

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 Five**

The 2001 World Figure Skating Championships continued in Vancouver, Canada, with the Ladies Short Program and the conclusion of the Ice Dance competition.

Ladies

The Ladies event featured tough competition and a very high level of skating.

Defending champion, Michelle Kwan (USA), winner of Qualifying Group A, was first to skate in the top group. She started her new lyrical Short Program set to "East of Eden", with a double Axel, followed by a triple lutz/double toeloop combination, but just touched down with one foot on the landing of the lutz. Kwan performed her program with her typical grace, flowing through her elements including a triple flip and a well-centered combination spin, and finishing with her spectacular spiral sequence that won a standing ovation. Her marks went up to 5.8 for required elements and included three 5.9s for presentation. Kwan said: "I felt really good out there. I was a little crooked in the triple Lutz. I was a bit nervous going in but turned my nervous energy into positive energy."

Next to skate was European champion and Grand Prix winner, Irina Slutskaya (RUS) in joint first place after Qualifying Group B. Skating to "Culture" by Chris Speeris, the Russian opened her upbeat program with a solid triple lutz/double loop combination and went on to complete all the required elements with confidence, including intricate spins, her trademark double Biellmann spin combination, and spirals that demonstrated her strong technique and flexibility. She too earned a standing ovation from the audience. The Judges rewarded Slutskaya with two 5.9s for required elements and one more for presentation. "I'm happy with my program, I did what I wanted to do. Today was just a warm up for tomorrow. Today was important too, but whoever wins the Free Program wins overall. I waited so long for this Championship to come", said a very determined Slutskaya.

Last of the group to take the ice was Four Continents silver medallist, Angela Nikodinov (USA), third in Kwan's Qualifying Group. At the start of her program, Nikodinov nailed a clean triple lutz/double toeloop combination and went on to perform her balletic routine with no error, including a triple flip, a beautiful layback spin and a double Axel. The Judges awarded Nikodinov with marks up to 5.7 for required elements and up to 5.8 for presentation. "Going into this, I've been training very well. I was focused on what I had to do," said Nikodinov. "I feel like a totally different person. I can't compare my skating this year to last year", she explained, with regard to the changes in her training under new coach ElenaTcherkasskaya.

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So Slutskaya won the Short program by a seven Judges to two majority verdict over Kwan. Nikodinov placed third, by just five Judges to four over teammate Sarah Hughes, who also skated an immaculate program. 1999 world champion Maria Butyrskaya was fifth and European bronze medallist Viktoria Volchkova (RUS) sixth.

Slutskaya leads the overall placings, ahead of Kwan and Nikodinov followed by Hughes, Volchkova and Butyrskaya. The stage is set for a fascinating showdown between the top six skaters in Saturday's Free Program.

Ice Dance

Defending champions Marina Anissina & Gwendal Peizerat (FRA), in second place going into the Free Dance, were the first of the top couples to skate. They gave an impassioned performance of their Beethoven program, showing great speed, deep edges and intricate choreography including this season's version of their unique reverse lift, where Anissina lifts Peizerat. The Judges gave them marks ranging from 5.6 to 5.8 for technical merit and seven 5.9s and two 5.8s for presentation.

Next onto the ice were European champions and Grand Prix winners Barbara Fusar-Poli & Maurizio Margaglio (ITA), in first place. They gave their best performance yet of their dramatic Romeo and Juliet program, showing excellent ice coverage as they executed the fast steps, twizzles and complex lifts. Their marks ranged from 5.6 to two 5.9s for technical merit and five 5.9s and four 5.8s for presentation. The Judges split and by the narrowest possible margin of five Judges to four, the Italians had beaten the French.

Irina Lobacheva & Ilia Averbukh (RUS) had never won a World Championships medal but finished fourth for the past three years. Coming into the Free Dance in third place, they knew they had their best ever chance to get on to the podium. They gave their all in their swirling Bach program, full of difficult steps, turns and lifts. Their marks ranged from 5.5 to 5.8 for technical merit and six 5.8s for presentation. Would it be enough to win a world medal at their eighth attempt?

Last to skate were Canadian champions Shae-Lynn Bourne & Victor Kraatz (CAN), fourth after the first two stages of the competition. The capacity crowd roared them through their Vangelis "March With Me" program, cheering every lift and the sequences of fast twizzles and their closing hydroblade move. They were given marks from 5.6 to 5.8 for technical merit and four 5.8s for presentation. Again the Judges had split five to four – here in favour of the Russians.

So Fusar-Poli & Margaglio won Italy's first ever World Championships gold medal. Anissina & Peizerat had to settle for the silver and Lobacheva & Averbukh took the bronze.

"This is a first for Italy," said Margaglio. "It was a good season from start to finish. I'm proud to be Italian, we have had such good support. No words can explain." Fusar-Poli added: "It's like a dream. It is a very big emotion to be first."

"It was probably the best we've done this program this season," said Peizerat. "Things that don't kill you make you stronger."

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Averbukh said: "I think everyone can understand how happy we are. It's our first world medal. We had four free dances last year, and it was too much. We are stronger than last year."

Results

Ladies

FPL.	Name	Nat.	Points	QB	QA	SP	FS
1	Irina SLUTSKAYA	RUS	1.0	1		1	
2	Michelle KWAN	USA	1.6		1	2	
3	Angela NIKODINOV	USA	3.0		3	3	
4	Sarah HUGHES	USA	3.2		2	4	
5	Viktoria VOLCHKOVA	RUS	4.4	2		6	
6	Maria BUTYRSKAYA	RUS	4.6		4	5	
7	Vanessa GUSMEROLI	FRA	6.0	3		8	
8	Fumie SUGURI	JPN	6.2		5	7	
9	Elena LIASHENKO	UKR	7.4	5		9	
10	Silvia FONTANA	ITA	7.6	4		10	
11	Elina KETTUNEN	FIN	10.0		7	12	
12	Sarah MEIER	SUI	10.6	10		11	
13	Tatiana MALININA	UZB	10.8		6	14	
14	Susanne STADLMÜLLER	GER	12.2		11	13	
15	Jennifer ROBINSON	CAN	12.4	7		16	
16	Julia SOLDATOVA	BLR	13.0		10	15	
17	Mikkeline KIERKGAARD	DEN	13.4		8	17	
18	Laetitia HUBERT	FRA	13.8	6		19	
19	Julia SEBESTYEN	HUN	14.4		9	18	
20	Tamara DOROFJEV	HUN	15.8	8		21	
21	Annie BELLEMARE	CAN	17.2	13		20	
22	Zuzana BABIAKOVA	SVK	17.6	11		22	
23	Bit-Na PARK	KOR	18.0	9		24	
24	Karen VENHUIZEN	NED	19.4	14		23	
25	Idora HEGEL	CRO	19.8	12		25	
26	Hristina VASSILEVA	BUL	21.0		12	27	
27	Roxana LUCA	ROM	21.2		14	26	
28	Siyin SUN	CHN	22.8	15		28	
29	Carina CHEN	TPE	23.2		13	30	
30	Marta ANDRADE	ESP	23.4		15	29	
31	Zoe JONES	GBR		16			
31	Galina MANIACHENKO	UKR			16		
33	Natalie HOSTE	BEL		17			
33	Lenka SENIGLOVA	CZE			17		

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35	Sabina WOJTALA	POL		18			
35	Anna WENZEL	AUT			18		
37	Stephanie ZHANG	AUS		19			
37	Georgina PAPAVALO	ISU			19		
39	Marina KHALTURINA	KAZ		20			
39	Shirene HUMAN	RSA			20		
41	Olga VASSILJEVA	EST		21			
41	Dirke O'Brien BAKER	NZL			21		
43	Julia VOROBIEVA	AZE		22			
43	Rocio SALAS VISUET	MEX			22		
45	Darya ZURAVICKY	ISR		23			
45	Christine LEE	HKG			23		
47	Ksenia JASTSENJSKI	YUG		24			

Ice Dance

FPI.	Name	Nat.	Points	1B	2B	1A	2A	OD	FD
1	Barbara FUSAR POLI / Maurizio MARGAGLIO	ITA	2.0	1	1			1	1
2	Marina ANISSINA / Gwendal PEIZERAT	FRA	3.6			1	1	2	2
3	Irina LOBACHEVA / Ilia AVERBUKH	RUS	5.8	3	2			3	3
4	Shae-Lynn BOURNE / Victor KRAATZ	CAN	7.4	2	3			4	4
5	Margarita DROBIAZKO / Povilas VANAGAS	LTU	8.8			2	2	5	5
6	Galit CHAIT / Sergei SAKHNOVSKI	ISR	10.8			3	3	6	6
7	Kati WINKLER / Rene LOHSE	GER	12.8	4	4			7	7
8	Elena GRUSHINA / Ruslan GONCHAROV	UKR	14.4			4	4	8	8
9	Naomi LANG / Peter TCHERNYSHEV	USA	16.4	5	5			9	9
10	Albena DENKOVA / Maxim STAVIYSKI	BUL	18.0			5	5	10	10
11	Marie-France DUBREUIL / Patrice LAUZON	CAN	20.0	6	6			11	11
12	Tatiana NAVKA / Roman KOSTOMAROV	RUS	21.8			7	6	12	12
13	Isabelle DELOBEL / Olivier SCHOENFELDER	FRA	24.0			8	8	13	13
14	Sylwia NOWAK / Sebastian KOLASINSKI	POL	25.0			6	7	14	14
15	Eliane HUGENTOBLER / Daniel HUGENTOBLER	SUI	26.8	7	7			15	15
16	Marika HUMPHREYS / Vitali BARANOV	GBR	29.2			9	9	16	16
17	Tanith BELBIN / Benjamin AGOSTO	USA	30.6	8	9			17	17
18	Magali SAURI / Michail STIFUNIN	FRA	32.2	9	8			18	18
19	Kristin FRASER / Igor LUKANIN	AZE	35.0	10	10			20	19
20	Agata BLAZOWSKA / Marcin KOZUBEK	POL	35.6			11	10	19	20
21	Gloria AGOGLIATI / Luciano MILO	ITA	37.8			10	11	21	21
22	Zita GEBORA / Andras VISONTAI	HUN	41.0			13	13	23	22
23	Katarina KOVALOVA / David SZURMAN	CZE	42.0	12	11			24	23
24	Nakako TSUZUKI / Rinat FARKHOUTDINOV	JPN	42.0			12	12	22	24
25	Natalia GUDINA / Alexei BELETSKI	ISR		11	13			25	

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26	Valentina ANSELMINI / Fabrizio PEDRAZZINI	ITA		14	14			26	
27	Stephanie RAUER / Thomas RAUER	GER		16	12			27	
28	Weina ZHANG / Xianming CAO	CHN		13	15			28	
29	Anna MOSENKOVA / Sergei SYCHOV	EST				14	15	29	
30	Alissa de CARBONNEL / Alexander MALKOV	BLR				15	14	30	
31	Tae-Hwa YANG / Chuen-Gun LEE	KOR		15	16				
32	Portia DUVAL-RIGBY / Francis RIGBY	AUS				17	16		
32	Kamilla SZOLNOKI / Dejan ILLES	CRO				16	17		
34	Zuzana DURKOVSKA / Marian MESAROS	SVK		17	17				
35	Ana GALITCH / Andrei SHISHKOV	BIH		18	18				

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