

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: CHEMIN DE PRIMEROSE 2 - CH 1007 LAUSANNE - SWITZERLAND
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2001 European Championships of Figure Skating, Bratislava, Slovakia **Day Five**

The 2001 ISU European Figure Skating Championships continued in Bratislava, Slovakia, with the Ladies' Short Program and the conclusion of the Dance competition.

Ladies

Joint top qualifier and defending champion Irina Slutskaya (RUS) produced another assured performance to win the Short Program. She opened with a triple lutz/double toeloop and completed all the required elements with confidence and style, including quality spins (featuring her double Biellmann combination) and spirals that demonstrated her flexibility and technique. She was rewarded with a total of five 5.9s and first place for all nine judges to take the lead going into Saturday's Free Program.

Teammate and two time European bronze medallist Viktoria Volchkova, who finished only fifth in her Qualifying Group, placed second in the Short Program. She too skated a clean program with a triple lutz/double toeloop and triple flip. Her marks for required elements ranged from 5.2 to 5.5 and for presentation from 5.3 to 5.6. That moved her up to third place overall.

2000 silver medallist Maria Butyrskaya, the third member of the Russian team and winner of the other Qualifying Group, opened well with a triple lutz/double toeloop but fell on her triple flip. She performed the rest of her program with characteristically high quality skating but the damage was done. Her marks for required elements ranged from as low as 4.9 to 5.2. Her presentation marks included three 5.8s and she placed third in the Short Program.

Vanessa Gusmeroli (FRA) placed fourth in the Short and last season's world junior bronze medallist Sarah Meier (SUI) was fifth - both skating clean programs. So Slutskaya leads the overall placings ahead of Butyrskaya, Volchkova and Meier.

Asked about her confident performance, Slutskaya said: "I think it comes from last year and from my good practices. Actually I wasn't feeling too well because I have been sick prior to Europeans. I was in bed for one week with a high temperature. When I went back on to the ice, I thought I won't go to Europeans."

Volchkova said: "I was really angry at myself after the Qualifying. You have to skate well at the European Championships. I wanted to give everything. I was sick for one week and couldn't skate at all. This was one and a half weeks before I came here. I'm still feeling this of course."

Vladimir Kotin, one of Butyrskaya's coaches, said: "Maria made a mistake in the air, with the elbow. It's an unusual mistake for her. I guess it happened because she was nervous. She did really well in practice."

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Ice Dance

The conclusion of the Dance competition was an evening of high drama. First to skate of the top group were last year's silver medallists, Barbara Fusar-Poli & Maurizio Margaglio (ITA), the overnight leaders. They gave a powerful and dramatic performance of their Romeo & Juliet program, showing deep edges, fast turns and spins, passion and power. It earned one 5.9 and six 5.8s for technical merit and six 5.9s and three 5.8s for presentation. The Italians went backstage to wait to see how the other skaters would respond to their challenge.

Next on to the ice were Irina Lobacheva & Ilia Averbukh (RUS), in third place going into the Free Dance. Skating to Bach's Toccata and Fugue, the Russians' fast paced, whirling program showed difficult lifts and spins. It received seven 5.7s for technical merit and one 5.9 and seven 5.8s for presentation.

They were followed by the defending champions Marina Anissina & Gwendal Peizerat (FRA), skating to an arrangement of Beethoven. They performed the program with characteristic flair, including this season's version of their trademark reverse lift (where Anissina lifts Peizerat) but in the last seconds of the program, their feet tangled during a step sequence and they fell heavily. They recovered immediately to finish the program but knew that the gold was lost. Their marks for technical merit (with a mandatory deduction for the fall) ranged from 5.2 to 5.6 but the judges gave them two 5.9s and five 5.8s for presentation.

So Fusar-Poli & Margaglio won the Free Dance, placed first by all nine judges. The judges were divided amongst the next couples but Lobacheva & Averbukh were second by a majority verdict, ahead of Anissina & Peizerat with Margarita Drobiazko & Povilas Vanagas (LTU), last year's bronze medallists, fourth.

In the final results, Fusar-Poli & Margaglio placed first to take the gold and become the first Italian dance couple ever to win an ISU Championship. Anissina & Peizerat took the silver, as they did in 1999. Lobacheva & Averbukh won their second European bronze medal (they also finished third in 1999).

"We felt very confident when we skated," said Margaglio. "The audience was absolutely crazy about us. It's like your life just crossing like in a movie. It's absolutely unbelievable. We are very proud tonight. This is sport and there are victories and mistakes. We did our best tonight and we deserved to win."

"We were well prepared, everything was going well and it was our best competition," said Peizerat. "We have to tell ourselves that these are not the Olympic Games. We lost it in the last ten seconds of the program. If that hadn't happened, we would have been European champions. We take a lot of risks. We always try to push our limits." Anissina added: "It was the first fall in the Free program and I think the last. We'll continue to work hard as we did before."

"We gave everything we had," said Averbukh. "We are glad because last year people said that Russia has lost its medal position in Ice Dancing. We are glad that we were able to come back. When we went out into the arena, we felt like gladiators. It was so loud and hectic out there."

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The European Championships conclude on Saturday with the Ladies' Free Program.

Results

Ladies

FPl.	Name	Nat.	Points	QA	QB	SP	FS
1	Irina SLUTSKAYA	RUS	0.4	1			
1	Maria BUTYRSKAYA	RUS	0.4		1		
3	Elena LIASHENKO	UKR	0.8	2			
3	Julia SOLDATOVA	BLR	0.8		2		
5	Sarah MEIER	SUI	1.2	3			
5	Sabina WOJTALA	POL	1.2		3		
7	Elina KETTUNEN	FIN	1.6	4			
7	Julia SEBESTYEN	HUN	1.6		4		
9	Viktoria VOLCHKOVA	RUS	2.0	5			
9	Galina MANIACHENKO	UKR	2.0		5		
11	Silvia FONTANA	ITA	2.4	6			
11	Vanessa GUSMEROLI	FRA	2.4		6		
13	Zoe JONES	GBR	2.8	7			
13	Tamara DOROFJEV	HUN	2.8		7		
15	Idora HEGEL	CRO	3.2	8			
15	Vanessa GIUNCHI	ITA	3.2		8		
17	Alisa DREI	FIN	3.6	9			
17	Susanne STADLMÜLLER	GER	3.6		9		
19	Julia VOROBIEVA	AZE	4.0	10			
19	Lenka SENIGLOVA	CZE	4.0		10		
21	Roxana LUCA	ROM	4.4	11			
21	Zuzana BABIAKOVA-PAUROVA	SVK	4.4		11		
23	Karen VENHUIZEN	NED	4.8	12			
23	Hristina VASSILEVA	BUL	4.8		12		
25	Darya ZURAVICKY	ISR	5.2	13			
25	Anna WENZEL	AUT	5.2		13		
27	Anja BRATEC	SLO	5.6	14			
27	Klara BRAMFELDT	SWE	5.6		14		
29	Kaja HANEVOLD	NOR	6.0	15			
29	Olga VASSILJEVA	EST	6.0		15		
31	Ellen MAREELS	BEL		16			
31	Melania ALBEA	ESP			16		
33	Julia SELEPEN	LTU		17			
33	Julia LEBEDEVA	ARM			17		
35	Anna CHATZIATHANASSIOU	GRE			18		

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Ice Dance

FPI.	Name	Nat.	Points	C1	C2	OD	FD
1	Barbara FUSAR POLI / Maurizio MARGAGLIO	ITA	2.2	2	1	1	1
2	Marina ANISSINA / Gwendal PEIZERAT	FRA	4.8	1	2	2	3
3	Irina LOBACHEVA / Ilia AVERBUKH	RUS	5.0	3	3	3	2
4	Margarita DROBIAZKO / Povilas VANAGAS	LTU	8.0	4	4	4	4
5	Galit CHAIT / Sergei SAKHNOVSKI	ISR	10.0	5	5	5	5
6	Kati WINKLER / Rene LOHSE	GER	12.0	6	6	6	6
7	Elena GRUSHINA / Ruslan GONCHAROV	UKR	14.2	7	8	7	7
8	Albena DENKOVA / Maxim STAVIYSKI	BUL	16.8	8	7	8	9
9	Tatiana NAVKA / Roman KOSTOMAROV	RUS	17.0	9	9	9	8
10	Isabelle DELOBEL / Olivier SCHOENFELDER	FRA	20.0	10	10	10	10
11	Sylwia NOWAK / Sebastian KOLASINSKI	POL	22.0	11	11	11	11
12	Marika HUMPHREYS / Vitaly BARANOV Eliane	GBR	25.0	13	13	13	12
13	HUGENTOBLER / Daniel HUGENTOBLER	SUI	25.0	12	12	12	13
14	Alia OUABDELSSELAM / Benjamin DELMAS	FRA	28.0	14	14	14	14
15	Gloria AGOGLIATI / Luciano MILO	ITA	30.0	15	15	15	15
16	Kristin FREIZER / Igor LUKANIN	AZE	33.6	17	18	16	17
17	Natalia GUDINA / Alexei BELETSKY	ISR	33.8	18	17	18	16
18	Zita GEBORA / Andras VISONTAI	HUN	34.6	16	16	17	18
19	Katarina KOVALOVA / David SZURMAN	CZE	38.2	20	19	19	19
20	Valentina ANSELMINI / Fabrizio PEDRAZZINI	ITA	40.4	21	21	20	20
21	Stephanie RAUER / Thomas RAUER	GER	41.8	19	22	21	21
22	Alexandra KAUC / Filip BERNADOWSKI	POL	45.6	22	20	22	24
23	Alla BEKNAZAROVA / Yuri KOCHERZHENKO	UKR	46.0	23	25	24	22
24	Zuzana DURKOVSKA / Marian MESAROS	SVK	46.2	24	23	23	23
25	Anna MOSENKOVA / Sergei SYCHOV	EST	25.2	27	24	25	
26	Tiffany HYDEN / Vazgen AZROJAN	ARM	25.8	25	26	26	
27	Alissa de CARBONNEL / Alexander MALKOV	BLR	26.8	26	27	27	
28	Kamilla SZOLNOKI / Dejan ILLES	CRO	28.0	28	28	28	
29	Tatiana SINIAVER / Tornike TUKVADZE	GEO	29.0	29	29	29	
30	Ana GALITCH / Andrei CHICHKOV	BIH	30.2	30	31	30	
31	Dominyka VALIUKEVICIUTE / Aurimas RADISAUSKAS	LTU	30.8	31	30	31	

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