

# 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 Three**

The 2001 World Figure Skating Championships continued in Vancouver, Canada, Wednesday with the Pairs Free Program and the Ladies Qualifying Round.

### **Pairs**

The first medals of the 2001 World Championships were awarded at the conclusion of a thrilling Pairs competition of the highest quality skating.

European champions Elena Berezhnaya & Anton Sikharulidze (RUS), in first place after the Short, were first of the top group to take the ice. At the opening of their entertaining Charlie Chaplin program, they nailed side by side triple toeloops, and a double axel/double toeloop combination. A high triple twist followed but the landing was slightly marred. Their touching performance also featured flowing spirals linked with innovative lifts and steps performed with characteristic speed, good side by side spins, a throw triple salchow and a huge throw triple loop - but Berezhnaya slightly faltered on the landing. Their marks ranged from 5.6 to 5.9 for technical merit and six 5.9s and three 5.8s for presentation. They knew they were on the podium but had to wait and see what their competitors would do.

Next to skate were Four Continents Champions and Grand Prix winners Jamie Sale/David Pelletier (CAN), in third place coming into the Free. Skating to Richard Wagner's Tristan and Isolde Fantasy, they began with a spectacular throw triple loop, followed by perfect side by side triple toeloops and a high triple twist. They mesmerized the capacity crowd, weaving their elements seamlessly into a beautiful performance. Their only error came when Sale singled the Axel in their planned double axel/double toeloop sequence. After that, they were flawless, performing spectacular lifts with daring dismounts and the crowd responded with a standing ovation. The marks ranged from 5.6 to 5.9 for technical merit and eight 5.9s for presentation. By a majority of six judges to three, the Canadians had beaten the Russians.

But the competition was not over. The last pair to skate, Xue Shen & Hongbo Zhao (CHN), second in the Short, could still take gold if they won the Free. Skating to Xin's Spirit of Spring, they began with side by side double axels/triple toeloop sequence followed by triple toeloops. A high triple twist and spectacular throw triple loop and throw triple salchow followed in another performance of the highest quality Pairs skating. The only small mistake came when Shen was slightly off balance on the dismount of the final lift. The judges gave them five 5.9s and four 5.8s for technical merit - the best technical marks of the night - but it was not quite enough. Their presentation marks ranged from 5.5 - 5.7. All nine judges placed them third.

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So Sale & Pelletier, fourth last year, won the gold medal in only their second World Championships together. Berezhnaya & Sikharulidze, champions in 1998 and 1999, had to settle for the silver. Shen & Zhao, silver medallists for the last two seasons, took the bronze. Defending champions Maria Petrova & Alexei Tikhonov (RUS) placed fifth in the Free but finished fourth overall. Last year's bronze medallists, Sarah Abitbol & Stephane Bernadis (FRA), withdrew after Bernadis suffered an abdominal muscle tear as the couple finished seventh in the Short.

"I knew it was going to be a good night," said Sale. "Everyone was laying down strong programs and that makes it special." Pelletier added: "Tonight we skated for ourselves. You want to win when everyone skates great, that makes it more special."

"We were second, not last," said Sikharulidze. "It was a great Pairs competition. It's very difficult to say what kind of program we will have next season. If we keep this program, it can grow too."

"We skated very well in spite of the pressure of skating last," said Zhao. "We managed to cope with the pressure but we were still not able convince the judges. This is our third Worlds medal and it's probably the most emotional one. When we finished, we knew that our performance was the most demanding technically."

## **Ladies**

The first Qualifying Group skated in the morning session with the second competing in the evening after the Pairs Free skating.

European champion and 2000 world silver medallist Irina Slutskaya (RUS) won the morning Group. She produced a confident performance of her Don Quixote program, landing five triples including an unusual triple salchow/double loop/double toeloop combination. Her marks included two 5.8s for technical merit and one 5.9 and four 5.8s for presentation. Teammate Viktoria Volchkova, three time European bronze medallist, placed second with a reworked version of this season's program that included six clean triples. 1997 world bronze medallist Vanessa Gusmeroli (FRA) was third. After the Europeans in Bratislava, she decided to revert to last season's Legends of the Fall program with which she had placed fourth in the 2000 World Championships.

"I did what I wanted to do," said Slutskaya. "This year I'm in the weaker Group, it's like justice for having had to skate in the harder Group last year." Asked about the rivalry with Michelle Kwan (USA) she said: "We are competitors on the ice but off the ice we are friends. Of course the competition with her is pushing me. I love to compete with Michelle."

Kwan was the equally convincing winner of the second Group but her victory came after minutes of high drama. During the warm-up, the right heel of her skate separated from the boot. After she came off the ice, her father and others worked frantically to repair it in time for her to skate. The repair was finished just two skaters before Kwan was due to compete. But she proved unfazed by the situation and produced a fine performance that featured seven clean triples, including a triple toeloop/triple toeloop combination. The judges gave her four 5.8s and three 5.7s for technical merit and a clean swsweep of 5.8s for presentation.

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Teammate Sarah Hughes, fifth last year, placed second with her version of Don Quixote that included six triples. Four Continents silver medallist Angela Nikodinov placed third to complete an excellent day for the USA ladies. Former world champion and last year's bronze medallist Maria Butryskaya popped a lutz and two-footed a loop to place fourth.

"I felt really good out there," said Kwan. "I had a skate problem. It was important for me to have enough time, which I did fortunately, to adjust it. I just let everyone else handle it. I went backstage and stayed focused while they worked on my skate. I put it on and it felt fine. Tomorrow I have a day off and I will be able get my skate all squared away."

The Championships continue Thursday with the Original Dance and the Men's Free Program.

## Results

### Pairs

FPL.	Name	Nat.	Points	SP	FS
1	<a href="#">Jamie SALE / David PELLETIER</a>	CAN	2.5	3	1
2	<a href="#">Elena BEREZHAYA / Anton SIKHARULIDZE</a>	RUS	2.5	1	2
3	<a href="#">Xue SHEN / Hongbo ZHAO</a>	CHN	4.0	2	3
4	<a href="#">Maria PETROVA / Alexei TIKHONOV</a>	RUS	7.0	4	5
5	<a href="#">Tatiana TOTMIANINA / Maxim MARININ</a>	RUS	8.0	8	4
6	<a href="#">Dorota ZAGORSKA / Mariusz SIUDEK</a>	POL	8.5	5	6
7	<a href="#">Kyoko INA / John ZIMMERMAN</a>	USA	10.0	6	7
8	<a href="#">Kristy SARGEANT-WIRTZ / Kris WIRTZ</a>	CAN	15.0	14	8
9	<a href="#">Aliona SAVCHENKO / Stanislav MOROZOV</a>	UKR	15.0	12	9
10	<a href="#">Qing PANG / Jian TONG</a>	CHN	15.0	10	10
11	<a href="#">Tiffany SCOTT / Philip DULEBOHN</a>	USA	16.5	9	12
12	<a href="#">Katerina BERANKOVA / Otto DLABOLA</a>	CZE	17.5	13	11
13	<a href="#">Inga RODIONOVA / Andrei KROUKOV</a>	AZE	20.5	11	15
14	<a href="#">Sabrina LEFRANCOIS / Jerome BLANCHARD</a>	FRA	21.5	17	13
15	<a href="#">Yuko KAWAGUCHI / Alexander MARKUNTSOV</a>	JPN	21.5	15	14
16	<a href="#">Mariana KAUTZ / Norman JESCHKE</a>	GER	24.0	16	16
17	<a href="#">Natalia PONOMAREVA / Evgeni SVIRIDOV</a>	UZB	26.0	18	17
18	<a href="#">Viktoria SHKLOVER / Valdis MINTALS</a>	EST	27.5	19	18
19	<a href="#">Maria KRASILTSEVA / Artem ZNACHKOV</a>	ARM	29.0	20	19
R	<a href="#">Sarah ABITBOL / Stephane BERNADIS</a>	FRA		7	
21	<a href="#">Jelena SIROKHAVATOVA / Jurijs SALMANOV</a>	LAT		21	
22	<a href="#">Olga BESTANDIGOVA / Jozef BESTANDIG</a>	SVK		22	
23	<a href="#">Michela COBISI / Ruben DE PRA</a>	ITA		23	
24	<a href="#">Ivana DURIN / Andrei MAXIMOV</a>	YUG		24	

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## Ladies

FPL.	Name	Nat.	Points	QB	QA	SP	FS
1	<a href="#">Michelle KWAN</a>	USA	0.4		1		
1	<a href="#">Irina SLUTSKAYA</a>	RUS	0.4	1			
3	<a href="#">Sarah HUGHES</a>	USA	0.8		2		
3	<a href="#">Viktoria VOLCHKOVA</a>	RUS	0.8	2			
5	<a href="#">Vanessa GUSMEROLI</a>	FRA	1.2	3			
5	<a href="#">Angela NIKODINOV</a>	USA	1.2		3		
7	<a href="#">Maria BUTYRSKAYA</a>	RUS	1.6		4		
7	<a href="#">Silvia FONTANA</a>	ITA	1.6	4			
9	<a href="#">Elena LIASHENKO</a>	UKR	2.0	5			
9	<a href="#">Fumie SUGURI</a>	JPN	2.0		5		
11	<a href="#">Laetitia HUBERT</a>	FRA	2.4	6			
11	<a href="#">Tatiana MALININA</a>	UZB	2.4		6		
13	<a href="#">Elina KETTUNEN</a>	FIN	2.8		7		
13	<a href="#">Jennifer ROBINSON</a>	CAN	2.8	7			
15	<a href="#">Tamara DOROFJEV</a>	HUN	3.2	8			
15	<a href="#">Mikkeline KIERKGAARD</a>	DEN	3.2		8		
17	<a href="#">Bit-Na PARK</a>	KOR	3.6	9			
17	<a href="#">Julia SEBESTYEN</a>	HUN	3.6		9		
19	<a href="#">Sarah MEIER</a>	SUI	4.0	10			
19	<a href="#">Julia SOLDATOVA</a>	BLR	4.0		10		
21	<a href="#">Zuzana BABIAKOVA</a>	SVK	4.4	11			
21	<a href="#">Susanne STADLMÜLLER</a>	GER	4.4		11		
23	<a href="#">Idora HEGEL</a>	CRO	4.8	12			
23	<a href="#">Hristina VASSILEVA</a>	BUL	4.8		12		
25	<a href="#">Annie BELLEMARE</a>	CAN	5.2	13			
25	<a href="#">Carina CHEN</a>	TPE	5.2		13		
27	<a href="#">Roxana LUCA</a>	ROM	5.6		14		
27	<a href="#">Karen VENHUIZEN</a>	NED	5.6	14			
29	<a href="#">Marta ANDRADE</a>	ESP	6.0		15		
29	<a href="#">Siyin SUN</a>	CHN	6.0	15			
31	<a href="#">Zoe JONES</a>	GBR	6.4	16			
31	<a href="#">Galina MANIACHENKO</a>	UKR	6.4		16		
33	<a href="#">Natalie HOSTE</a>	BEL	6.8	17			
33	<a href="#">Lenka SENIGLOVA</a>	CZE	6.8		17		
35	<a href="#">Anna WENZEL</a>	AUT	7.2		18		
35	<a href="#">Sabina WOJTLA</a>	POL	7.2	18			

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37	<a href="#">Georgina PAPAVALOUL</a>	ISU	7.6		19		
37	<a href="#">Stephanie ZHANG</a>	AUS	7.6	19			
39	<a href="#">Shirene HUMAN</a>	RSA	8.0		20		
39	<a href="#">Marina KHALTURINA</a>	KAZ	8.0	20			
41	<a href="#">Dirke O'Brien BAKER</a>	NZL	8.4		21		
41	<a href="#">Olga VASSILJEVA</a>	EST	8.4	21			
43	<a href="#">Rocio SALAS VISUET</a>	MEX	8.8		22		
43	<a href="#">Julia VOROBIEVA</a>	AZE	8.8	22			
45	<a href="#">Christine LEE</a>	HKG	9.2		23		
45	<a href="#">Darva ZURAVICKY</a>	ISR	9.2	23			
47	<a href="#">Ksenia JASTSENJSKI</a>	YUG	9.6	24			

**For Further information contact:**

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