

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: CHEMIN DE PRIMEROSE 2 - CH 1007 LAUSANNE - SWITZERLAND
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2001 World Figure Skating Championships, Vancouver Canada **Day One**

The 2001 ISU World Figure Skating Championships opened in Vancouver, Canada Monday with 208 skaters participating from 46 ISU Members.

Men

The Championships began with the Men's Qualifying Round, which counts for 20% of the skaters' final score. Thirty skaters (fifteen from each group) went through to compete in the Short Program.

Takeshi Honda (JPN) was the winner of the first Qualifying Group. His program, set to Concerto de Aranjuez by Rodrigo, was not perfect but included a quadruple toeloop, and four more triples. His marks went up to 5.7 for technical merit and up to 5.8 for presentation, with four Judges placing Honda first. "I was so scared going in and then I missed the first three jumps. But after that I just told myself to take my time, use the techniques and just do it," Honda said.

Canada's Elvis Stojko placed second. Competing for the first time this season, Stojko fought throughout after a shaky start. He landed five clean triples in his Gladiator program but couldn't hold the landings of his two quadruple jump attempts. He received marks up to 5.6 for technical merit and 5.8 for presentation, earning three first places from the Judges. Stojko said: "I felt I gave a good performance, it really is a warm up. I feel confident. I am where I want to be at this stage".

French champion Stanick Jeannette did not attempt a quadruple jump. He nonetheless placed third with a well-choreographed program that included his trademark original spins and five triple jumps. A four to three majority verdict from the Judges placed him ahead of Canada's Emanuel Sandhu, who finished fourth in this Group.

Two time European champion Evgeni Plushenko of Russia triumphed in the much stronger second Qualifying Group, skating to his Free Program from last season, set to Russian folk music. The Russian produced a triple Axel-triple toeloop combination, triple lutz-triple toe and four more triples, but he fell on his opening quadruple toeloop. He earned marks ranging from 5.6 to 5.8 for technical merit and 5.7 to 5.9 for presentation with six first place ordinals. "It was not very good nor bad" said Plushenko, who plans to be the first skater to perform a different Free Program for the Qualifying Round and the final Free Program. "It was the idea of my coach", explained Plushenko.

1996 world champion, Todd Eldredge (USA), placed second, skating his new Free Program set to the soundtrack of "1492 Conquest of Paradise". Coming back from the ankle injury that kept him out of the Grand Prix Final, Eldredge delivered a strong performance that featured eight clean triples, including a triple Axel-triple toeloop combination and excellent spins. His marks were 5.6

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across the board for technical merit and ranged from 5.7 to 5.8 for presentation with four Judges placing him ahead of his teammate, Timothy Goebel.

Goebel also put in a solid performance, to finish third in this Group. Goebel landed a quadruple salchow-triple toeloop combination, a quadruple toeloop as well as six more triple jumps with marks from 5.7 to 5.8 for technical merit and 5.5 to 5.7 for presentation. Russia's Alexander Abt was fourth.

The biggest shock of the day was the performance of three time world champion Alexei Yagudin. It was clear from the beginning of Yagudin's program, also set Gladiator, that the defending champion was in trouble. He fell heavily on his opening quadruple toeloop and struggled throughout his program, only landing three clean triples and falling again on a flying spin. His coach, Tatiana Tarasova, revealed afterwards that Yagudin was suffering from an injury he sustained to his right foot three days ago while jogging.

"He skated in pain through yesterday's practice, and today it became worse," said Tarasova. "I was afraid that he wouldn't be able to skate at all." The foot was x-rayed after the competition. As Tarasova explained, the x-ray showed accumulation of fluid in between the bones of the right foot. Yagudin got a painkiller shot and will decide tomorrow if he competes in the Short Program.

A total of eight clean quadruple jumps were landed in the Qualifying Round. In Group B (first to skate), Yamato Tamura (JPN) landed a quadruple toeloop/ triple toeloop combination, Min Zhang (CHN) landed a quadruple toeloop, Chengjiang Li (CHN) a quadruple salchow/double toeloop and Takeshi Honda a quadruple toeloop. In Group A, Timothy Goebel (USA) landed a quadruple salchow/ triple toeloop combination and a quadruple toeloop, Yunfei Li (CHN) a quadruple toeloop/triple toeloop and Vitali Danilchenko a quadruple toeloop.

Pairs

Former world champions Elena Bereznaya & Anton Sikharulidze won the Short Program to take the lead in a close Pairs competition. They performed all the required elements cleanly including side by side triple toeloops, a very high double twist and perfect throw triple loop. Their marks included one 5.9 for required elements, six more 5.9s for presentation and first places from all nine judges.

"Tonight was probably our best short program this season," said a delighted Sikharulidze. "We hope to skate on the same level in the Free Program."

Second in the Short were two time world silver medallists Xue Shen & Hongbo Zhao (CHN). They too skated a clean program, also featuring triple toeloops and a throw triple loop. They were rewarded with four 5.8s for required elements and another two for presentation.

Shen said: "We are both not fully recovered from our ankle injuries." Zhao added: "We feel we are improving with each performance but we still didn't manage the complete breakthrough."

Four Continents champions and Grand Prix final winners Jamie Sale & David Pelletier (CAN) placed third. Sale fell on their opening side by side triple toeloop but they recovered immediately,

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roared on by the home crowd, and skated the remaining elements cleanly. They received three 5.9s and six 5.8s for presentation but it was not quite enough to beat the Chinese couple. The judges split five to four in favour of the Chinese.

“The audience is a bit overwhelming. There are so many people here!” said Sale. “Everything except the toe felt very, very good.” Pelletier added: “When you get on the ice and you have all those people behind you, it’s hard to describe – I love it.”

Defending champions Maria Petrova & Alexei Tikhonov (RUS) were the last couple to skate. They too produced a quality performance, performing all the required elements, but had to settle for fourth place going into Wednesday’s Free Program.

The Championships continue Tuesday with the Compulsory Dances and the Men’s Short Program competition.

Results

Men

FPL.	Name	Nat.	Points	QB	QA	SP	FS
1	Takeshi HONDA	JPN	0.4	1			
1	Evgeni PLUSHENKO	RUS	0.4		1		
3	Todd ELDREDGE	USA	0.8		2		
3	Elvis STOJKO	CAN	0.8	2			
5	Timothy GOEBEL	USA	1.2		3		
5	Stanick JEANNETTE	FRA	1.2	3			
7	Alexander ABT	RUS	1.6		4		
7	Emanuel SANDHU	CAN	1.6	4			
9	Yamato TAMURA	JPN	2.0	5			
9	Alexei YAGUDIN	RUS	2.0		5		
11	Yunfei LI	CHN	2.4		6		
11	Min ZHANG	CHN	2.4	6			
13	Ivan DINEV	BUL	2.8		7		
13	Sergei RYLOV	AZE	2.8	7			
15	Chengjiang LI	CHN	3.2	8			
15	Patrick MEIER	SUI	3.2		8		
17	Vitali DANILCHENKO	UKR	3.6		9		
17	Stefan LINDEMANN	GER	3.6	9			
19	Dmitri DMITRENKO	UKR	4.0		10		
19	Anthony LIU	AUS	4.0	10			
21	Gheorghe CHIPER	ROM	4.4		11		
21	Vakhtang MURVANIDZE	GEO	4.4	11			
23	Sergei DAVYDOV	BLR	4.8	12			

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23	Angelo DOLFINI	ITA	4.8		12		
25	Vincent RESTENCOURT	FRA	5.2		13		
25	Roman SKORNIAKOV	UZB	5.2	13			
27	Markus LEMINEN	FIN	5.6	14			
27	Neil WILSON	GBR	5.6		14		
29	Robert KAZIMIR	SVK	6.0	15			
29	Gregor URBAS	SLO	6.0		15		
31	Kristoffer BERTSSON	SWE	6.4	16			
31	Alexei KOZLOV	EST	6.4		16		
33	Michael SHMERKIN	ISR	6.8	17			
33	Kevin van der PERREN	BEL	6.8		17		
35	Konstantin KOSTIN	LAT	7.2		18		
35	Zoltan TOTH	HUN	7.2	18			
37	Gareth ECHARDT	RSA	7.6	19			
37	Juri LITVINOV	KAZ	7.6		19		
39	Yon GARCIA	ESP	8.0		20		
39	Mauricio MEDELLIN	MEX	8.0	20			
41	Ricky COCKERILL	NZL	8.4		21		
41	Milos MILANOVIC	YUG	8.4	21			
43	Panagiotis MARKOUIZOS	ISU	8.8		22		
R	Kyu-Hyun LEE	KOR					

Pairs

FPL.	Name	Nat.	Points	SP	FS
1	Elena BEREZHAY / Anton SIKHARULIDZE	RUS	0.5	1	
2	Xue SHEN / Hongbo ZHAO	CHN	1.0	2	
3	Jamie SALE / David PELLETIER	CAN	1.5	3	
4	Maria PETROVA / Alexei TIKHONOV	RUS	2.0	4	
5	Dorota ZAGORSKA / Mariusz SIUDEK	POL	2.5	5	
6	Kyoko INA / John ZIMMERMAN	USA	3.0	6	
7	Sarah ABITBOL / Stephane BERNADIS	FRA	3.5	7	
8	Tatiana TOTMIANINA / Maxim MARININ	RUS	4.0	8	
9	Tiffany SCOTT / Philip DULEBOHN	USA	4.5	9	
10	Qing PANG / Jian TONG	CHN	5.0	10	
11	Inga RODIONOVA / Andrei KROUKOV	AZE	5.5	11	
12	Aliona SAVCHENKO / Stanislav MOROZOV	UKR	6.0	12	
13	Katerina BERANKOVA / Otto DLABOLA	CZE	6.5	13	
14	Kristy SARGEANT-WIRTZ / Kris WIRTZ	CAN	7.0	14	
15	Yuko KAWAGUCHI / Alexander MARKUNTSOV	JPN	7.5	15	
16	Mariana KAUTZ / Norman JESCHKE	GER	8.0	16	

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17	Sabrina LEFRANCOIS / Jerome BLANCHARD	FRA	8.5	17	
18	Natalia PONOMAREVA / Evgeni SVIRIDOV	UZB	9.0	18	
19	Viktoria SHKLOVER / Valdis MINTALS	EST	9.5	19	
20	Maria KRASILTSEVA / Artem ZNACHKOV	ARM	10.0	20	
21	Jelena SIROKHVATOVA / Jurijs SALMANOV	LAT	10.5	21	
22	Olga BESTANDIGOVA / Jozef BESTANDIG	SVK	11.0	22	
23	Michela COBISI / Ruben DE PRA	ITA	11.5	23	
24	Ivana DURIN / Andrei MAXIMOV	YUG	12.0	24	

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