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Lausanne, Switzerland

More junior skaters qualify for Final in Ljubljana

More junior skaters secured their spot in the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final as the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating series continued in Ljubljana (SLO) with the sixth and penultimate event.

Petr Gummenik (RUS) strikes gold again

[Petr Gummenik](#) of Russia struck gold again in his second Grand Prix event and now tops the list of qualifiers for the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final. [Tomoki Hiwatashi](#) (USA) earned his second silver medal on the circuit this season and Japan's [Koshiro Shimada](#) took the bronze.

Gummenik won the Short Program with a confident performance to "Czardas" that was highlighted by a triple Axel and a triple Lutz-triple toeloop combination. The 16-year-old then followed up with a strong performance to "Romeo and Juliet", hitting a triple Axel, a somewhat shaky triple Axel-triple loop combination as well as four more clean triples and level four spins and footwork. Gummenik racked up 219.25 points. "The short program went well. In the free not everything went smoothly, but I more or less dealt with it," the skater from St. Petersburg commented. "The Final means a lot to me. This is one of the most important competitions of the year. Now I want to make my program harder," he added.

Hiwatashi ranked third in the Short Program as he wobbled on his camel spin and underrotated the triple Lutz-triple toe combination. However, the 18-year-old landed a quad toe-triple toe combination in the Free Skating and pulled up to second at 215.16 points. Shimada turned in two solid performances to score 212.95 points. With two silver medals Hiwatashi most likely qualified for the Final while Shimada needs to wait and see what will happen next week.

Anastasia Tarakanova (RUS) claims gold

Russia's [Anastasia Tarakanova](#) celebrated her second victory on the ISU Junior Grand Prix circuit in Ljubljana. Teammate [Anna Tarusina](#) and [Haein Lee](#) of Korea came second and third.

Tarakanova reduced her combination in the Short Program to a triple Lutz-double toe and ranked third in this segment. She rallied in the Free to "Believer" by Imagine Dragons and nailed seven triples to collect a total of 190.05 points. "When I went to the competition I knew that I had to win," the 14-year-old pointed out. "After I made the mistake in the short program, I was upset, because I was ready to skate clean. I prepared mentally more for the free and focused on the jumps. I made it to the Final, but there are still enough glitches in my program and the score is not so high, so I need to continue to work," she said. Tarakanova had won silver at the Junior Grand Prix in Richmond (CAN) this season and is the Champion of the Austria Cup 2017.

Tarusina produced a clean Short Program and two triple-triple combinations in her Free Skating to claim her second silver medal this season on 188.24 points. With two silver medals, she has a chance to get to the Final as well, but it depends on what the competitors will do next week in Armenia. Lee, who stood in fourth place following the Short Program, pulled up to third on 180.48 points. [Tomoe Kawabata](#) (JPN) led following the Short Program, but fell twice in the Free Skating to drop to fifth place.

Nguyen/Kolesnik (USA) dance off with gold

[Avonley Nguyen/Vadym Kolesnik](#) (USA) danced off with their first Junior Grand Prix gold medal. The Russian couples [Sofia Shevchenko/Igor Eremenko](#) and [Polina Ivanenko/Daniil Karpov](#) picked up the silver and bronze medals.

Nguyen/Kolesnik led in the Rhythm Dance with an expressive Tango and defended their lead with a strong performance to “Demons” by Imagine Dragons and “Experience” by Ludovico Einaudi. The young team from Michigan earned a level four for five elements in the Free Dance and totaled 165.63 points. “We knew we came to do what we always do,” Nguyen said. “We wanted to put out the best free that we could so far this season. We wanted to tell a story. The Demons part is about how everybody has something that they want to keep hidden, but the next part, Experience, is about how, as you experience more in life, there’s more that you want to show the world and it’s a part of who we are,” she explained. Watch the full interview with Nguyen/Kolesnik on the ISU skating channel [here](#).

Shevchenko/Eremenko, the winners of the Junior Grand Prix in Bratislava, also skated very well, but lost a few points because of an extended lift and a level-two step sequence. They accumulated 161.67 points. The team from Moscow will return to the Junior Final where they will meet again Nguyen/Kolesnik, among others. Ivanenko/Karpov added the bronze to their silver from Richmond with 151.69 points.

Overall, 90 skaters and couples from 35 ISU members competed at Ljubljana Cup 2018: 24 Junior Men, 36 Junior Ladies and 15 Junior Ice Dance couples. The ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series continues next week with the sixth and final event in Eriwan (ARM). Full [entry lists](#), [results](#), [the General Announcement](#) of the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series are available on [isu.org](#).

Junior Grand Prix livestream

The ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating events are live streamed on the official [ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating YouTube Channel](#). Additionally, all performances since 2011 are available on demand.

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