

April 14, 2022

Tallinn, Estonia

ISU World Junior Figure Skating Championships 2022, Day One

Ilia Malinin (USA) and Pair Skaters Karina Safina/Luka Berulava (GEO) skated to the lead as the ISU World Junior Figure Skating Championships opened in Tallinn (EST) Thursday with the Junior Men's and Junior Pairs Short Programs. At total of 144 Skaters/Couples representing 39 ISU members are competing in Estonia.

Ilia Malinin (USA) claims Junior Men's Short Program

[Ilia Malinin](#) (USA) skated to a strong lead in the Junior Men's Short Program. [Wesley Chiu](#) of Canada came second, edging Estonia's [Mikhail Selevko](#).

Skating to "Billie Jean", Malinin nailed a triple Lutz-triple toe, a triple flip, triple Axel and collected a level four for his spins and footwork. The two-time ISU Junior Grand Prix gold medallist scored 88.99 points.

"I feel very excited that I skated the best I came here to skate. I prepared a lot for this moment to make sure I skate clean and do the best possible," the 17-year-old said.

"It's different from the senior level, because I had quads in the short (at the ISU World Championships). It's hard because you have to focus on not overrotating your triples. Overall it's an easier layout and definitely better to work on your skating skills. You can have that shine more than the jumps," he said.

Chiu's performance to "Vincent" was highlighted by a triple Axel, triple Lutz-triple toe and difficult spins. The National senior-level bronze medallist posted a new personal best of 81.59 points.

"It was personal best for me and I have been training a long time for this moment," the ISU JGP Courchevel Champion said. "I just continued training (after the National Championships in January). Skate Canada actually held a camp for all of the Junior World competitors, so it was nice to go there and show my programs to some judges and get some feedback."

Selevko produced a triple flip, triple Axel and level-four spins and steps in his routine to "Nothing Else Matters", but he stepped out of the landing of his triple Lutz-triple toe combination. The ISU World Championship competitor earned 81.26 points.

"I am very happy with result. That was quite unexpected for me considering the mistakes I made in the end of the program," the Estonian skater said. "My brother ([Aleksandr Selevko](#)) was 4th (in the Short Program) last time when Junior Worlds was in Tallinn (in 2020) so we're both happy that I got that place.

"I think there is not a lot of pressure on me in the free skating. It is more in the short program because you can't make mistakes and you have to be very precise. In the free skating it is a bit more relaxed," he added.

[Liam Kapeikis](#) (USA) is not far behind in fourth place at 79.83 points, closely followed by [Tatsuya Tsuboi](#) (JPN) on 79.15 points. 2018 ISU Junior Grand Prix Final Champion [Stephen Gogolev](#) (CAN) placed sixth (78.75 points).

Karina Safina/Luka Berulava (GEO) shine in Junior Short Program

Olympic and ISU World competitors [Karina Safina/Luka Berulava](#) of Georgia smashed expectations and won the Junior Pairs Short Program with six points to spare. Australia's [Anastasia Golubeva/Hector Giotopoulos-Moore](#) finished second while [Anastasiia Smirnova/Danylo Siianytsia](#) (USA) are sitting in third heading into Friday's Free Skating.

Safina/Berulava put out a strong performance of their program to a modern arrangement of the “Moonlight Sonata”, completing a triple twist, side by side double Axel and throw triple Salchow. The two-time ISU Junior Grand Prix medalists picked up a level four for the twist, lift and side by side spin to set a new personal best of 67.77 points.

“We are satisfied, everything worked out today and we’ll work further,” Berulava said. “For us, each competition is the same, we prepare and focus in the same way, regardless if it is Junior Worlds or Senior Worlds,” he explained.

Performing to “Fire Dance” by Jennifer Thomas, Golubeva/Giotopoulos-Moore landed a triple twist, double Axel, throw triple Salchow and two level-four elements. The couple scored 61.72 points, which was a new personal best score as well.

“We are very happy with how we skated,” Giotopoulos-Moore told the press. “For us, it (the postponement of Junior Worlds) extended our season a bit and we had more training.”

Smirnova/Siianytsia’s performance to “Hey Big Spender” included a triple twist and throw triple Salchow. However, Smirnova’s double Axel was downgraded. Nevertheless, the team achieved a personal best score of 60.38 points.

“We are happy how it turned out today, but we still have tomorrow,” Siianytsia said. “We feel we are stronger skaters than two years ago,” Smirnova said, when asked about coming back to Junior Worlds after 2020.

[Brooke McIntosh/Benjamin Mimar](#) (CAN) finished fourth with 58.00 points followed by [Letizia Roscher/Luis Schuster](#) (GER) on 54.01 points. [Violetta Sierova/Ivan Khobta](#) (UKR) came sixth (49.57 points).

Event Schedule

The schedule of the ISU World Junior Figure Skating Championships 2022 is as follows:

Thursday, April 14	Men’s & Pairs Short Program
Friday, April 15	Ice Dance/Rhythm Dance, Pairs Free Skating
Saturday, April 16	Women’s Short Program, Men’s Free Skating
Sunday, April 17	Ice Dance/Free Dance, Women’s Free Skating

* Following the IOC recommendation, in order to protect the integrity of ice skating competitions and for the safety of all the participants of international ice skating competitions, the ISU Council based on Article 17.1.q) i) of the ISU Constitution, agreed that with immediate effect and until further notice, no Skaters belonging to the ISU Members in Russia (Russian Skating Union and the Figure Skating Federation of Russia) and Belarus (Skating Union of Belarus) shall be invited or allowed to participate in international ice skating Competitions including ISU Championships and other ISU Events (Full [Statement](#) to be read on ISU website).