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USA

Las Vegas,

## **ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2021/22 Guaranteed Skate America, Day Two**

[Vincent Zhou](#) (USA) and [Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov](#) (RUS) were crowned the first ISU Grand Prix [Guaranteed Rate Skate America](#) Champions on Saturday in Las Vegas (USA). [Alexandra Trusova](#) (RUS) and Ice Dancers [Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue](#) (USA) lead after the Women's Short Program and the Rhythm Dance.

### **Vincent Zhou (USA) skates to first ISU Grand Prix gold at Skate America**

[Vincent Zhou](#) (USA) skated to his first ISU Grand Prix gold medal at Guaranteed Rate Skate America, ending the winning streak of three-time ISU World Champion [Nathan Chen](#) (USA), who took the bronze medal. The silver went to Japan's [Shoma Uno](#).

Zhou reeled off a quad Lutz and flip and three more, albeit slightly under-rotated (q) quadruple jumps, plus two triple Axels in his martial-arts inspired routine to "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon". The 2019 World bronze medalist set a new season's best in the Free Skating with 198.13 points, and in the total score with 295.56 points.

"I don't think it has sunk in yet," Zhou told the post-event press conference. "I didn't really expect this result, but what I did expect of myself was to be as well prepared and well trained as I possibly could.

"I think just focusing on that every single day at home led to making the seemingly impossible become possible. I hope that's a recurring theme for the rest of this season. I look forward to continuing to work hard to make even better things happen."

Skating to a new arrangement of Maurice Ravel's "Bolero", Uno landed a somewhat shaky quad loop, two quad toe-double toe combinations, a quad flip and two triple Axels. The quad Salchow was not clean and was downgraded. The 2018 Olympic silver medalist earned 181.61 points and accumulated 270.68 points.

"I am honored to end up second," he said. "This is a very high-level competition, it is amazing. But at the same time, when I look at my goals and what I am aiming at, I face reality that I'm not there yet. I will work hard and train for my next Grand Prix, which is the NHK Trophy in Japan."

Chen completed a quad loop, quad flip-triple toe, quad toe-Euler-double flip and quad toe-triple toe as well as a triple Axel in his routine to a selection of music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, but he doubled the Lutz and Salchow. The three-time World Champion scored 186.48 points and totaled 269.37 points.

“It (the winning streak) was going to end at some point of time. I'm really proud of these guys here, if anyone is to break my winning streak I'm glad it's him (Zhou)”, Chen said. “I'm proud of what I've accomplished in the past, but at this point of time the only thing I can do is move forward.”

[Shun Sato](#) (JPN) finished fourth on 247.05 points. [Jimmy Ma](#) (USA) dropped from third to fifth with 228.12 points after a few errors, while [Michal Brezina](#) (CZE) completed the top six (227.47 points).

[Kevin Aymoz](#) (FRA) withdrew before the Free Skating due to injury. He stood in 11<sup>th</sup> place following the Short Program.

### **Tarasova/Morozov (RUS) claim first ISU Grand Prix gold in three years**

Two-time European champions [Evgenia Tarasova/Vladimir Morozov](#) of Russia skated to gold in the Pairs event at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Guaranteed Rate Skate America in Las Vegas on Saturday. Japan's [Riku Miura/Ryuichi Kihara](#) moved up one spot to take the silver medal, while Russians [Aleksandra Boikova/Dmitrii Kozlovskii](#) settled for the bronze.

Overnight leaders Tarasova/Morozov produced a triple twist, throw triple flip and loop as well as five level-four elements in their Free Skating to “Lighthouse” by Patrick Watson. However, she doubled the side by side triple Salchow while he wobbled on the triple toe-double toe and did not add the second double toe. The two-time World silver medalists scored a season's best of 142.14 points for a total of 222.50 points.

“It was not perfect, but it was a good step forward. We'll work harder to achieve better performances,” Morozov said. “It is a good feeling (to win a Grand Prix again for the first time since 2018). In the last three years we went through many changes. For this season we are back in Moscow and we have a great team, that's why we gave good results.”

Performing to “Woman” by Shawn Phillips, Miura/Kihara landed a triple toe-double toe-double toe, triple Salchow and triple twist, but she fell on the throw triple Lutz. The Japanese team set a personal best of 135.57 points and ranked third in the Free Skating, and overall they finished second with 208.20 points to win the first Grand Prix medal for a Japanese Pair in ten years. “Now we aim for another medal at our next Grand Prix event and we would like to get 210 points,” Miura said. “We are taking it step by step.”

Boikova/Kozlovskii's program to “Malaguena” included a triple toe, triple twist and throw triple loop, but Boikova missed the second jump in their triple Salchow-Euler-triple Salchow combination and the triple twist. The 2020 European Champions amassed a total of 205.53 points to finish in third place. “Not everything worked out, but it was a huge experience for us and very interesting,” Kozlovskii said.

U.S. Champions [Alexa Knierim/Brandon Frazier](#) (USA) moved up from fifth to fourth on 202.97 points with a strong performance and the second-best Free Skating score. [Jessica Calalang/Brian Johnson](#) (USA) dropped from fourth to fifth on 197.42 points after making some errors on the side by side jumps.

### **Hubbell/Donohue (USA) edge Chock/Bates (USA) in Rhythm Dance**

Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue (USA) edged out their teammates Madison Chock/Evan Bates by just 1.03 points as the ISU Grand Prix Skate America continued on Saturday in Las Vegas (USA) with the Rhythm Dance. Canadians Laurence Fournier Beaudry/Nikolaj Sorensen came third in the first segment of the Ice Dance event.

Hubbell/Donohue produced a characteristic performance to “Nasty”, “Rope Burn” and “Rhythm Nation” by Janet Jackson, collecting a level four for their spectacular stationary lift and a level three for the twizzles and the Midnight Blues Pattern. The 2021 World silver medalists earned 83.58 points.

“The one thing that stuck in my mind from this performance was really being aware while it was happening of how the crowd was reacting,” said Hubbell. “When we did the entry into our lift, I heard the uproar. It was very welcome after a year of mostly silence.

“We definitely left a lot of points on the table. We're hoping that with those extra technical points we go towards 90, but today it was enough.”

Chock/Bates selected Blues and Hip Hop to “Myboi”, “Therefore I am” and “Bad Guy” by Billie Eilish. Their curve lift merited a level four, while the Midnight Blues and the Pattern Dance step sequence garnered a level three. However, the midline steps were rated only a level one leaving the two-time World medalists second on 82.55 points.

“We were at Finlandia (Trophy, earlier in October) and today we got lower levels, but we definitely feel we skated better. We had a lot more attack and, element-wise, it was pretty comparable I'd say,” Bates said. “The important thing is we really attacked the program and felt it was a step up.”

Dancing to Blues and Funk to songs by George Michael, Fournier Beaudry/Sorensen completed a level-four lift and level-four twizzles, while other elements were graded a level one and two to score 75.33 points.

“It was nice to go back out on to the ice after a while,” Fournier Beaudry said. “Nik and I were focusing more on the performance aspect in the past few weeks, that was our main goal for today, not to focus on the levels mainly.”

Olivia Smart/Adrian Diaz (ESP) remain within striking distance of the podium in fourth place on 74.06 points. Annabelle Morozov/Andrei Bagin (RUS) sit in fifth with 68.79 points.

### **Alexandra Trusova (RUS) leads Women in Short Program**

2021 World bronze medalist Alexandra Trusova led Russia's Women to a 1-2-3 in the Short Program at the ISU Grand Prix Guaranteed Rate Skate America Saturday in Las Vegas. Daria Usacheva is currently ranked second, ahead of Ksenia Sinitsina.

Top seed Trusova produced an excellent performance to “Frida” that was highlighted by a triple flip, triple Lutz-triple toe, double Axel and level-four spins and footwork. The 2020 European bronze medalist earned a personal best score of 77.69 points.

“I am pleased with my performance, but I am a bit sad that I did not do my triple Axel and hopefully I can do it next time,” the 17-year-old said.

Referring to rumors she might have been forced to withdraw through injury, she explained: “There was the option to skate or to withdraw. When I got up this morning my foot hurt less and I decided I can fight.”

Skating to “Never Enough” from “The Greatest Showman”, Usacheva landed a double Axel, triple Lutz and triple flip-triple toeloop combination and picked up a level four for her spins. That was certainly enough for a personal best score of 76.71 points.

“I am happy with my performance and especially that I was able to open up and bring across the emotions,” the 2020 World Junior silver medalist said. “I did not specifically work on this, I just enjoyed performing today and the emotions came by themselves.”

Sinitsina, who had skated first out of the 12 women, delivered a clean performance to Petr Tchaikovski’s “Lullaby” that featured a triple Lutz-triple toeloop combination and triple flip. She scored 71.51 points. “I am very excited to be at the senior Grand Prix and I wanted to give it my all, skate clean and show the audience this wonderful short program,” the 2020 Youth Olympic Games silver medalist said.

[Kaori Sakamoto](#) (JPN) is less than a point behind in fourth place with 71.16 points. She doubled her flip in combination with a triple toe. [Young You](#) (KOR), who fell on her triple Axel, ranks fifth (70.73 points) followed by [Yelim Kim](#) (KOR) on 70.56 points.

### **About ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating**

The ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series started in 1995 (previously known as the ISU Champions Series) and consists of six invitational international senior events and the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final. The top six of the past World Championships are seeded. Competitors collect points in their events towards the qualification for the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final. Only the top six Skaters / Couples in each discipline can qualify for the Final.