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Nathan Chen and Rika Kihira lead the Men and Ladies Short Program in Vancouver

Nathan Chen (USA) skates to lead in Men's Short Program

Reigning World Champion [Nathan Chen](#) (USA) took the Men's Short Program as the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final continued Thursday in Vancouver (CAN). Japan's [Shoma Uno](#) stands in second place and [Michal Brezina](#) of the Czech Republic ranks third.

Chen opened his routine to "Caravan" with a solid triple Axel and a quad flip, but then stumbled on the quad toeloop and had no combination jump. The reigning World Champion collected a level four for his spins and step sequence and managed a season's best with 92.99 points. "Clearly I made the big mistake at the end of the program (on the quad toe) - something that I could totally have avoided, it's just a little bit of a slip. But I'm glad I'm getting experience, I'm doing the program throughout the season and making mistakes like this so I can keep learning," the U.S. Champion said.

Uno underrotated and stepped out of his quad flip but landed a quad toe-double toe and a triple Axel. The Olympic silver medalist scored 91.67 points and was disappointed with himself. "I couldn't do anything what I trained for in Japan. Today at the practice, both in the morning and the six minutes warm up, I couldn't jump properly. I am not ill or injured. I have absolutely no excuse as to why I couldn't jump. I wish I could say there was a reason. The fact that I could do everything well in practice and couldn't do in the competition probably means that the mental side is part of the problem and is my weakness," Uno shared.

Brezina's solid program to "Who Wants to Live Forever" included a quad Salchow-double toeloop combination, a triple flip, a triple Axel and difficult spins. The multiple Czech Champion earned 89.21 points. "The quad-triple combination was not great but the rest was good. It's been seven years since my last Final, I am lucky enough to be make it this time to the top six to skate in such a prestigious competition," the 2013 European bronze medalist told the press. "I'm feeling good, I just have to do my job, show what I practiced. I have no particular goal for tomorrow (in the Free Skating)," he added.

[Junhwan Cha](#) (KOR) underrotated his quad Salchow to finish fourth on 89.07 points. [Sergei Voronov](#) (RUS) came fifth (82.96 points) followed by [Keegan Messing](#) (CAN) on 79.56 points.

Rika Kihira (JPN) upstages Alina Zagitova (RUS) in Ladies Short Program

Japan's rising star [Rika Kihira](#) upstaged reigning Olympic [Alina Zagitova](#) of Russia in the Ladies Short Program as the competition wrapped up on the first day of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final in Vancouver (CAN) on Thursday. [Elizaveta Tuktamysheva](#) of Russia came third in the Short Program.

Skating to "Clair de Lune" by Claude Debussy, Kihira nailed a triple Axel, a triple flip-triple toe, triple Lutz and two level-four spins as well as a level-four step sequence. The NHK Trophy Champion set a new personal best with 82.51 points, which is also the highest score so far achieved this season. "I was extremely surprised when I saw that score of 82.51, because it was not a score that I would have imagined would ever come up," the 16-year-old said. "For the free

program, my goal is to land all my jumps cleanly and I will do my best to ensure it. I don't want to have any other regrets. Now that I've received such a score in the short, I need to complete my free successfully as well. That's all I would like to focus on for now," she continued.

Zagitova's performance to "The Phantom of the Opera" was highlighted by a triple Lutz-triple loop combination, double Axel, triple flip and difficult spins and footwork. The defending ISU Grand Prix Final Champion scored 77.93 points. "I was somewhat tense, very focused and I was nervous. I didn't see the protocol yet, so I don't know what scores the judges gave me. I completed all my elements but I didn't do them as easily as I could have done them. If I skate better I can get more points," the European Champion pointed out.

Tuktamysheva underrotated her triple Axel, but landed a triple toe-triple toe and a triple Lutz in her routine to "Assassin's Tango". The 2015 World Champion earned 70.65 points. "Well, we all are not robots, I was a little bit tired. This time also, I am not as fresh (jetlag), as I was during previous performances. But I am happy that despite being tired, I fought and this was probably one of the most difficult performances for me in this season. Which is why I am happy that I still performed the Axel, and other elements," the 2015 European Champion shared.

[Kaori Sakamoto](#) (JPN) remained within striking distance of the podium on 70.23 points in fourth place. Newcomer [Sofia Samodurova](#) (RUS) finished fifth on 68.24 points while World bronze medalist [Satoko Miyahara](#) (JPN) underrotated her triple Lutz to come sixth (67.52 points).

Full entry lists and results of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series are available [here](#). Follow the conversation with #JGPFigure and #GPFigure.