from 11 ISU members competed in Beijing. The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating continues next week with NHK Trophy in Osaka (JPN).

Full entry lists and results of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2017/18 are available [here](#). Follow the discussion on social media by using **#GPFigure #FigureSkating**.

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