

February 8, 2019

Anaheim, USA

Tennell and Zhou in front after first day of ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships 2019

[Bradie Tennell](#) (USA) and [Vincent Zhou](#) (USA) took the lead as the ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships opened Thursday in Anaheim, USA, with the Ladies and Men's Short Programs. As Anaheim hosts an ISU Figure Skating Championship for the first time, 87 skaters from 14 ISU members are competing in this 20th anniversary edition of the Four Continents Championships: 25 Men, 22 Ladies, 8 Pair Skating couples and 12 Ice Dance couples.

Tennell (USA) captures lead in Ladies Short Program

[Bradie Tennell](#) (USA) took a narrow lead in the Ladies event after the Short Program as the ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships 2019 opened in Anaheim (USA) Thursday. Following in second is defending champion [Kaori Sakamoto](#) of Japan, with USA's [Mariah Bell](#) in third place.

Tennell delivered a sharp performance to "Rebirth" by High Finesse that featured a triple Lutz-triple toeloop combination, a triple flip, double Axel and level-four spins and footwork. The US silver medalist earned 73.91 points, a season's best for her.

"I'm extremely happy with how I did," Tennell said. "It's exactly how I train at home and what I wanted to do here, to go out there and trust myself and trust my training. I'd like to go out tomorrow (in the Free Skating) and skate like I did today, going for everything and really enjoying myself."

"I really want to sell my program, and skate the best I possibly can, with a clean program and achieve all my levels."

Skating to "From My First Moment" by Charlotte Church, Sakamoto produced a triple flip-triple toeloop combination, a triple loop, double Axel as well as difficult spins and footwork for a season's best of 73.36 points.

"I went too sideways on the last spin, but other than that, I can say that my jumps were very good, so I am very satisfied with my performance," the Japanese champion said. "The score showed my improvement, too."

Bell's routine to "To Love You More" by Celine Dion was highlighted by a triple Lutz-triple toeloop combination, a triple flip and double Axel. The national bronze medalist also recorded a season's best, of 70.02 points.

"I just absolutely love this program and when the music comes on I get chills and I just love competing it," she said. "Throughout the season I haven't had a perfectly solid skate; I've had some clear under-rotations or a fall at NHK (Trophy) so just to put out a solid short program I was just really pleased with myself and I felt really good and in the moment and I was really excited with how the program was going."

[Eunsoo Lim](#) (KOR) came fourth with a solid performance and remains close to the podium on 69.14 points. ISU Grand Prix Final Champion [Rika Kihira](#) (JPN) placed fifth after popping her planned triple Axel into a single (68.85 points).

[Elizabet Tursynbaeva](#) (KAZ) follows in sixth on 68.09 points. The 2017 Four Continents champion [Mai Mihara](#) (JPN) finished in eighth place after an error on her combination jump (65.15 points).

Zhou (USA) cracks 100 points to take Men's Short Program

[Vincent Zhou](#) (USA) cracked the 100-point barrier for the first time in his career to win the Men's Short Program at the ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships 2019 in Anaheim (USA) on Thursday. Korea's [Junhwan Cha](#) came second while defending champion [Boyang Jin](#) of China is currently ranked third.

Zhou opened his program to "Exogenesis Symphony Part III" by Muse with a quad Lutz-triple toe loop combination and followed up with a quad Salchow. The 2017 World Junior Champion went on to produce a triple Axel and level-four spins and footwork to score 100.18 points, which is a personal best.

"This is my first time breaking 100 (points) in the short in international competition, I am very happy with this result, it is a reward, and a testimony to the hard work I've been putting in," the US silver medalist said.

"I'm becoming more confident in my abilities. I did my jumps with better quality than before, I've been working on them. I'm proving to myself I can do clean jumps."

Performing to "Cinderella" by Sergei Prokofiev, Cha hit a quadruple Salchow, triple Lutz-triple loop combination and triple Axel. The Korean Champion collected a level four for his three spins and the step sequence and achieved a personal best score of 97.33 points.

"Actually I'm very happy about my performance tonight, because I have a lot of competitions in a row," the 17-year-old said. "I didn't have the chance and time to train as normal, since I had competitions almost every week. I was nervous today, too, but I think I really tried my best."

Jin stumbled on his opening quad Lutz, but recovered to land a somewhat shaky quad toe-double toe combination and a triple Axel in his program to "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" by The Beatles. He earned a season's best of 92.17 points.

"I'm not quite satisfied with today's performance, because I've been doing pretty well in the practice, so it may be due to my physical condition or the jet lag - it's already 10pm and I'm actually kind of sleepy now," Jin said.

"Two jumps were not very good. I think failing two jumps in one short program is a big problem, so I hope to adjust myself to pull out a better skate in the Free Program."

Olympic, World and Four Continents silver medalist [Shoma Uno](#) (JPN) had a shaky landing on the quad toe and stepped out of the triple Salchow-triple toe loop combination to finish fourth on 91.76 points.

[Keegan Messing](#) (CAN) came fifth with 88.18 points and 2018 Four Continents bronze medalist [Jason Brown](#) (USA) rounds out the top six at 86.57 points.

The ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships 2019 continue Friday with the Pairs Short Program, Rhythm Dance and Ladies Free Skating. Click on the highlighted text for [entry lists](#), [full results](#) and the [official event website](#). Follow the discussion on social media using [#4ContsFigure](#) and [#FigureSkating](#).

ISU Media Coordinator
Selina Vanier
E-Mail: vanier@isu.ch

For further information please contact:

ISU Four Continents Championships
Michael Terry, Press Officer
E-Mail: mterry@usfigureskating.org