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March 2019



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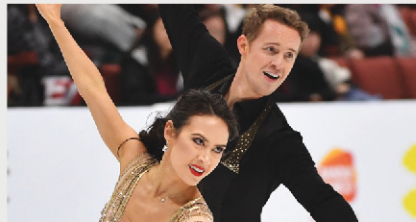
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## ON THE COVER

### JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

The 2019 GEICO U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Detroit will go down as one of the most exciting competitions in the event's storied history. New champions, record-breaking performances and an electric atmosphere at the new Little Caesars Arena all helped to create a memorable event. Celebrating their monumental achievement alongside the U.S. Championships Trophy are 2019 U.S. champions (l-r) Alysa Liu, ladies; Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue, ice dance; Ashley Cain and Timothy LeDuc, pairs; and Nathan Chen, men's. Event coverage begins on page 10.





## DETROIT DELIVERS A MEMORABLE U.S. CHAMPIONSHIPS

I knew five minutes after arriving at the Detroit Skating Club in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, that the 2019 GEICO U.S. Figure Skating Championships would be something special.

Before the juvenile free skate at 9:45 a.m. on the first day, I walked around the DSC to get the lay of the land. One of the first people I ran into was two-time U.S. ladies champion Alissa Czisny, wearing a volunteer jacket, and preparing to begin her shift with other enthusiastic and friendly DSC and Detroit Metro Skating Council member volunteers.

That spoke volumes to me about how this competition would go — that one of the sport's stars had volunteered to help manage practice ice.

Another U.S. skating great, five-time ice dance champion Jerod Swallow, served as local event director, managing Alissa and the rest of the volunteers and taking care of things behind the scenes at the juvenile, intermediate and novice events at DSC, and then later in the week at the junior and senior competitions held at the state-of-the-art Little Caesars Arena in downtown Detroit.

"The Detroit skating community came out in force to volunteer and contribute to the success of the event, and we had a great time," Swallow said. "I'm proud to say I'm from Detroit."

The competition was the last U.S. Championships for the lower-division skaters, as U.S. Figure Skating moves to a different competition structure next season. And they didn't disappoint.

"They knew that this would be their final time, so it was a celebration that we are concluding [the championships] and transitioning to a different structure for competition," Chief Referee Gale Tanger said. "I loved that energy and celebration part of that, and then moving forward and seeing all these new champions; it couldn't have been better."

The U.S. Championships ramped up at Little Caesars Arena, where the NHL Detroit Red Wings and NBA Detroit Pistons play. The new venue set the stage for an excellent fan experience, which included a 5,100-square-foot centerhung scoreboard that kept audiences informed, excited and entertained.

Each of the four skating disciplines provided its share of memorable moments, most notably, the record-breaking performances by 13-year-old Alysa Liu and three-time U.S. champion Nathan Chen.

Liu's free skate on Friday night was electric, moving and inspiring, as she became the youngest ladies champion in U.S. Figure Skating history.

Her performance undoubtedly encouraged many young girls across the country to go after their skating dreams, and it made Kris Smith, the director of the Detroit Sports

Commission, a "true fan."

"It was sold out last night. We were rocking and rolling," Smith said of the ladies free skate on championship Friday night. "The energy in this place — I have to tell you, I've been to other championships and I've really enjoyed those, but the energy here in this arena last night, and today so far, has been absolutely amazing.

"For somebody who is a casual fan of the sport, I'm loving it and I certainly can see why you have die-hard fans. When you do that in an arena like this, in a community like Detroit, you really start to create those new fans and you can definitely now count me as one of them — a true fan."

Chen followed up the exceptional ladies free skate with a performance for the ages. The 19-year-old from Salt Lake City produced one of the most technically and artistically brilliant performances in U.S. Figure Skating history.

His clean quads and artistry took skating to a new place on the final afternoon of the U.S. Championships.

Many other memorable performances were delivered in the Motor City over the 10-day event, and Tanger couldn't have been more proud of all the athletes, officials, volunteers and the host arena.

"I think being in a brand-new facility really adds a lot," she said. "There's great energy here. A post-Olympic year is just a wonderful year because it's a renewal of skating at all levels. The door is open to anybody, and they know that.

"The officials are excited to see what is developing during the next quadrennium as we approach the next Games. There's just great excitement with this particular year."

Smith wants to make sure U.S. Figure Skating doesn't wait another 25 years to return to the Motor City.

"Detroit is open for business," he said. "Figure skating is our sport, with the clubs and the Detroit Metro Skating Council here. Absolutely, anytime U.S. Figure Skating wants to come back to our community, the door is wide open."



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## ICE BREAKERS



### LAS VEGAS TO HOST 2019 SKATE AMERICA

World-class figure skaters and fans alike will be heading to Las Vegas in October. The entertainment capital of the world has been selected to host 2019 Skate America Oct. 18-20 at Orleans Arena. It will be the first of six stops in the ISU Grand Prix Series.

"We think this will be an outstanding destination for both American and international figure skating fans," U.S. Figure Skating Executive Director David Raith said.

The Orleans Arena is adjacent to the Orleans Hotel and Casino, and is a popular venue for sporting events,

concerts and other prominent performances.

"We're happy to welcome some of the world's greatest skaters to the destination, and look forward to showing the sport and its fans an amazing time," said Lisa Motley, director of sports marketing and special events for the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority.

A list of athletes selected to compete at 2019 Skate America will be announced in June, and tickets for the event will go on sale this spring.



### COUNTRY STAR DIERKS BENTLEY TAKES TO THE ICE TO ANNOUNCE NEW TOUR

Dierks Bentley announced his Burning Man Tour by taking to the ice in a dramatic video.

And it turns out he's got moves. Bentley dressed in a mesh shirt with a deep vee, so he was definitely on trend in skating. He shimmies, points at the camera, blows a kiss and gestures dramatically. Bentley is clearly a total-package figure skater.

Bentley's tour mates make appearances in the video, too: Tenille Townes in a skating dress, Jon Pardi in fringe and a cowboy hat, hanging on for dear life on the boards. Eventually, Pardi sips a beer while Bentley holds him in a one-handed lift.

Bentley is known to be an avid ice hockey player. Once he had to choose between playing a set at the Grand Ole Opry or playing with his local Nashville

team. One of his songs was used in commercials for the Stanley Cup playoffs.

Bentley wrote on Twitter that he studied a lot of Adam Rippon's programs and watched *Blades of Glory* for inspiration. He extended an invitation to the tour to Rippon, adding, "I will pack my skates, feathers and lace in case you want to have a skate-off."

Rippon replied, "I WOULD LOVE to come. I'll be studying all your performances in case you need me for a duet."

The winter leg of the tour — hence the "on ice" mention in the video — kicked off in Canada on Jan. 17, and tours to the U.S. in February and March.

Here's a look at Bentley's promotional video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08\\_p9hvHWZO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08_p9hvHWZO)

— Rachel Lutz





## HUBBELL AND DONOHUE, CHEN AND LIU WIN TEAM USA BEST OF DECEMBER, JANUARY AWARDS

Grand Prix Final champions Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue received the Team USA Best of December award from the U.S. Olympic Committee for their exceptional performance at the ISU Grand Prix Final in Vancouver, British Columbia, in early December.

Hubbell and Donohue achieved a season-best score of 205.35 in this first win — and medal — and kept Team USA's ice dance medal streak alive.

Nathan Chen and Alysa Liu received the male and female athlete Best of January award for their achievements at the 2019 GEICO U.S. Figure Skating Championships. Chen won his third consecutive U.S. title with an overall score of 342.22. Topping the field by more than 50 points, Chen set a record for the largest margin of victory at the U.S. Championships.

Liu set several records herself in Detroit. At 13 years old, she became the youngest lady to win the event as well as the only American woman to land two triple Axels in a single program, and the second in the world to land three in a competition.

The fan-voted Team USA award honors a male athlete, female athlete and team each month for outstanding performances in their respective sports.



## National #GetUpDay

FEBRUARY 1

The nation celebrated the third annual National Get Up Day on Feb. 1. Created by U.S. Figure Skating and recognized on the National Day Calendar, Get Up Day celebrates those who embody the Get Up spirit.

Using the tag #WeGetUp, U.S. Figure Skating encouraged skaters and athletes from all sports to share their support of the movement.

Since its creation in 2017, Get Up Day has gained a lot of traction, even getting picked up by a number of sports' national governing bodies. This year, USA Volleyball, USA Curling, USA Triathlon, USA Boxing and USA Swimming posted on Twitter in support of Get Up Day.

"The faster we get up, the faster we get back into play!" USA Volleyball posted.

U.S. Figure Skating members and well-known skaters alike also posted during the day, sharing their stories and offering support to others. U.S. bronze medalist Jason Brown wrote, "For everyone who refuses to stay down when life knocks them down ... TODAY'S FOR YOU!"

## AAC ELECTION CYCLE UNDERWAY

The 2019–20 Athletes Advisory Committee election cycle kicked off March 1, with phase 1 (intent to serve on the AAC) beginning on March 13.

All eligible athletes (see Article XXII of the U.S. Figure Skating bylaws) will have the opportunity to participate in one or more phases of the process. For those who believe they meet the definition but did not receive an email, contact Kathy Drevs at [kdrevs@usfigureskating.org](mailto:kdrevs@usfigureskating.org).



**The Detroit Skating Club helped to kick off the 2019 GEICO U.S. Figure Skating Championships, with 80 skaters participating in the opening ceremony at Little Caesars Arena. The opening ceremony featured a salute to all four of Detroit's professional sports teams: Detroit Tigers, Detroit Lions, Detroit Pistons and Detroit Red Wings, with music representing each of the teams. The event provided DSC skaters a chance to perform in front of a packed crowd prior to the start of the championship ladies short program. Rachel Bauld-Lee, Alexandra Aldridge and Peyton Lee produced the skating show. Coverage of the U.S. Championships begins on page 10.**



## GOOD MORNING, SUNSHINE!

Zoueva relocates International Skating Academy

BY MIMI MCKINNIS

World-renowned coach Marina Zoueva has left her home base of Canton, Michigan, and relocated the International Skating Academy, its students and staff, to Estero, Florida.

"It's something I've been thinking about for quite a long time," Zoueva said. "It sounds like I'm moving, but it's not just that. I relocated the whole International Academy. Everyone came with me. We looked at several rinks, but this one will provide our students with a really special experience."

Zoueva's new program celebrated its official opening day on Feb. 25 at Hertz Arena — a facility that boasts a 7,186-seat main arena and two smaller practice rinks. While the arena is less than 20 minutes from the Southwest Florida International Airport in Fort Myers, Florida, a location Zoueva notes is a draw for athletes and teams flying in for training, the rink was ultimately chosen for its close proximity to training facilities for a variety of other sports — all of which Zoueva plans to incorporate into her new program.

Marina Zoueva, music composer Alexander Goldstein, left, and coach Johnny Johns are excited about the International Skating Academy's new home in Florida.



"We're going to use all of these different sports to create stronger, healthier athletes," Zoueva said. "I'm looking forward. We're starting over to train for a new Olympics. By incorporating these sports, we're going to learn and train things like quicker footwork, better coordination and faster reaction times, and we can do it all outdoors. In my new program, I want our off-ice training to happen outside in the sun."

In addition to the International Skating Academy's existing staff and programming, which includes strength training, ballet, ballroom and modern dance, Zoueva will use the area's resources to incorporate elements of tennis, soccer, biking and kayaking into her training program, all of which she hopes will

work together to create more well-rounded athletes.

"For such a long time, we've been doing the same things over and over," Zoueva said. "I wanted to do this to add new ways of training to my program. Athletes show more improvement, faster improvement, with a new routine, and this facility has access to so many different ways to train. The most important thing to me is that my students are happy and healthy. Incorporating these new elements in the sunshine will be beneficial for everyone."

Joining Zoueva on her staff of coaches will be Johnny Johns, Ilya Tkachenko and Alper Ucar; Massimo Scali and Oleg Epstein will serve as part-time coaches.

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



Amy Webster Berg directs a power stroking lesson with a hockey player.

# GRACE AND GRATITUDE

Former ice dance competitor treasures life lessons, friendships skating brought



BY LOIS ELFMAN

When asked to reflect on her time as a competitive ice dancer, four-time U.S. senior medalist Amy Webster Berg often uses the word *gratitude*. She's grateful for the chance to skate with three great partners — John Millier, Leif Erickson and Ron Kravette. She's grateful for the opportunity to skate alongside her childhood skating idol, Dorothy Hamill, when she and Kravette toured with *Champions on Ice*. She's especially grateful for her family and has raised her sons to embrace gratitude in their lives.

Her skating journey began in Yarmouth, Maine, a small suburb of Portland. Transfixed by the figure skating at the 1976 Olympic Winter Games, Webster Berg decided she wanted to go beyond pond skating and venture into the town's newly opened ice arena.

"Marty MacDiarmid started the skating program, and I would spend every Saturday and Sunday attending family skating, which was like modern-day public skating for families," Webster Berg, 50, said. "As those of my age were the first skaters at this new rink, we made our way through the USFSA badge program with eager enthusiasm. ... I just loved the feeling of the wind blowing across my face. Going to the rink

was my absolute favorite thing to do. ... I was going to be Dorothy Hamill. It was all I thought about. I slept with my skates under my bed."

Her time at the rink grew, as did her competitive desires, and she came to realize her path to success would most likely come in ice dance. In March 1981, the World Figure Skating Championships were held in Hartford, Connecticut, and a group of skaters from Maine went to see what the upper echelons of skating looked like. They were so inspired that on the car ride home Webster Berg and Millier decided to try skating together. Since she had already

passed several levels of ice dance tests, their coach, Polly Hodgkins, asked her to take Millier through his pre-silver dances.

By 1983, they won novice dance at both the New England Regional and Eastern Sectional Championships. Hodgkins had started taking the young team for lessons with her former coach, Barret Brown, in Boston. After their successes, it was time for a change. Webster Berg is still amazed that her parents allowed her to move away from home the summer after eighth grade to train with Brown. Millier enrolled in college, and Webster Berg lived with a local

(l-r) Sam Berg, Andrew Berg, Connor Berg and Amy Webster Berg







Above, Amy Webster Berg with former ice dance partner Ron Kravette and the duo's coaches, Barret Brown and Tom Lescinski. Left, Amy Webster Berg and Ron Kravette compete at the 1995 U.S. Championships in Providence, Rhode Island.

family and began Wellesley High School in the fall.

The duo made their debut at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships in 1985, finishing seventh in junior dance. They won the bronze medal in junior dance in 1987 and Webster Berg felt satisfied enough to call it quits.

"During high school, we would skate from 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. I would go to Wellesley High School for my five classes from 9:30 to 2:10. Then, I came home to babysit for the family with whom I lived. Twice a week, we would go back to the rink facility for ballet from 5:30 to 7 p.m.," Webster Berg said.

"After being accepted to two of my favorite colleges, I decided third at nationals was good enough. I went off to Bowdoin College, played on the women's varsity hockey team, and enjoyed life as a freshman college student."

Just as the 1976 Olympics started her skating journey, the 1988 Olympic Winter Games rekindled her fire. By the end of May, she and Millier decided to team up again (they had previously passed their senior free dance), and she moved back to Boston to again train with Brown. Unfortunately, they didn't qualify for the 1989 U.S. Championships. Webster Berg teamed with Erickson, with whom she skated until 1992. In the spring of that year she called Kravette, and after a tryout he agreed to be her partner and relocate to Boston.

"I am especially thankful for having had the chance to skate with Ron, who had already achieved greater success than I when we started (two bronze medals with Suzy Semanick), but who never made me feel inferior," she said. "His

irrepressible spirit and inherent goodness taught me a lot about facing adversity and rising above it. He's one of the most innately kind human beings I have ever met. Skating with him was a pleasure."

Webster Berg had already started dating Sam Berg, now her husband of 22 years, before teaming with Kravette. She's grateful he supported her competitive desires. When she and Kravette retired from eligible competition in 1997 and had opportunities to tour and skate in pro competitions, Berg told her to live her dream. Her skating days concluded when she became pregnant with older son Andrew, now 19 and a student at Princeton University. He and his brother, Connor, 15, both played hockey, which Connor continues to do. Andrew is now active in rowing.

"Part of what I've been trying to teach my kids their whole lives is how important gratitude is — feeling it and expressing it," Webster Berg said. "It's always been sort of at the forefront of my mommying."

Education is a priority for Webster Berg. When she moved back to Boston in 1988 to resume training, she took a year off from school and then transferred to Wellesley College, from which she graduated. Due to training and competing, it took a bit longer than the traditional four years, but she attended and graduated from college while still a competitive athlete, as did Kravette.

Connections to ice and skating continue in Webster Berg's life. She lives in the Boston area and has been a power skating coach for 11 years — coaching hockey players every morning

from 6 to 8 at the same Babson rink where she trained as a teenager. In addition to the on-ice time, she interacts with parents, helps the young skaters choose teams, and writes prep school and college recommendation letters. Many of her students, whom she teaches in private or semi-private lessons, have gone on to play at the college and pro levels.

Webster Berg and Kravette remain bonded with their coaches, Brown and Tom Lescinski. She delights in their enduring friendship. Brown has a master's degree in psychology, and Lescinski has master's degrees in sports counseling and counseling psychology, and in addition to on- and off-ice training, the ice dancers spent time having meetings centered on effective communication.

"I feel Barret and Tom are fully responsible for Ron and I being able to walk away from our sport [feeling positive]," Webster Berg said. "Because of our training and the way our coaches valued the whole person, we were able to leave without feeling jaded, sad or regretful."

The four of them still get together regularly for birthdays, special occasions and skating viewing parties. They sat together at 2014 U.S. Championships and 2016 Worlds.

"How lucky are we that what we learned from those coaches all those years ago made such a lasting impression that we still choose to hang out together," she said.

Those communication lessons carry over to her marriage with Berg, vice president of worldwide sales for Cazena, Inc., a software start-up.

"I was fortunate in two ways: I had parents who set a really good example of loyalty and marriage. Then, communication was part of everyday training with Barret and Tom," she said.

"The lesson I learned from skating is fortitude, and that every day is not great and you have to push through. Things that are worth it are worth the effort."



# 'YOU CAN FEEL THE ENERGY'

Detroit welcomes back U.S. Championships in style



Ice dancers Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue display their coveted gold hardware after repeating as U.S. ice dance champions.



Nathan Chen celebrates his history-making performance.

BY TROY SCHWINDT

Bradie Tennell summed up what virtually every skater who took the ice at Little Caesars Arena in Detroit felt during the 2019 GEICO U.S. Figure Skating Championships.

"I love the fans, they are great," said Tennell, who finished as the silver medalist. "Their support for not just me but for the whole sport is wonderful. And when you are out there skating, you can feel the energy from them."

Detroit is known as a hotbed for both hockey and figure skating, so fans know what quality performances look like. The Detroit Metro Skating Council lists 27 clubs that have helped to produce many Olympic, World and national-level skaters over the years, including 1998 gold medalist Tara Lipinski.

But it had been 25 years since the city, which is in the midst of a major revival, last hosted the U.S. Championships, in 1994.

"Twenty-five years had been too long," Kris Smith, director of the Detroit Sports

Alysa Liu and her coach Laura Lipetsky are overjoyed upon hearing the skater's event-best free skate scores.







PHOTOS BY GREGORY SHANUS/GETTY IMAGES

**Ashley Cain, her partner Timothy LeDuc and Cain's coaches and parents, Darlene Cain and Peter Cain, experience an emotional moment after winning the U.S. pairs title.**

Commission, said. "We definitely want to make sure that members of U.S. Figure Skating don't forget about Detroit."

That's likely not going to happen.

On championship Friday night, the excitement inside the state-of-the-art arena in downtown Motor City reached a fever pitch as Alysa Liu took the ice. The 13-year-old dynamo from the Bay Area electrified the packed house by landing two triple Axels in a memorable gold medal-clinching performance. Liu's emotions played above the crowd on the world's largest centerhung scoreboard as NBC's cameras focused on her and her coach in the kiss and cry.

"We set out to change opinion about our city and we accomplished that," said Jerod Swallow, local event director and managing director of the Detroit Skating Club. "We also set out to create new history in Detroit for skating, and Alysa Liu did that for us. Thank you, Alysa!"

On the event's final day, it was Nathan Chen who took the sport to another level with his record-shattering free skate.

Ashley Cain and Timothy LeDuc delivered the most inspired performance, winning the pairs title just six weeks after Cain fell on her head at a competition in Croatia and suffered a concussion.

And Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue continued their upward trajectory by repeating as ice dance champions.

"I love coming back to Detroit," Chief Referee Gale Tanger said. "I was here in 1994, so to revisit Detroit at this particular point is really special to me, and to be working with Jerod Swallow is like frosting on the cake. Love the headquarters crew, love the staff in this arena. They are superb."

A total of 95,920 fans walked through the turnstiles at DSC and Little Caesars Arena, which is regarded as one of the county's premier entertainment and sports venues. It opened in September 2017.

More than 7 million people tuned in to NBCSN and NBC to watch coverage of the U.S. Championships, including more than 3 million for the ladies finals on NBC during primetime coverage on Friday, Jan. 25, recording a rating of 2.02, up slightly over primetime coverage of the ladies (Saturday night) in 2017 (1.97), the last non-Olympic year.

The competition also ramped up on social media, with a high volume of activity on all channels. The Utah Jazz tweeted out a good luck message to Nathan Chen, who wore his Jazz jersey to the press conference after the short program.

## U.S. WORLD AND WORLD JUNIOR TEAM SELECTIONS

### LADIES

#### 2019 World Championships

Mariah Bell  
 Bradie Tennell  
 Alternate 1 - Ting Cui  
 Alternate 2 - Megan Wessenberg  
 Alternate 3 - Starr Andrews

#### 2019 World Junior Championships

Ting Cui  
 Hanna Harrell  
 Alternate 1 - Starr Andrews  
 Alternate 2 - Gabriella Izzo  
 Alternate 3 - Audrey Shin

### MEN

#### 2019 World Championships

Jason Brown  
 Nathan Chen  
 Vincent Zhou  
 Alternate 1 - Tomoki Hiwatashi  
 Alternate 2 - Alex Krasnozhon  
 Alternate 3 - Timothy Dolensky

#### 2019 World Junior Championships

Tomoki Hiwatashi  
 Alex Krasnozhon  
 Camden Pulkinen  
 Alternate 1 - Ryan Dunk  
 Alternate 2 - Andrew Torgashev  
 Alternate 3 - Dinh Tran

### PAIRS

#### 2019 World Championships

Ashley Cain/Timothy LeDuc  
 Alternate 1 - Tarah Kayne/Danny O'Shea  
 Alternate 2 - Alexa Scimeca-Knierim/  
 Chris Knierim  
 Alternate 3 - Deanna Stellato/  
 Nathan Bartholomay

#### 2019 World Junior Championships

Sarah Feng/TJ Nyman  
 Kate Finster/Balazs Nagy  
 Laiken Lockley/Keenan Prochnow  
 Alternate 1 - Chelsea Liu/Ian Meyh  
 Alternate 2 - Grace Knoop/Blake Eisenach

### ICE DANCE

#### 2019 World Championships

Madison Chock/Evan Bates  
 Kaitlin Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker  
 Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue  
 Alternate 1 - Lorraine McNamara/  
 Quinn Carpenter  
 Alternate 2 - Christina Carreira/  
 Anthony Ponomarenko  
 Alternate 3 - Rachel Parsons/Michael Parsons

#### 2019 World Junior Championships

Caroline Green/Gordon Green  
 Eliana Gropman/Ian Somerville  
 Avonley Nguyen/Vadym Kolesnik  
 Alternate 1 - Oona Brown/Gage Brown  
 Alternate 2 - Jocelyn Haines/James Koszuta  
 Alternate 3 - Ella Ales/Daniel Tsarik



## SOAKING IT IN

Liu lands three triple Axels, steals show in Motor City; Tennell, Bell shine en route to silver, bronze medals

BY TROY SCHWINDT

In a matter of 24 hours, tiny Alysia Liu (St. Moritz ISC) went from being unknown outside of the skating world to becoming the youngest U.S. ladies champion and a guest on the “Today” show and on “The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon.”

Just 13 years old, the diminutive showstopper from Richmond, California, delivered two nearly flawless performances on back-to-back nights at the 2019 GEICO U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Detroit to emerge as U.S. Figure Skating’s new leading lady.

Her unprecedented three triple Axels in U.S. competition — one in the short program and two in the free skate — helped lift her past defending champion Bradie Tennell (Skokie Valley SC) and 2017 U.S. bronze medalist Mariah Bell (Rocky Mountain FSC), who each skated well but made one significant error in their free skate, opening the door for Liu.

On the Friday evening of the free skate, Liu captivated a huge crowd at Little Caesars Arena and a live TV audience on NBC with her joyous, magical skating and technically packed program to *The Witches of Eastwick* soundtrack by John Williams. She landed eight triple jumps — three in combination — and earned Level 4s on her three spins and footwork.

While Liu’s program components score fell well short of Tennell’s and Bell’s, her technical

**Alysia Liu dazzled the crowds and TV audience with her big jumps and dynamic skating, becoming the youngest U.S. ladies champion in history.**



PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



## SENIOR LADIES

package made the difference, with Liu posting an overall score of 217.51. Tennell, the short program leader but fourth in the free skate, garnered a score of 213.59 and the silver medal. Bell delivered the second-best free skate score and with 212.40 points overall, and earned the bronze medal.

While in the kiss and cry, Liu broke down in tears upon hearing her scores, her black gloves covering her face.

Laura Lipetsky, her coach since she was 5, held the young skater tight as the cameras closed in on the raw, emotional moment. Lipetsky, who considers Liu almost like a daughter, told her young skater before the performance to enjoy the moment.

"I told her to soak it in and enjoy the experience, because you can't return to this day," said Lipetsky, who coaches Liu at Oakland Ice Center in Oakland, California. "I always tell her to trust the training, trust the technique, treat it like a rehearsal and rely on the work we've put into it.

"I tell her it goes on autopilot. It's like studying for a test. If you are so well prepared for a test, you won't be as nervous."

Liu, who won the junior title in 2018 in San Jose, California, close to her hometown, displayed her priceless smile as she climbed up the few stairs to take her seat at the press conference. With Tennell on her right and Bell on her left, she peeked over the table and provided a glimpse of her competitive spirit and what she likes to do off the ice.

Liu had talked about winning as always being one of her goals. 1998 Olympic champion Tara Lipinski — and former youngest U.S. champion — even predicted that it could happen.

"After what Tara said, did you begin to believe that you could win here if you skated your best?" a reporter asked.

"Well, I did want to win obviously," Liu said. "I bet everyone else in this competition did, too. I didn't know that Tara said that because I don't really listen to the media while I'm focusing on a competition. I just really wanted to do my best once I got here."

When asked what she liked to do off the ice, the 4-foot-7 inch dynamo perked right up.

"I like to ride my bike a lot," she said with a smile. "Over the weekends, sometimes I go to my house in Antioch (California) with all of my siblings where I play video games, or I go to the park with them and ride my bike or play tag."

PHOTO BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



(l-r) Bradie Tennell, silver; Alysa Liu, gold; Mariah Bell, bronze; Hanna Harrell, pewter

While becoming the youngest champion in history, Liu isn't old enough to compete at major international competitions for another year, a fact that doesn't bother her.

"I'm not worried about not being able to go to Worlds or World Juniors, because I get more time to work on my jumps, skating skills and learn more before I compete against them (Russians) because they are very good," she said.

Two-time Olympian Mirai Nagasu, who was in a similar situation in 2008 when she won the U.S. title at age 14, provided analysis during the ladies event on the Bridgestone Ice Desk, and offered her thoughts to SKATING magazine.

"I have to stand with the ladies that I competed with (Tennell and Bell); that experience, you can't take that away from them," Nagasu said. "They really knew how to perform. But at the end of the day, they left the door open and Alysa just slipped in and technically beat them. That was what set her apart from the other two girls, but I really appreciated that the judges gave the components to Bradie and Mariah and the older skaters, because it takes experience to learn how to perform, especially with arenas all the way to the top.

"Especially in the short program; I thought Bradie really killed it. I was getting goose bumps from the way she performed. I think this competition was actually good for her because I think it gives her even more fire and motivation heading into Worlds and Four Continents. At the same time, you can't take anything away from Alysa. She did three triple Axels. That's really cool. It's great for

me to see because last year I was the only one (doing a triple Axel) and I felt a lot of pressure. Now coming into rinks and seeing all the girls attempting quads and triple Axels, this is what our country needs to go up against the other figure skating powerhouses in the world."

Tennell, who broke through last season to win the U.S. title and earn an Olympic berth, began with a beautiful and flawless short program including an opening triple Lutz-triple toe loop combination that garnered 12.04 points. Her three spins and footwork earned Level 4s as she posted a segment-best score of 76.60.

"I was super confident going into tonight," Tennell said. "I practiced really hard for this and I know I trained, and I love these programs that I have."

With Liu in second place 2.71 points back and Bell in third 6.30 points behind, Tennell took the ice for her free skate to a *Romeo and Juliet* medley. And while she performed the program with strong emotion while exhibiting exceptional skating skills, she made one major mistake when she fell midway through on the first jump of a planned triple Lutz-triple toe loop combination.

"Obviously, it wasn't my best skate," Tennell said. "I'm disappointed, but there's always something to be learned from skates like this, so I'm excited to get back home and work harder than ever to fix what I made mistakes on."

Jeremy Allen, who coaches Tennell in Buffalo Grove, Illinois, with Denise Myers, said Tennell has made progress this season, including at this competition.



## SENIOR LADIES



Bradie Tennell's improved artistry helped earn her the top score in the short program.

"Did things go like we wanted tonight?" he rhetorically asked. "Of course not, but that's part of the game. There are ups and downs and you have to roll with it.

"This year was about maintaining what she had jump-wise and adding the triple Lutz-triple loop to her long program, and also her main focus this year was her components score, which I think was a huge success. This is the time (early in the Olympic quadrennium) to push different areas of your skating that you want to work on and test out new things. Three years from now we'll see what happens."

Tennell's and Bell's finishes earned World Team berths, something Tennell is taking seriously as Team USA looks to regain three spots at future World Championships.

"That's a big goal, a big priority and a big responsibility to both of us, and one I'm honored to be tasked with," she said.

Bell, who placed fifth at the 2018 U.S. Championships, made a fierce charge to try to overtake Liu and Tennell with her sterling free skate to a soft piano medley by Ludovico Einaudi.

Her smooth skating — she posted the event's top components score — and strong tech-

nical skills put her on the brink of winning the crown, but a fall on a triple Lutz combination late in the program ultimately foiled that possibility.

Still, after that mistake, she rebounded nicely to land a triple flip and that same combination she had fallen on moments earlier.

"It wasn't my best performance and I obviously had one large mistake there," Bell said. "Other than the fall, I had a really great time."

Bell moved to California in 2016 to train under Olympic coach Rafael Artunian, and she hasn't looked back. "I'm going to make that 2022 Olympic Team," she has stated.

Since making the move, Bell's skating has improved as has her confidence to compete at the highest level. The 22-year-old has also grown off the ice, she said, although there have been some tough life lessons along the way.

After moving to California, Bell had to learn not only how to understand her coach and his style, but how to handle those things that come with living on one's own.

"There was one time not that long ago that I went to the post office with my rent check and utility check," Bell said. "I put them in the mailbox and started walking away when I realized that I hadn't put a stamp on the envelopes.

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

"I called my mom and she said find out when they pick up from that mailbox and be there and maybe the guy will let you take a look. So he came to the mailbox the next day at 5 p.m. and I sat there sifting through all the mail to find my two bills and put a stamp on them. So now I never forget a stamp. Those are the little things you never think about."

Bell moved to the West Coast with her boyfriend Romain Ponsart, a French figure skater. The day after the U.S. Championships, they moved to Irvine, California, where they'll train at the new Great Park Ice facility. Having him there, Bell said, has made the transition much easier.

"We are a good team," she said.

Hanna Harrell (Dallas FSC) and Ting Cui (Baltimore FSC) made a big splash in their senior debuts, with Harrell claiming the pewter medal and Cui placing third in the free skate.

"I thought it would be pretty similar (to the junior level) since it's in the same arena," Harrell said. "But to me it was completely different, and it was such a great experience. I was a little nervous at first, but the crowd was supportive and I felt confident in myself because I've been working hard, and knew I could do my jumps."

Cui, who was 12th after the short program, skated a clean free skate that included seven triple jumps.

**Skating last in the field of 18 ladies, Mariah Bell delivered a beautiful performance that locked up the bronze medal and a berth at Worlds.**





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**342.22!**

Chen shatters his own records, wins third title; Zhou, Brown cart home silver, bronze



JAY ADERF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

**BY MARISSA PEDERSON**

In two years, U.S. Figure Skating will celebrate its 100th anniversary as an organization. The sport's greatest moments and skaters will be celebrated during this historic milestone.

One man who is well on his way to being mentioned in the same breath as legends Dick Button, Brian Boitano and Scott Hamilton is 19-year-old Nathan Chen (Salt Lake Figure Skating), who absolutely crushed the competition at the 2019 GEICO U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Detroit.

The 2018 World champion, two-time and

reigning Grand Prix Final champion, three-time and reigning U.S. champion, and winner of the free skate at the 2018 Olympic Winter Games destroyed his own records at Little Caesars Arena.

His free skate score sheet looks like it can't possibly be correct, yet it is. His overall score of 342.22 provided for a record margin of victory of 58.21 points. Olympians Vincent Zhou (SC of San Francisco) and Jason Brown (Skokie Valley SC) also turned in excellent performances, finishing with silver (284.01) and bronze (273.08), respectively.

"The score definitely took me by surprise," Chen said. "It was a lot bigger than I was expecting, but ultimately the score is the score and I'm happy with what I did. Hopefully I can continue to do that in other competitions."

In his free skate to "Land of All" by Woodkid, he landed four clean quads, one in combination, plus two triple-triple combinations and a triple Axel. His spins and footwork earned Level 4s. Remarkably, seven of his 12 technical elements received double-digit scores, owing to many +4 and +5 grades of execution from the judges.



## SENIOR MEN

Chen's program components were equally impressive. He received perfect 10s for his performance and interpretation of music, and high 9s for everything else. Chen's free skate score alone would have placed him seventh overall in the event. Oh, and by the way, he broke his short program record 24 hours earlier.

It's fitting that U.S. Figure Skating inducted Tim Goebel, the original "quad king," into its hall of fame during the same event where Chen impressed one and all with the ease of his four-revolution jumps.

"Being clean is the first thing you have to focus on with quads," Chen said. "Then after that, you start building the quality and the ease of the jump. As it goes, I'm glad I was able to put everything together in the program. All the jumps went exactly how I wanted them (to be)."

Chen's artistry and overall choreography have also hit new heights this season.

"I try to get into the program as much as I can," he said. "Of course, the first few jumps have to be pretty technical. Things are very much like a checklist; I can't really let myself wander too much. As soon as those major jumps get done, I can start focusing more on the performance aspect of it and trying to get into the music and get into the audience."

**Nathan Chen took his skating to yet another level, shattering his own records en route to his third consecutive U.S. title.**



PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



(l-r) Vincent Zhou, silver; Nathan Chen, gold; Jason Brown, bronze; Tomoki Hiwatashi, pewter

Chen's performances this season have been made even more remarkable as he successfully handles a full course load at Yale University, and trains on his own at two rinks in New Haven, Connecticut, 3,000 miles away from coaching guru Rafael Arutunian.

"There are pros and cons of being at college," Chen said. "I'm definitely loving being in the college atmosphere and having something to do outside the rink. It's great being able to focus on things outside of the rink that are, in my opinion, equally as important as the time I spend on the ice."

Despite being away from Arutunian, Chen is able to work via FaceTime with his coach. In the weeks leading up to the U.S. Championships and after his first semester, Chen was able to travel to Southern California for a two-week refresher with him before heading back to Yale for syllabus week.

"Rafael fosters a great training atmosphere, so it was great to be back in that to fine-tune the things that I let slip during the season," Chen said. "He really knows me well and knows what things will change throughout the season."

Prior to Chen's dominant performance on the final afternoon of the U.S. Championships, the men's event grabbed the crowd and live TV audience on NBC as the final four skaters prepared to compete.

After performing a nearly flawless free skate, Tomoki Hiwatashi (DuPage FSC) flashed his trademark smile, and headed to NBC's Athlete Lounge, having moved into first place. The 19-year-old scored 169.23 points in his

program to "Fate of the Gods" by Steven Reincke, which opened with a quad toe loop-triple toe loop combination, followed by seven more triple jumps.

Hiwatashi was the first of the day to be put into a "champion's hold," where the top skater at the moment sits on a couch, and watches the action unfold, all while NBC cameras roll. In his third year in the senior division, the Illinois native was thrilled with his skate (he finished with a total score of 253.28), but admitted that his time in the Athlete Lounge would be short-lived, with 2015 U.S. champion Brown, Chen and Zhou still to compete.

"Well, unlike last year I'm not 11th, 12th or 15th," he said. "I'm more at the top and I was able to stay up in the last group, so that's my motivation to stay in the last group and be able to compete with Jason, Vincent, Nathan and everyone who is above me."

Hiwatashi eagerly watched Brown's free skate, cheering him on and jumping up to give him a hug as he made his way backstage. With a proud smile, Hiwatashi conceded his spot in the champion's area and congratulated his teammate on a great skate.

Next, it was Brown's turn to watch Chen. Brown had broken the 100-point mark for the first time in the short program and went on to score 172.56 points for his free skate. His overall score of 273.08 moved him into first place.

This was a season of change for the 24-year-old, who moved to Toronto last summer to train under Tracy Wilson and Brian Orser. After missing the Olympic Team in 2018, Brown was ready to hit the reset button



## SENIOR MEN



PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

**Vincent Zhou overcame nerves and delivered an inspired free skate to claim the silver medal.**

and focus on the next quadrennium.

“One of my biggest draws to Toronto was that Brian and Tracy didn’t know much about me or my skating,” he said. “They can see me with fresh eyes from a new perspective, and that goes for my jumps, choreography and skating skills.”

With new technique in tow, Brown arrived in Detroit with the goal of landing his first fully rotated quad in competition. When the time came for his opening quad Salchow in his free skate, however, he popped the jump. Despite the disappointing start, Brown executed a stirring, mature program to a Simon and Garfunkel medley that brought the crowd to its feet.

“It’s a process,” he said. “I’m learning that where I am in practice is about five, six, seven steps ahead of where I am in competition. This new technique changes the way I jump when I have adrenaline. That said, I’m proud of the strides I have made with the Salchow at this competition and this week, and I can’t wait to continue that the rest of the season. I’m disappointed that I didn’t rotate it, but hopefully I get another chance this season to do it.”

Brown’s bronze medal-finish was his fourth podium placement in the last six seasons.

With Chen now in the champion’s hold,

he watched as fellow quadster Zhou took the ice as the final performer of the competition.

Zhou sat third entering the free skate, just .27 point behind Brown. With an ambitious technical routine planned to music from the soundtrack from *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, Zhou executed four quadruple jumps to open his program, including a flawless quad Lutz-triple toe loop combination to start. His next two quads received underrotation calls, with the final jump being downgraded.

The Bay Area native powered through the remainder of his program, executing four Level 4 spins and Level 4 footwork to score 183.76 points. His overall score of 284.01 points topped Brown by more than 10 points.

“My legs were definitely a little shaky because I was so nervous, but I thought I did a really good job today of staying in my own bubble and focusing on what I needed to do,” Zhou said. “Skating last, especially with Jason and Nathan leading me after the short program, was not easy to do at all. There was a lot of pressure and I felt like I did a great job handling that. I’m proud of myself for coming so far this season, because I had a late and rough start.”

Plagued with a back injury throughout the summer, Zhou experienced a long recovery

process that extended into the beginning of the season. At his first event, U.S. International Classic in September, he struggled with his jumps, either falling or underrotating his quads. Throughout the Grand Prix season, Zhou slowly regained his strength but continued to receive underrotation calls. Despite his rocky start, he pushed through to prepare for U.S. Championships.

“I mean, this is more than I could have asked for,” Zhou said after his short program. “Each season it seems that it just gets harder and harder. When it feels like it can’t get any harder, then the next season is always there waiting. And this season I can’t count the number of times I’ve gone through a feeling that I don’t know if I can continue. To push through and overcome my biggest obstacle, which is myself, and be able to perform like that today, I’m grateful for the opportunity to have been able to do that.”

Zhou hopes to continue pushing the limits and growing as a competitor.

“I’m happy with the results but there is still so much room for improvement, and that gives me hope for the future,” he said. “Looking ahead to Four Continents and Worlds, I know that I can do even better.”

**Jason Brown wowed the crowds in Detroit by skating two impressive programs. He said that he’s proud of the strides he’s made since moving to Canada last summer to train under renowned coaches Tracy Wilson and Brian Orser.**







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## ‘REMEMBERING THIS MOMENT’

Cain and LeDuc overcome scary injury, return to win title; Denney and Frazier, Stellato and Bartholomay finish on podium



JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

Ashley Cain and Timothy LeDuc display raw emotion following their gold medal-clinching free skate.

### BY TAYLOR DEAN

Six weeks before the 2019 GEICO U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Detroit, the pairs team of Ashley Cain (SC of New York) and Timothy LeDuc (Los Angeles FSC) found themselves in a hospital room in Croatia. A devastating fall out of a lift during Golden Spin of Zagreb put Cain's skating career, and more importantly, her health, in serious jeopardy.

Diagnosed with a concussion after falling on the back of her head, she underwent days of mental and physical rehabilitation. As Cain lay

in her hospital room, she thought to herself, "I need to remember this moment, because next month I'll hopefully be standing on top of the podium."

For the next two weeks, she followed doctor's orders, making incremental gains until she was finally released to return to the rink.

Still, at that point, it was anyone's guess whether Cain and LeDuc would be able to resume their high-level training, and compete at the U.S. Championships.

But that's where this ultimate "Get Up" story gets good.

Cain and LeDuc arrived in Detroit ready

to fight for a title against a formidable field of teams also looking to write their own comeback stories. After finishing second in a well-skated short program to "Bella Belle" by the Electric Swing Circus, Cain and LeDuc rocked Detroit with an electric free skate that brought the crowd to its feet and Cain to her knees.

The nearly perfect performance to music from the *W.E.* soundtrack by Abel Korzeniewski earned them their first U.S. title and a berth to their first World Championships. As soon as the music ended, Cain dropped to the ice, filled with tears and joy, while LeDuc covered his face with his hands.



## SENIOR PAIRS

"It was just a release of everything," Cain said. "When I was off for the two weeks initially, I couldn't do anything. All I envisioned was the program over and over, and all it would be in that moment; every time I was dropping to my knees because finally I had done it. I'm so happy I got to feel that moment today, because I saw it so many times."

A day earlier, after the short program, LeDuc talked about how hard it was to experience such an accident.

"I would say it's every pairs skater's worst nightmare, what happened in Croatia," LeDuc said. "Undoubtedly what got us through was our connection to each other and our coaches. Knowing what she went through physically and for me to fight through the doubts ... What got me through was Ashley's courage. Every day I could see her fighting to push herself, so she could get better for this competition. It was inspiring to me on a daily basis. I'm so proud of her."

Cain and LeDuc put themselves in contention for the title after posting a score of 70.47 in the short program. The top four teams, led by 2016 U.S. champions and 2018 U.S. silver medalists Tarah Kayne and Danny O'Shea, found themselves separated by a mere 3.65 points.

With everything on the line, Cain and

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFFI/US FIGURE SKATING



(l-r) Haven Denney/Brandon Frazier, silver; Ashley Cain/Timothy LeDuc, gold; Deanna Stellato/Nathan Bartholomay, bronze; Tarah Kayne/Danny O'Shea, pewter

LeDuc were the last team to take the ice, appearing calm, relaxed and ready. They completed every element leading up to the lift that went awry at Golden Spin. When LeDuc lifted Cain into the air then flipped her down to a perfect exit, the crowd erupted. It didn't even faze Cain and LeDuc, as they continued to perform flawlessly on every element.

"We were so dialed in that nothing at that point was going to affect us," Cain said. "I was

just thinking solely of technique. Do what we know."

Focusing on the task at hand and "checking off the boxes," as Cain said, worked as the team scored 141.89 points, pushing them to first place and the gold medal with an overall score of 212.36.

"We're always trying to progress as a team; it's about us and our journey," LeDuc said. "We wanted to step up and really break out and be that team. One of my first thoughts after the program had finished was I want to do this at Worlds."

Several years ago, Cain and LeDuc could not have imagined standing at the top of the podium. Cain stopped pairs skating in 2012, and LeDuc had retired from competing, and was performing on cruise ships. After they had won, Cain said to LeDuc, "Aren't you happy you got off that ship?"

Haven Denney (SC of New York) and Brandon Frazier (All Year FSC) also returned from an injury, to claim the silver medal. Denney suffered a stress fracture in her ankle that bothered her throughout the Grand Prix season, forcing them to withdraw from Internationaux de France over the Thanksgiving holiday.

"We went, went, went, and it was getting too painful, and it increasingly got worse and worse to the point where we couldn't skate, because it became a stress fracture," Denney said.

Originally injured in August, Denney said her foot bothered her through Autumn Classic and Skate Canada International, where they placed third and sixth, respectively.

Cain and LeDuc present their fun, vintage jazz age program with a modern twist.





## SENIOR PAIRS



**Haven Denney and Brandon Frazier perform a lift in their free skate.**

Feeling better after a rocky start to the season, the 2017 U.S. champions returned to the ice with renewed hope. Skating to “Two Men In Love” by The Irrepressibles, Denney and Frazier opened their free skate with a towering triple twist. They finished with a Level 4 reverse lasso lift that garnered 10.00 points. Two of their jumping passes received negative GOEs. The team posted a free skate score of 133.32 points, boosting them to second place with an overall score of 201.64.

“I’m just so proud of Haven, of us,” Frazier said. “We’ve had our ups and our downs in our career, and it’s been a difficult process, but I think that we’re starting to feel back in a good rhythm that we can trust. We’ve put so much work into the last five to six weeks of training to just show up and be able to put out stuff that we’re proud of, and today was a fight.”

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFU/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

Deanna Stellato and Nathan Bartholomay (Southwest Florida FSC) repeated as bronze medalists, with 199.92 points. The audience adored the duo’s free skate to music from Whitney Houston, but Stellato and Bartholomay felt they could’ve performed better technically, especially on their reverse lift.

“We win every competition with that lift, it’s fabulous,” said Stellato, who admits she’s always hard on herself because she wants to be technically perfect. “I think that lift would’ve made a huge difference.”

Stellato and Bartholomay also experienced an up-and-down season, from withdrawing from Rostelecom Cup due to illness to earning the bronze medal at Golden Spin. Part of the improvement they experienced came with a change to their short program music. The team skated to tango music at the beginning of the season, but switched to “Somewhere” by Barbra Streisand before Golden Spin.

“We just never truly felt it and that showed in our marks, and it didn’t draw people in,” Bartholomay said. “Whereas this performance, it has a real strong character for us to portray.”

“Just like in business or whatever, you would replace someone or get a new company to help you with something; we just had to fix this,” Stellato added.

The veteran skaters partnered up less than three years ago, after Stellato decided to come off a 16-year hiatus from skating. Despite not achieving all they wanted in Detroit, Bartholomay said they are proud of what they put out.

“Today was definitely a fight,” he said. “Some things could’ve definitely been a lot worse than they were.”

Kayne and O’Shea (Southwest Florida FSC) fell to fourth place after losing points on their first jumping pass combination and missing the last lift in their well-known program to a medley from *Swan Lake*. As the pair skated on, Kayne closed her eyes, holding back tears.

She knew the reality: A clean skate could have possibly earned them the gold medal.

“I screwed up pretty bad,” a dejected O’Shea said. “The lift didn’t go up. It is something that honestly doesn’t even happen in practice. Sometimes you mess even when it counts most.”

Putting it into perspective, O’Shea added, “There was no reason [for it]. Why do you overthrow the ball in football? Why do you miss the pass that goes right through your hands? It’s basically what that equates to.”

Missing that last lift cost the team at least eight points. They finished with a total score of

198.64.

The reigning U.S. champions and favorites to make the podium, Alexa Scimeca-Knierim (DuPage FSC) and Chris Knierim (Broadmoor SC), finished seventh after two shaky performances. In their free skate set to “Wicked Games” by James Vincent McMorrow, the couple lost points on both jumping passes. They exited halfway through the second lift and missed the entire last lift.

Scimeca-Knierim noted this was only the second time in their careers they’ve missed a lift in competition (the first was at Skate America in 2014).

“The program went how our year went,” Knierim said. “Unusual changes. Unusual issues and mishaps.”

With coaching changes and big moves within the last few months, the two-time U.S. champions are looking forward to settling in at the new Great Park Ice Arena in Irvine, California, where they will be training under coaches Jenni Meno and Todd Sand.

**Deanna Stellato and Nathan Bartholomay open with a big triple twist.**







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Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue are passion on ice as they perform their *Romeo + Juliet* free dance en route to a U.S. overall record score.

## ‘FOCUSED AND CONNECTED’

Hubbell and Donohue win second U.S. dance crown with ease; Montreal-based teams claim top three spots in Detroit

BY LYNN RUTHERFORD

In seasons past, Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue sometimes lost their focus at big events — perhaps for just a split second — and made mistakes that cost them medals, maybe even titles. Not anymore.

Performing to *Romeo + Juliet*, they kept their competitive cool even as their passion for the program and occasion rose to the surface. Skating with greater speed and power than ever before, showing stunning lifts and clean, flowing steps, they interpreted a tragedy and made it a triumph.

“One of the things we’ve learned is to go out and do our best performance, not to try to beat our competitors,” Hubbell said after

the free dance. “That’s what we did today. We focused on each other and stayed connected.”

Winning their second U.S. title at Detroit’s Little Caesars Arena brought Hubbell and Donohue (Lansing SC) full circle. The skaters, who teamed up in May 2011, trained at Detroit Skating Club for four years before moving to Montreal, Quebec, seeking a fresh start in Marie-France Dubreuil and Patrice “Patch” Lauzon’s international skating school.

Their big breakthrough came last season: gold after six U.S. bronze and pewter medals; an impressive — although agonizing — fourth place at the Olympic Games and a silver medal on their fifth trip to the World Championships.

“It was a big step for us to be able to skate

a clean program (at the U.S. Championships) last season,” Hubbell said. “That was something that haunted us at nationals, making costly mistakes. To skate a focused performance was a very special moment in our career.”

Hubbell and Donohue arrived in Detroit riding a four-event winning streak, including the Grand Prix Final in December. Their sharp and intense tango rhythm dance earned 84.56 points, and they entered the free dance with a 2.23-point lead over longtime rivals — and new Montreal training partners — Madison Chock (All Year FSC) and Evan Bates (Ann Arbor FSC).

The couple’s free dance, choreographed by Dubreuil to the soundtrack of the 1996



## SENIOR ICE DANCE

film version of Shakespeare's classic love story, widened the gap. With nearly all Level 4 elements and rapturous grades of execution from the nine judges, it earned 131.32 points. The couple ended with 215.88 points, a new U.S. record. Yet they believe their free dance has yet to be fully realized.

"What we would love to develop more is the story and the connection, and to fully explore the characters again," Hubbell said. "We've been putting so much energy into getting the levels and GOEs, and as we have that base now, we would love to make the story more and more beautiful."

When Chock and Bates left Michigan for Montreal, the 2015 U.S. champions made a near four-month detour along the way: Chock underwent ankle surgery to remove chipped bone fragments last April, followed by a lengthy rehabilitation and physical therapy stint in Colorado Springs, Colorado. It was a trying end to a trying season for the two-time World medalists, including a disappointing ninth-place finish at the Olympic Games.

"When we moved to Montreal, the welcome was so warm and so gracious from all of our teammates there," Chock said, and then added, "We feel like we're in a completely new head space and new physical space. I feel the strongest I've ever felt in my career, and that's a really nice feeling to have after coming back



(l-r) Madison Chock/Evan Bates, silver; Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue, gold; Kaitlin Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker, bronze; Lorraine McNamara/Quinn Carpenter, pewter

**Hubbell and Donohue show perfect unison in their sizzling tango rhythm dance.**



from an injury."

Hubbell and Donohue, and Chock and Bates, have been intense rivals for the better part of a decade. For much of that time both teams — as well as Kaitlin Hawayek (Detroit SC) and Jean-Luc Baker (Seattle SC), the third couple in the Montreal-based trio — trained a few miles apart in suburbs of Detroit. One reason for the move to Montreal, Hubbell admitted, was to "get out of the fishbowl" and train away from other U.S. teams. But after last season's success, that viewpoint changed.

"Yes, I want to win, but in order to win I have to beat my last performance," Hubbell said. "That's the focus in Montreal, to become the best version of you. We don't compare ourselves to the other teams in the arena; we don't try and copy the same moves and the same technique. The coaches are great at adapting toward each couple's strength."

Donohue credits the other teams' presence with lifting him and Hubbell to greater heights.

"We've got such an incredible, unique atmosphere where we all love each other, we all want to beat each other, we all want Patch to say, 'Good job,'" he said. "It's really inspiring to



## SENIOR ICE DANCE



“Madison was born to tango,” Evan Bates said of partner Madison Chock. She shows that here.

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

be able to watch all the teams surrounding us put out their best on a daily basis, and make us step up our own game.”

In Detroit, Chock and Bates performed a sophisticated tango with a distinctly modern vibe. Their free dance, set to a medley of Michael Bublé’s version of “Fever” and Elvis Presley’s “Burning Love,” is four minutes of sheer entertainment, ranging from slinky and sexy to pure fun.

“We wanted to show the true essence of dance, because after all we’re ice dancers,” Chock said.

Before accepting them as students, Dubreuil and Lauzon told Chock and Bates that it would take a few years to improve their skating. Since the couple is targeting the 2022 Beijing Games, that suited them fine.

“We knew it would be a process to develop the kind of skating that we know we are capable of; it’s not something that just happens in six months,” Bates said. “Our coaches warned us about that: ‘Do you want to get better skating? It’s going to take two years.’ We’re really happy with the progress we made, happy with the performances in Detroit.”

Like Chock and Bates, Hawayek and Baker overcame injury to thrive this season: Baker suffered a concussion in August, forcing them to withdraw from an event in early October. Fortunately, they moved from Detroit to Montreal last spring, and were able to develop their programs — including their free dance to

music from *The Irrepressibles* — prior to the injury.

“Jean-Luc found the music a year and a half ago; when he heard it, it touched him right away and I had the same reaction,” Hawayek said. “[Our free dance] is about growing together through that (concussion) experience. Everyone goes through trials and downs, and to have somebody with them to bring them up is very special, and that’s what we’re trying to portray.”

The 2014 World Junior champions are working with the Montreal coaches to improve their power and consistency, and it’s having an impact: 2018/2019 is their best season yet, including a win at NHK Trophy and a trip to the Grand Prix Final in December. After placing third in the rhythm dance, their captivating, finely woven free dance cemented their bronze medal with 196.95 points, their best senior finish in five trips to the U.S. Championships.

“For us, moving to Montreal is about our growth as people, not only as skaters,” Hawayek said. “I think that’s showing in our skating, because as you’re happy and content with your life as a whole, it makes being able to skate freer and more openly a little bit easier, and I think that’s what really happened for us this season.”

Lorraine McNamara (Peninsula SC) and Quinn Carpenter (Washington FSC) are also having their finest season ever, including their first medal on the Grand Prix Series. After plac-

ing fifth in the tango rhythm dance, the couple showed new maturity and connection in their free dance to a contemporary piano medley from Yann Tiersen, and climbed to fourth place overall with 191.10 points.

In their second season as seniors, the 2016 World Junior champions, who train at the Wheaton Ice Skating Academy in Rockville, Maryland, acknowledge the difficulty of standing out in the talented U.S. ice dance ranks. Still, they think World and Olympic teams are in their future.

“We’re both very confident in what we have to offer,” McNamara said. “You can’t control who is ahead of you, who has been in the game a long time. We’re still new to the senior level technically, but we’re confident in where we are and that we belong up there.”

Making their U.S. senior debut, up-and-coming Christina Carreira (SC of New York) and Anthony Ponomarenko (SC of San Francisco) performed a striking and dramatic tango to take fourth place in the rhythm dance. Although a few bobbles in their free dance to Tokio Meyers’ “Bloodstream” left them fifth overall, the two-time World Junior medalists achieved their goal of skating in the final warm-up group.

“I feel like we held back a little bit, made a couple mistakes, but overall it’s a great feeling to be here, a great atmosphere,” Ponomarenko said after the free dance. “Every competition is a learning experience, so we see how we can do better next time, how we can get even better results.”

Kaitlin Hawayek and Jean-Luc Baker light up the ice in their rhythm dance tango.







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# CLUTCH PERFORMANCE

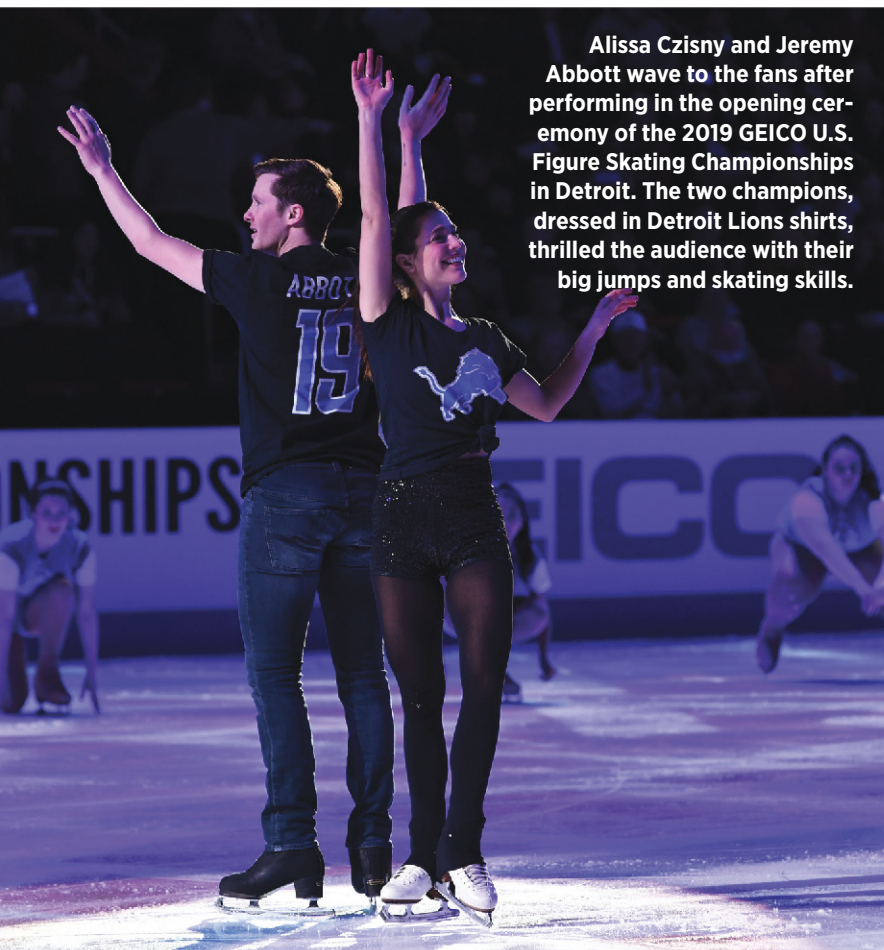
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Alissa Czisny and Jeremy Abbott wave to the fans after performing in the opening ceremony of the 2019 GEICO U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Detroit. The two champions, dressed in Detroit Lions shirts, thrilled the audience with their big jumps and skating skills.



PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

U.S. ice dance silver medalists Madison Chock and Evan Bates greet their fans at the Friends of Figure Skating Brunch inside the Motor City Club at Little Caesars Arena. Blue-level Friends received an event-level tour of Little Caesars Arena, where they got to see where the athletes get on the ice, the media pressroom and the kiss and cry. Silver-level Friends enjoyed a “chalk talk” by Olympian Mirai Nagasu, as she answered questions about the competition and even her time as a contestant on “Dancing with the Stars.” More than 300 Friends of Figure Skating members attended the brunch and met several members of Team USA, including U.S. champions Alysa Liu, Ashley Cain and Timothy LeDuc, and Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue.

Fifty-eight juvenile and intermediate ladies, men and pairs skaters took part in the Future U program after they finished competing at the Detroit Skating Club. Olympic ice dance champion Charlie White delivered the keynote address. Athletes received instruction and information from experts and officials on topics ranging from spins to the new

competition structure. Elliot Schwartz and Lorrie Parker gave a judging presentation. From U.S. Figure Skating headquarters, Sora Hwang delivered a presentation on social media, and Devin Wang provided a program on sports science and medicine. On the ice, Lucinda Ruh worked with skaters on their spins, while Ikaika Young and Kyoko

Ina demonstrated skating skills. Off the ice, Randi Strong gave instruction in dance, while Veronique Breen explained the benefits of Gyrokinesis. The Future U program overlaps with other programs that the Athlete High Performance Department puts on during the U.S. Championships.





## EVENT EXTRAS

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

Members of the 2019 Scholastic Honors Team were honored in Detroit. Ten outstanding student-athletes were recognized for their talents on the ice, and commitment in the classroom and in their communities. Six of the 10 Scholastic Honors Team members were in the Motor City, and honored in a breakfast gathering and during an on-ice ceremony. U.S. Figure Skating President Anne Cammett and Jonathan Geen, vice chair for Scholastic Honors, congratulated the recipients. Each recipient is a full-time high school student with a 3.4 or higher grade point average, and has competed at the novice level or above for the past two years. Members of the team each received a certificate, team jacket and a \$2,500 scholarship courtesy of the Pioneer Fund. (l-r) Diana Zhu, Annie Wang, Audrey Lu, Luke Ferrante, Abby Dowse and Vanessa Chen. Not pictured: Maggie Brooks, Cordelia Chen, Katherine Elminger, Joyce Guo



^ Junior ladies champion Gabriella Izzo is the recipient of the 2019 Ron and Gayle Hershberger Award. The award is presented at the U.S. Championships to the junior-level competitor with the highest combined program components. The annual award rotates through all four disciplines. It was created by former U.S. Figure Skating President Ron Hershberger and his wife Gayle. Izzo will receive a grant of \$1,000 and a certificate of her achievement.

The U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame Class of 2019 was recognized during an on-ice induction ceremony at Little Caesars Arena and at a reception at the Westin Book Cadillac Hotel in Detroit on Jan. 26. (l-r) Tim Goebel, Carol Fox and Richard Dalley, and Julie Lynn Holmes Newman were honored for their competitive accomplishments and their continued contributions to the sport. Sharing the special evening with the latest inductees were more than a dozen members of the U.S. Hall of Fame and 150 guests.





# OLYMPIAN NAGASU MAKES DEBUT AS SKATING ANALYST

PHOTO BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



Brooke Castile, Mirai Nagasu and Nick McCarvel bring the action to viewers from the Bridgestone Ice Desk.

Olympian Mirai Nagasu sat rinkside inside the Little Caesars Arena and, offering encouragement, applauded as one of the men's competitors nailed a jump during a practice session in Detroit.

"Sorry, but that's not allowed in the media seats," said Jackie Wong of Rocker-Skating.com, ribbing Nagasu a bit.

But it's true. In the press area, applause is usually frowned upon.

"Oh ... I had no idea," came Mirai's wide-eyed response.

It was a week of lights, camera and learning for the 2008 U.S. champ and two-time Olympian, who revealed recently that she underwent hip surgery in September for an ailment that had bothered her since 2016.

Attending the U.S. Championships for the first time in 12 years as something other

than an elite skater, Nagasu was part of the Bridgestone Ice Desk (along with yours truly) as an analyst, as well as being the featured interview subject for outlets like the local NBC affiliate, the Olympic Channel, the Wake Up! Folgers Facebook show and many, many more.

"I had a blast," said Nagasu, who is still based in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and is not officially hanging up her skates just yet. "Usually I use my skating as my voice and show my hard work through my movement, but [at Championships] it was my actual voice and using my knowledge of skating."

On the Ice Desk, in particular, Nagasu shined, especially as she was able to relate to the athletes so well: She knows fellow Olympian Bradie Tennell's skating as well as anyone, has competed alongside Mariah

Bell, and was the youngest winner since Tara Lipinski (at 14 in 1997) before breakout star Alysia Liu, the new U.S. champ.

"She was cool and collected," Nagasu said of Liu. "We in the media talked so much about her triple Axels before ... it didn't seem to faze her."

But what didn't faze Nagasu, either, was her new roles. And the rules of press row in the arena? She's ignoring them.

"As a journalist you're supposed to stay neutral, but I just want to say, 'Good job!' to everybody," she said. "It's nice to see a friendly face saying, 'You got this!' I'll be that person."

And it's nice to see a friendly and familiar face as Nagasu tries something new in the skating world.

— Nick McCarvel

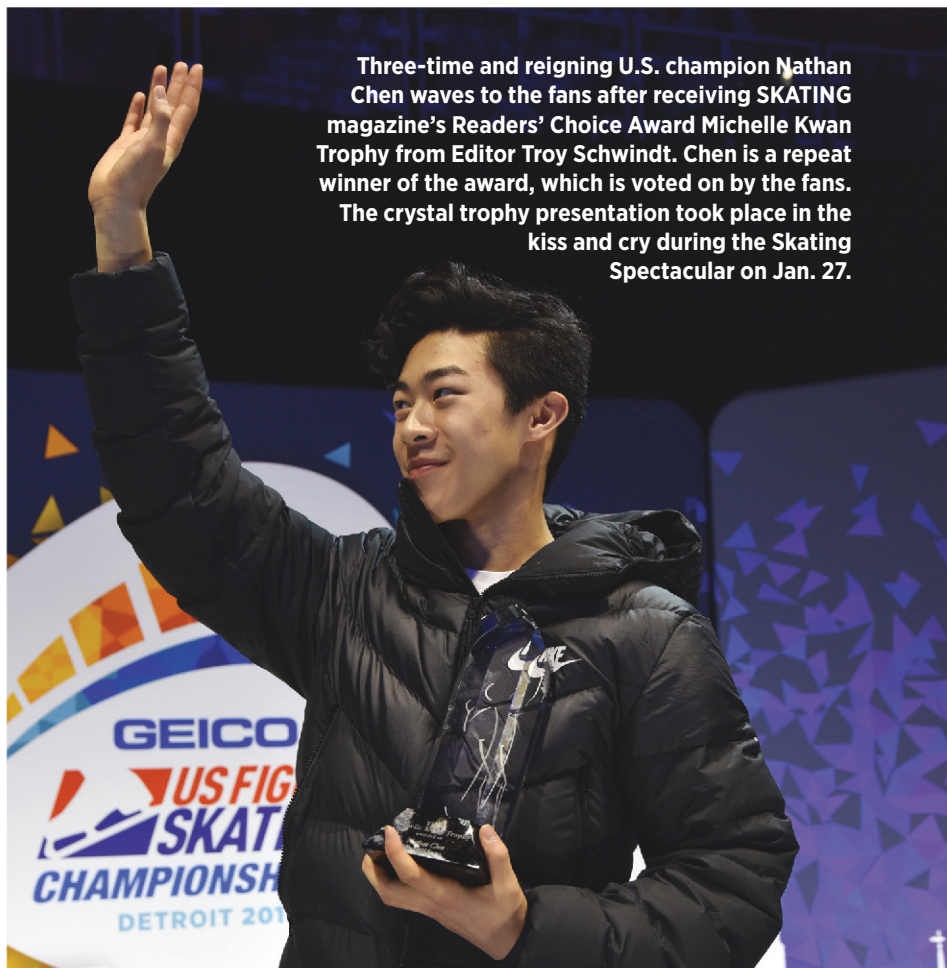


## EVENT EXTRAS

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



^ Siblings Danielle Hartsell Minnis and Steve Hartsell, 1999 U.S. pairs champions representing the Detroit Skating Club, attended the annual Athletes Advisory Committee Athlete Alumni Reception on Jan. 26 in the Players Club at Little Caesars Arena. More than 60 former athletes attended the festivities, hosted by Olympic champion Brian Boitano and Olympian and AAC Chair Mark Ladwig. Many Detroit alumni attended the event, along with the 2019 Hall of Fame class.



Three-time and reigning U.S. champion Nathan Chen waves to the fans after receiving SKATING magazine's Readers' Choice Award Michelle Kwan Trophy from Editor Troy Schwindt. Chen is a repeat winner of the award, which is voted on by the fans. The crystal trophy presentation took place in the kiss and cry during the Skating Spectacular on Jan. 27.



< Detroit skating greats Alissa Czisny and Jeremy Abbott fielded questions during an informal Q&A at the Memorial Fund reception. Ice Talk talent Nick McCarvel and Jackie Wong hosted the discussion with the two-time U.S. champion Czisny and the four-time U.S. titlist and two-time Olympian Abbott. Memorial Fund donors were able to get a hot-fudge sundae and ask the skating stars questions of their own. Czisny and Abbott, both recipients of the Memorial Fund, shared many of their favorite moments in the sport. More than two dozen athletes and recipients of Memorial Fund scholarships attended and thanked donors. One lucky fan, Sheila Hard, won a live auction to ride the Zamboni during an ice resurface later that night.



# HUBBELL AND DONOHUE

## WIN FIRST DAVIS AND WHITE GLOBAL EXCELLENCE AWARD



Two-time and reigning U.S. ice dance champions Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue were presented with the first Meryl Davis and Charlie White Global Excellence Award on the final day of the 2019 GEICO U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Detroit.

Davis and White, the first U.S. Olympic ice dance champions, presented the original bronze sculpture to Hubbell and Donohue during a break in the Skating Spectacular. U.S. Figure Skating created the honor to

annually recognize a dance team, using an algorithm of placement/points at the U.S. Championships and World ranking points.

Harold Linke is the sculptor; he was also commissioned to create the inaugural Peggy Fleming Trophy last year.

The sculpture depicts the signature opening pose of Davis and White's 2014 gold medal-winning "Scheherazade" free dance from Sochi, Russia. Hubbell's and Donohue's names will be engraved on the wooden base.

Davis said she was honored to learn that U.S. Figure Skating wanted to develop the award.

"Meryl and I were always asked about our legacy while we were competing," White said. "For us, it was just that positivity, excellence and passion go hand in hand. Hopefully, when people see the trophy or think of maybe what it represents other than just big-picture success — numbers and things like that — they'll consider that as well."

— Rachel Lutz





# TOP TAKEAWAYS FROM THE U.S. CHAMPIONSHIPS

BY JACKIE WONG

The post-Olympic U.S. Championships did not disappoint. In fact, it may have been one of the best U.S. Championships we've seen in recent memory. There was a lot to love about the skating that we saw in Detroit from all disciplines. Here are some of my takeaways from the competition.

## ALMOST FLAWLESS

Just when you think Nathan Chen has given the performance of his career, he goes and delivers programs that one-up his previous best. The two programs he laid down in Detroit were perhaps his most impressive ever — soft knees, improved spins, refined choreography — all this while looking like his midterms were taking his mind off the pressure of defending his U.S. title. He had fun, he was relaxed, and that's when we see him at his best.

## NEW QUEEN OF AXEL

You wanted a triple Axel, right? Well, Alysia Liu gave you three en route to her first U.S. senior title, at age 13. Liu came to Detroit with no fear, and became the first U.S. woman to land three triples Axels at one competition. It was historic, and surely, she has now inspired many up-and-coming skaters to push themselves for more. The two who finished behind Liu — Bradie Tennell and Mariah Bell — were

both a triple Lutz away from the title. Even though they didn't win, both showed a lot of fight and some of their strongest skating of the season. They have momentum and motivation going into Worlds this month.

## AN IMPROBABLE COMEBACK

Six weeks before the U.S. Championships, Ashley Cain and Timothy LeDuc wondered if they were going to be able to continue their season after a freak fall that left Cain with a concussion. With a lot of will, a bit of luck and a regimented recovery plan, they skated the performance of their careers to win their first U.S. title. There's a lot to be said about perseverance, and Cain and LeDuc will remember this moment for the rest of their lives. And now it's time to get that second spot back for the U.S. at Worlds.

## THE DEPTH OF IT ALL

The amount of talent we are seeing in American ice dance is incredible. Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue won their second consecutive U.S. title, but only after fending off Madison Chock and Evan Bates, who look refreshed and have a new mindset after some Olympic disappointment, and Chock's recovery from surgery last year. But the depth extends to several other dance teams, as they really put on a show, and revealed how

much greatness there is to mine.

And a quick shout-out to Karina Manta and Joe Johnson, who skated the program of their careers with an electrifying free dance that was a statement of who they are as a team, and who they are as people. They are amazing ambassadors of the LGBTQ+ community and figure skating.

## HERE TO PLAY

Across the board — podium or not — we witnessed some amazing skating in Detroit. From Ting Cui's comeback free skate to Tomoki Hiwatashi's breakthrough competition to Tarah Kayne and Danny O'Shea's stunning short program to Christina Carreira and Anthony Ponomarenko's passionate rhythm dance, so much about these U.S. Championships spoke to how motivated these skaters are to start this new Olympic quad on a positive note. We've got a great three years ahead of us.

*Jackie Wong is a figure skating analyst at Rocker Skating and a guest host of U.S. Figure Skating's Fan Zone podcast. He has been involved in figure skating for more than 20 years as a skater, coach, choreographer and judge. You can find him at rockerskating.com and on Twitter and Instagram for comprehensive coverage of figure skating events all season long.*



**THE SLIME QUEEN**

Youngest U.S. champion, first U.S. lady to land two triple Axels in a program, second lady in the world to land three triple Axels in a competition, and slime enthusiast. These are all titles that 2019 U.S. champion Alysa Liu holds dear.

Her passion for slime began when her training mates started bringing their home-made slime to the rink. After learning from her friends, the 13-year-old started making her own slime and was completely hooked.

"I got totally obsessed with slime, way too obsessed," she said. "I'm still kind of obsessed."

Liu claims to own more than three gallons of slime at home. Some of her friends even have their own slime accounts, with one friend boasting almost 20,000 followers and her own shop.

"Whenever I get home, I go upstairs, go to my room and play with my slime," she said.

When asked what she wanted to do when she got home to the Bay Area, she had only one thing in mind.

"I just made a clear slime that is almost a fourth of a gallon," Liu said. "I plan to play with it right when I get home."

— **Marissa Pederson**



HANS ROSEMOND PHOTOGRAPHY

**MCMNAMARA, CARPENTER PORTRAY ... THEMSELVES**

Lorraine McNamara and Quinn Carpenter have often brought the drama by playing well-known characters in programs set to *Carmen*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Phantom of the Opera*. One season, McNamara portrayed the role of Anitra the wood nymph in Grieg's "In the Hall of the Mountain King."

"A lot of programs in the past have been characters, or even something a little bit traditional like last year's tango free dance," Carpenter said. "We took the opportunity this season to really branch out from that."

The 2016 World Junior champions, who have skated together for 13 years, made a bold decision: This time around, they would just be themselves on the ice. They teamed with renowned choreography and media artist Jonah Bokaer to create an abstract, contemporary free dance set to a piano medley by Yann Tiersen. Unencumbered by a storyline, it's full of interesting shapes and free-flowing movement. The skaters think it's let them connect with each other, and the audience, as never before.

"Jonah's background is not in skating, so he sees things differently than we do," Carpenter said. "We're on the ice, that's how we work. He works differently, and that added a new dynamic to it. It's given us something new, and we forget sometimes how powerful that can be."

"It's so enjoyable to have a different set of eyes," McNamara said. "He sees things that we're not used to seeing. He's opened up our vocabulary."

— **Lynn Rutherford**

**'I KNEW IT WAS GOING TO MATTER'**

Pairs skater Deanna Stellato didn't hide her emotions following her free skate with Nathan Bartholomay. Looking up at the world's largest centerhung scoreboard, those who could read lips knew exactly what she said and felt at that moment.

The veteran skater was upset that she didn't perform the team's reverse lift up to standards.

"I'm furious because that's straight [plus] 5s that we left on the table and I knew that it was going to matter," she said.

Stellato also was unhappy with her part of the throw triple Salchow, calling it "probably the worst I've done all week, although I hung on to it. Otherwise, it was a cruddy version of a run-through that we do at home," she said. "We typically do sharper run-throughs at home on a daily basis."

Despite her harsh criticism of herself, fans loved their emotional and powerful program to songs by Whitney Houston, and gave the couple a partial standing ovation. They finished third in the free skate and repeated as U.S. bronze medalists.

— **Troy Schwindt**

GREGORY SHAMUS/GETTY IMAGES



GREGORY SHAMUS/GETTY IMAGES





## EVENT NUGGETS

### ONE FOR ALL, ALL FOR ONE AT #ICEDANCETAILGATE

After the press conference following the short dance, Madison Hubbell issued an invitation to one and all for the afternoon of the free dance.

"Go to 2301 Cass Avenue, there's a parking structure," she said. "My family will be there, and his (Zachary Donohue's) family, and Kaitlin's (Hawayek) family, making a tailgate. Anyone can show up. It's going to be around 3 p.m. — grilling, drinks, everything set up, no matter the weather. It's happening."

#IceDanceTailgate was the brainchild of Hubbell's family, including mom Sue Hubbell, uncle Steve Dedoes and cousin Mattie Dedoes. The Michiganders were all well acquainted with the legendary tailgate parties for University of Michigan football; why not ice dance? Sue reached out to the parents of Madison Chock and Evan Bates, as well as Hawayek and partner Jean-Luc Baker, to join the party. All three teams train together at Gadbois Centre in Montreal, Quebec.

"We heard about it and said, 'Go parents! It's so festive of you,'" Chock said.

So the families, along with friends and fans, made their way to Cass Avenue for hot dogs, hamburgers and — maybe — some adult beverages. That last menu item gave Hawayek some pause.

"We're hoping they all actually make it to the event to see us," she said.

— *Lynn Rutherford*

PHOTO BY LYNN RUTHERFORD



PHOTOS BY GREGORY SHAMUS/GETTY IMAGES

### FOLLOWING HER HEART

Not many skaters compete at the U.S. Championships as a senior in one discipline, and qualify the next season in another discipline. Julia Biechler not only competes in both ice dance and singles, but has done both at the championship level. This year, however, she officially committed to singles.

"I realized that I needed to make a choice if I wanted to be an elite athlete, and I chose what my heart told me to do," Biechler said. "I don't think it was something people understood, because I had a lot of success in dance, but for me, if you don't love what you do, then don't do it."

After finishing seventh in ice dance at 2017 U.S. Championships, Biechler found her stride after making the switch, qualifying for her first U.S. Championships in singles at 20 years old.

"Dance has helped me a ton," she said. "It influences how I put my footwork together, think about my artistry and listen to music. That's my base and now I need to focus on nailing jumps, working on repetition and getting the mileage that I need."

Biechler finished 17th at the U.S. Championships in Detroit.

— *Marissa Pederson*



Kevin Shum

### A MIND GAME

The senior men's roster at the U.S. Championships was rife with intelligent adults studying at renowned schools and training full-time.

Most notable is Nathan Chen, who is midway through his freshman year at Yale University, where he's studying quantitative reasoning. The 2019 U.S. champion balances a full course load while training on his own at rinks in New Haven, Connecticut.

"I feel like I'm learning quite a lot in terms of how to train by myself and deal with unknown circumstances," Chen said, "Everything's paying off exactly as I hoped it would."

Kevin Shum is another brainiac skater; he's finishing up his studies at MIT this year. Studying computer science, Shum landed an internship with Microsoft last summer. He plans on graduating this spring, after which he is set to start working on the West Coast.

Colorado skater Jordan Moeller just graduated from the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, where he majored in criminal justice and psychology. Moeller hopes to work part time before applying to law school.

— *Taylor Dean*



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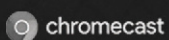
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**JUNIOR MEDALISTS**

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFU/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



**LADIES:** (l-r) Audrey Shin, silver; Gabriella Izzo, gold; Emilia Murdock, bronze; Sarah Jung, pewter



**MEN:** (l-r) Dinh Tran, silver; Ryan Dunk, gold; Joonsoo Kim, bronze; Peter Liu, pewter



**PAIRS:** (l-r) Kate Finster/Balazs Nagy, silver; Laiken Lockley/Keenan Prochnow, gold; Isabelle Martins/Ryan Bedard, bronze; Maria Mokhova/Ivan Mokhov, pewter



**ICE DANCE:** (l-r) Avonley Nguyen/Vadym Kolesnik, silver; Caroline Green/Gordon Green, gold; Eliana Gropman/Ian Somerville, bronze; Oona Brown/Gage Brown, pewter

# JUNIORS PROVIDE EXCITING GLIMPSE OF WHAT'S TO COME

Alexei Kiliakov and Elena Novak have built something special in Rockville, Maryland, with 12 of their ice dance teams competing at the U.S. Championships.

Their junior-champion team of Caroline Green and Gordon Green proved in Detroit that they are ready to join their rinkmates Lorraine McNamara and Quinn Carpenter, and Rachel Parsons and Michael Parsons, next year in the senior ranks.

"That whole program in Washington, (D.C.) continues to thrive," said Justin Dillon, director of high performance development

at U.S. Figure Skating. "They had multiple athletes at the lower levels be successful here again as they have for the last number of years. I think that speaks to the program, because we are now watching them in the final warm-up at the U.S. Championships. It shows that it takes time, but now it's all coming to fruition."

Gabriella Izzo and Audrey Shin placed first and second, showing they are not afraid to take some risk and go for it.

Izzo performed a triple-triple for the first time in her short program, while Shin attacked her program that included seven triple jumps.

"It's good for our skaters to rise to the challenge," Dillon said.

Three of the top four men landed clean triple Axels in their free skates, including titlist Ryan Dunk. Dunk is coming off a successful Junior Grand Prix Series, and is primed for more success next season on the JGP circuit.

In pairs, Laiken Lockley and Keenan Prochnow continued their upward trajectory — they placed third at the junior level in 2018. Their free skate included a Level 4 triple twist.



## JUNIOR LADIES

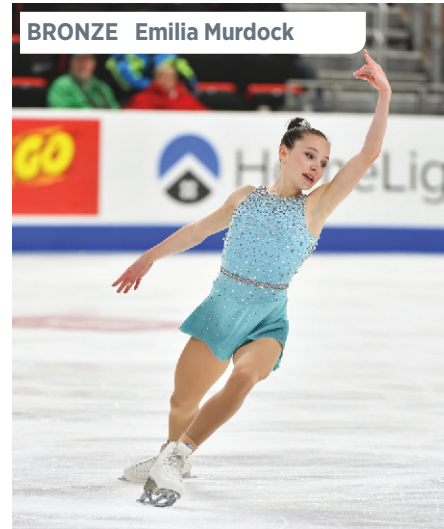
**GOLD** Gabriella Izzo



**SILVER** Audrey Shin



**BRONZE** Emilia Murdock



PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

# GOLD AND HARVARD

Izzo reaches major milestones on and off ice

**BY TROY SCHWINDT**

Gabriella Izzo's greatest strength is her determination, her coach Mark Mitchell said after the 17-year-old overcame an early mistake in her free skate to win the title in Detroit.

"On a day-to-day basis, she works her butt off," said Mitchell, who with Peter Johansson coaches Izzo and others at the Mitchell Johansson Method in Revere, Massachusetts.

Izzo led after the short program, and started her free skate to "La Vie en Rose" with a strong triple Lutz-double toe loop combination. Moments later, things briefly went south when she failed to execute another combination.

"I've been working a long time on this flip-hop-Salchow, and at every single competition I've done a double Salchow," she said. "So I wanted to get this done, and then it just slipped away from me. After that, I was like, that's it. I'm going to get this done, and it was like checking off boxes. ... That was the only thing going on in my head — just keep going. You can do this."

Izzo's will took over as she skated a clean program the rest of the way to finish second in the segment, and win the gold medal, with a score of 172.42. Her rinkmate, Emilia Murdock (SC of San Francisco), finished second in the short program and won the bronze medal, while Audrey Shin (SC of New York) rallied with the top free skate and earned the silver medal.

"Last year she was just kind of learning

all the triples, believe it or not," Mitchell said of Izzo. "She's really learned how to do them on a regular basis and be able to put them out consistently now. She added the triple-triple here at nationals in her short program, which was a big deal."

Izzo landed four triple jumps — two in combination — and earned all Level 4s for her spins and footwork.

Izzo also recently enjoyed an off-ice gold medal of sorts when she learned that she'd been accepted to Harvard.

"I started laughing," Izzo said. "I was by myself in my room and I saw it and I couldn't do anything else but laugh, because it was surreal. I couldn't get my head around that I had gotten in."

Shin, ninth as a novice in 2017 and ninth as a junior in 2018, put everything together in her ambitious free skate to music from *Romeo and Juliet*.

The Colorado-based skater landed seven triple jumps, including a triple Lutz-triple toe loop combination that earned her a program-high 11.20 points. Three of her triples received underrotation calls. The 14-year-old finished with a free skate score of 112.58 points and an overall score of 165.61.

"I felt like today I just went out and tried to be more aggressive and tried to show that I can do these triple jumps and I can perform," Shin said.

Shin, who was sixth after the short program, heeded the instructions of her coach Tammy Gambill, and went for it in the free

skate.

"Yesterday she told me that she could see that I was slow and kind of holding back," Shin said. "Today, you have to be more aggressive, so I felt I could be stronger."

Gambill, who coaches Olympians Karen Chen and Vincent Zhou, said she knew her young pupil had it in her to deliver a winning free skate.

"She's an amazingly hard worker," Gambill said. "She has a lot of talent and potential. She held back in the short and talked about learning a lesson from that experience and moving on. I was proud of her tonight that she went out and attacked the program much more."

Murdock, who failed to get out of sectionals at the novice level last year, turned in a strong competition, earning a total score of 154.48. After placing second in the short program, Murdock, 16, hit a few bumps in her free skate to "Moon River."

Skating at the Mitchell Johansson Method, she said, has been key in turning her skating around.

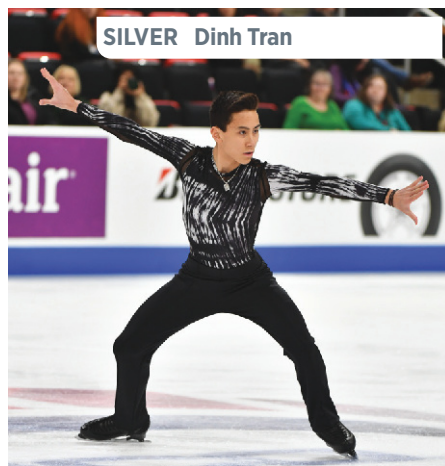
"I think we all go to school and we all learn from each other and we are all going through the same things," Murdock said. "It means so much to have so many kids that you can rely on and so many kids who are going through the same thing as you. We all have good days, we all have bad days. We all go through it together, which is a big part of how I was able to become the skater I am today."

Sarah Jung (Columbia FSC) earned the pewter medal with a score of 150.88.





**GOLD** Ryan Dunk



**SILVER** Dinh Tran



**BRONZE** Joosoo Kim

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

## ‘FEELS DIFFERENT’

Dunk chills out to capture crown on biggest stage yet

BY **MARISSA PEDERSON**

Ryan Dunk (Baltimore FSC) was still jittery following his short program inside the new, state-of-the-art Little Caesars Arena in downtown Detroit.

In his third year as a junior at the U.S. Championships, the 18-year-old's focus turned to calming his nerves and putting on a show on the biggest stage yet.

“Since I’m still junior, all my competitions are usually in an empty rink and not a stadium,” he said. “There are no cameras or anything. The Junior Grand Prix (events) have a little bit more going on but coming here it is a full-on stadium with more than 10 people, more than just my parents. It definitely feels different.”

Dunk sat in second place after the short program, 2.14 points behind Joonsoo Kim (Los Angeles FSC). Despite the excitement and anticipation of the free skate, the Baltimore native focused on doing his best inside the venue that is shared NBA's Detroit Pistons and NHL's Detroit Red Wings.

“It would be pretty cool to win, but my main goal is just to skate well and get better scores,” Dunk said.

The next day, he did just that.

Dunk stole the show with his program to music from the *La La Land* soundtrack, scoring 132.85 points to win the segment and finish first with an overall score of 201.43.

He earned bronze and pewter medals at the 2017 and 2018 U.S. Championships, respectfully. However, this season, he made some major training changes to give him that

extra boost before moving up to senior-level competition.

“I have always gone to full public school until this year,” he said. “I did my senior year of high school online. That was a big change and I’m happy because I think it paid off for my skating.”

Dunk landed seven triple jumps, including two triple-triple combinations in his free skate. His triple Axel was the highest-scoring element of the segment and was awarded a 1.49-point grade of execution. He also received the highest program component score.

Dinh Tran (SC of San Francisco) repeated as silver medalist with 196.03 points. Armed with a luck necklace from his brother, Tran rallied from a fourth-place short program.

He arrived in Detroit despite having dealt with an injury in the weeks leading up to the U.S. Championships.

One week before the Pacific Coast Sectionals, he sprained his ankle. After winning the Pacific Coast Sectional title, he sprained it two more times.

“I haven’t been injured like this, so it was a new experience for me,” he said. “I had a lot of help from a lot of people with physical therapy and mental training to help me through the process.”

Tran also had an extra support system at Little Caesars Arena. His mom was shown smiling on the world’s largest centerhung scoreboard after his free skate to a medley of music by Woodkid.

“I am so grateful for their support and I wouldn’t be here without it,” Tran said. “I think

my mom was really nervous, especially thinking about my ankle recovery and all of that.”

Despite a few shaky jumps in his free skate, Kim secured the bronze medal with an overall score of 187.95.

In addition to his successes on the ice this season, Kim has hurdled a number of other major milestones this year — moving from the Midwest to California, beginning his freshman year at UCLA studying neuroscience and joining a new skating club in Los Angeles.

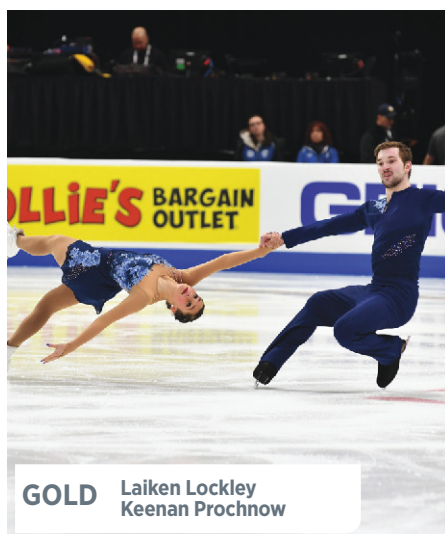
“I knew that L.A. has a big skating community and a cooperative one at that,” he said. “I had been skating in the Midwest my whole life and I just wanted to mix things up a little. Skating to me isn’t just about the results, points and jumps. I want to create connections with people and make relationships that will last. I chose UCLA for the academics and to continue my skating career.”

Peter Liu (SC of Wilmington) won the pewter medal with 182.32 points. Liu finished third in the free skate.

“After my Junior Grand Prix season, I wasn’t happy with myself and I took a break from skating,” he said. “I didn’t quit but I didn’t go to the rink for two weeks and considered all the possibilities of what I could do if I wasn’t skating. The past few years, it felt like the pressure was coming from the people around me, but I decided to just do it for myself. I do it because I enjoy being on the ice. After that I went to sectionals and I ended up winning, which was a big surprise because I wasn’t going in with any expectations. I tried to apply the same mindset here.”



## JUNIOR PAIRS



**GOLD** Laiken Lockley  
Keenan Prochnow



**SILVER** Kate Finster  
Balazs Nagy



**BRONZE** Isabelle Martins  
Ryan Bedard

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

# ‘PUSHING THROUGH’

Lockley and Prochnow lock up title with improved free skate

BY TAYLOR DEAN

When short program leaders Laiken Lockley and Keenan Prochnow (DuPage FSC) took the ice for their free skate at the U.S. Championships, they knew gold was within reach. They also understood that they had plenty of work still left to do.

Skating to music from the *Cloud Atlas* soundtrack, the skaters were most worried about their triple twist, something they'd struggled with the past few months. While the twist was nearly perfect — they received a Level 4 and positive grades of execution — Lockley stumbled on the landing of their throw triple Salchow, and they lost points on both side-by-side jumps.

Despite those miscues, the 2018 U.S. junior bronze medalists pushed through, winning the segment and finishing with a winning overall score of 163.35.

“We left some points out in our skate but compared to what our free skates have been like all year, I definitely think it’s an improvement,” Prochnow said.

Lockley, 16, and Prochnow, 21, have been together for four seasons, and this is their fourth U.S. Championships, third at the junior level.

“We’ve really earned it, and we’ve worked so hard,” Lockley said. “The only thing we were working on was a little more consistency on the jumps, which I think has shown, especially today.”

The duo got together after parting ways

with previous partners. Both from the Chicago area, Lockley and Prochnow joined forces and haven’t looked back.

“We’ve had a good relationship from the beginning,” Lockley said. “We have the same goals, and we know what we want to do.”

Lockley and Prochnow will head to Japan this month to compete at the World Junior Championships, and after that, they plan on moving up to the senior ranks. To make that step, Prochnow said they’ve been working on their components and improving the quality of their elements.

“Components are a huge part of stepping into being a senior team, because you’re competing against teams that are 10 years older,” Prochnow said. “Going out there and showing that we’re not kids is definitely a huge step.”

The new pairs team of Kate Finster (Northern Kentucky SC) and Balazs Nagy (Broadmoor SC) clinched the silver medal with an overall score of 149.48. They, like the champions, experienced a few hiccups in their free skate.

On their triple Salchows, Nagy fell on the landing. He mentioned how this season it was Finster who usually fell on the jump.

“I was so confident, I was like, ‘We landed it, we got it,’” Finster said, “I look over and it didn’t happen.”

Finster, 15, and Nagy, 20, teamed up just a few months ago. Finster was on the lookout for a new partner, and Nagy wanted to get back into skating after quitting several years

ago. When they started training together, Nagy knew nothing about pairs skating.

“I was more scared in the beginning than she was because I was like, ‘What if I drop her on a lift?’” Nagy said. “I was scared learning a twist for the first time. She’s going to spin and I’m going to try and catch her and hope she doesn’t fall. But it worked out so I’m not that scared anymore.”

Isabelle Martins (Chicago FSC) and Ryan Bedard (Northern Ice FSC), another Chicago-area pairs team, and friends of Lockley and Prochnow, won the bronze medal with 141.97 points. They performed a nearly clean program, but were forced to exit their second lift early because they were too close to the rink boards.

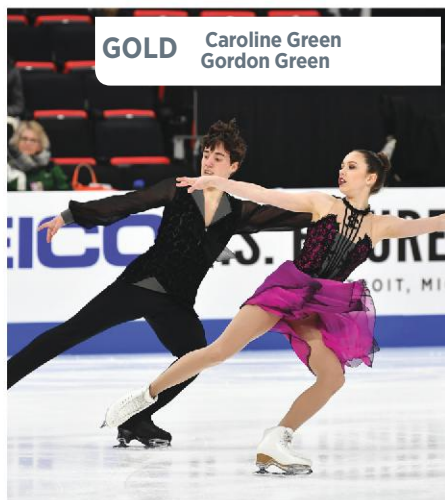
“Last year we only had our double throws and our lifts weren’t quite there yet,” Bedard said. “This year we stretched and made a huge improvement, and it feels amazing to be on the podium.”

Martins, 12, and Bedard, 18, have been together for four years, competing at four U.S. Championships. The team won the juvenile title in 2016 and placed third in the intermediate ranks in 2017. Skating at the novice level last year, Bedard caught the flu, and the team ended up 11th overall.

“It’s nice to be back,” Bedard said.

Sibling team Maria Mokhova and Ivan Mokhov (Chelsea FSC) earned the pewter medal with 136.61 points.

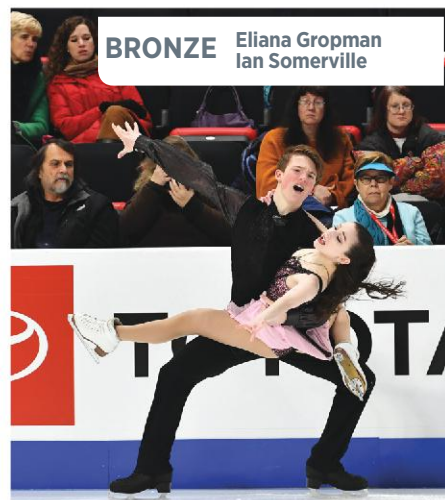




**GOLD** Caroline Green  
Gordon Green



**SILVER** Avonley Nguyen  
Vadym Kolesnik



**BRONZE** Eliana Gropman  
Ian Somerville

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

## A LITTLE BIT ‘CRAZY’

Green siblings win a close contest

BY LYNN RUTHERFORD

Sometimes, Gordon Green admits, he can get a little bit “crazy” on the ice. So this season, his coaches from Wheaton Ice Skating Academy (WISA) gave him the perfect character to play: Niccolò Paganini, the 19th century violinist and composer so virtuosic he was said to be in league with the devil.

“He’s playing not necessarily an evil, but a crazy character,” Caroline Green said of her brother’s part in their free dance to a medley including Paganini’s “Caprice No. 24.” “I think they see Paganini in Gordon. ... He’s very passionate.”

There’s a method in Gordon’s madness, though.

“I feel like because we’re brother and sister, it’s better to show emotions instead of that love story,” he said. “I feel we have been doing a good job, but we need to find more originality in our skating and find ourselves more.”

The Greens’ Paganini program included a strong spin with good camel and sit positions, and built to a drama-filled final section. It earned 101.72 to take second place in the free dance and gave the siblings gold by 1.48 points.

“There are a lot of nuances in the music, and we’ve kind of just scratched the surface of what we can do,” Caroline said.

It’s been a challenging season for Caroline (Pavilion SC of Cleveland Heights) and Gordon (Washington FSC). An illness Caroline suffered took them off the ice for two months last summer; when they returned to training in

early September, it was too late to prepare for the Junior Grand Prix Series.

“It was a letdown, but there was nothing we could do about it,” Caroline said. “It changed our goals for the season, and working through it together we prepared for this event and, hopefully, Junior Worlds.”

The Greens, who won U.S. titles at the juvenile (2013), intermediate (2014) and novice (2015, 2016) ranks as well as the 2018 junior silver medal, had tough competition from Avonley Nguyen and Vadym Kolesnik, a rising team coached by Igor Shpilband and Pasquale Camerlengo in Novi, Michigan. In the rhythm dance, the siblings’ technical prowess — including their clean Argentine tango pattern dance — helped them earn 70.82 points and take a 4.90-point lead into the free dance.

“Even when we were younger, our coaches stressed the importance of developing that technical foundation for good skating,” Caroline said. “Now since we’ve established that foundation, we’re able to get out of our comfort zone with our connection to each other, and trying to emote to the audience and the judges.”

Nguyen (Washington FSC) and Kolesnik (SC of Novi), who qualified for the Junior Grand Prix Final earlier this season, performed a mature and dramatic tango, but minor mistakes on steps took their toll.

“We did a little mistake and it cost a lot, but overall we’re happy with what we did,” said Kolesnik, who was born in Ukraine and moved to Michigan three years ago.

“It was my mistake at the end of the step

sequence, I fell out,” Nguyen said, before being quickly corrected by her partner.

“I would say there is no *your* mistake, or *my* mistake — it is *our* mistake,” he said. “We will work on it and get it better and better.”

The tables were turned in the free dance. Performing to a medley including Imagine Dragons’ “Demons,” Nguyen and Kolesnik showed superb connection, speed and performance quality, executing a fine one-foot step sequence as well as lovely, floating lifts. They won the free dance with 105.14 points, but were unable to erase the rhythm dance deficit.

“I still had a hope, but five points is a big difference. We tried our best but it didn’t happen,” a disappointed Kolesnik said. “Now we know where we have to focus and we will work on it.”

The bronze medal went to the Greens’ training partners at WISA, Eliana Gropman (Pavilion SC of Cleveland Heights) and Ian Somerville (Washington FSC). The couple moved up from fourth place after the rhythm dance with a strong performance to the *Mozart L’Opera Rock* soundtrack, marked by fine musicality and good flow across the ice. They ended with 155.46 points.

“It was powerful today; we felt the music and performed the highest we could and the connections were strong,” Somerville said. “We focused on getting the audience involved in the program.”

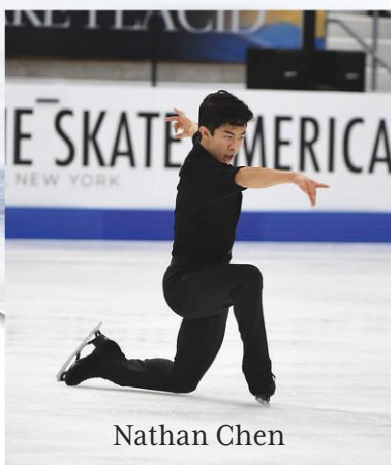
Oona Brown and Gage Brown (SC of New York) placed third in the rhythm dance, fourth in the free dance and fourth overall with 153.67 points.



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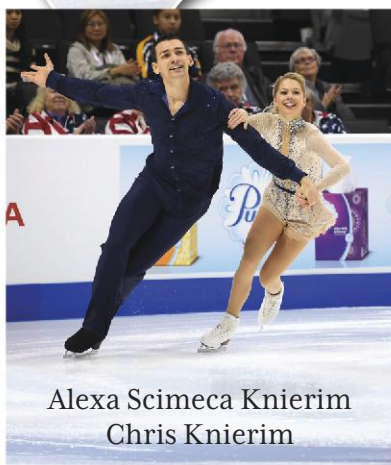
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**NOVICE MEDALISTS**

PHOTOS BY DIXIE KNUDSON



**LADIES:** (l-r) Aubrey Ignacio, silver; Calista Choi, gold; Isabelle Inthisonne, bronze; Laura Jacobson, pewter



**MEN:** (l-r) Matthew Nielsen, silver; William Annis, gold; Ilia Malinin, bronze; Joseph Klein, pewter



**PAIRS:** (l-r) Cate Fleming/Jedidiah Isbell, silver; Isabelle Goldstein/Keyton Bearinger, gold; Anastasiia Smirnova/Danil Siianytsia, bronze; Alexandra Schneiderhahn/Timmy Chapman, pewter



**ICE DANCE:** (l-r) Jordan Lin/Morgan Sletten, silver; Elizabeth Tkachenko/Alexei Kiliakov, gold; Layla Karnes/Kirill Aksenov, bronze; Elliana Peel/Ethan Peel, pewter

## ATHLETES TAKE CHALLENGES HEAD-ON

At last fall's 2018 Novice Junior Challenge Skate in Salt Lake City, Utah, the men were reminded that they could earn bonus points for trying a triple Axel.

William Annis took that enticing option to heart in Detroit by cleanly landing the triple Axel in both of his programs. But he wasn't the only one. Eric Prober included two in his free skate and one in his short program, while Ilia Malinin demonstrated the jump in his practices.

"Many of these skaters have gone out internationally or will go out this spring," said Justin Dillon, director of high performance development at U.S. Figure Skating. "I think it's nice for these athletes to get out there and compete against these other countries because it gives them more confidence; they wear that Team USA jacket and they are proud, and I

think they are more competitive because their minds are just a little bit sharper competing against other countries."

Medalists Calista Choi and Isabelle Inthisonne took a page from one of their heroes and mentors, Bradie Tennell, finishing first and third, respectively.

"They made great improvements this year," Dillon said. "It's probably nice to have the (2018) U.S. champion in your rink inspiring and pushing these girls. I think both are really solid. Aubrey Ignacio, who was second, performed beautiful triple Lutzes."

The experience of pairs champions Isabelle Goldstein and Keyton Bearinger paid off. After finishing in the middle of the pack the last two years at the novice level, they broke through with two sound and entertaining programs.

Ice dance champions Elizabeth Tkachenko and Alexei Kiliakov also enjoyed a breakthrough competition. They had placed fourth at the novice level the past two seasons.

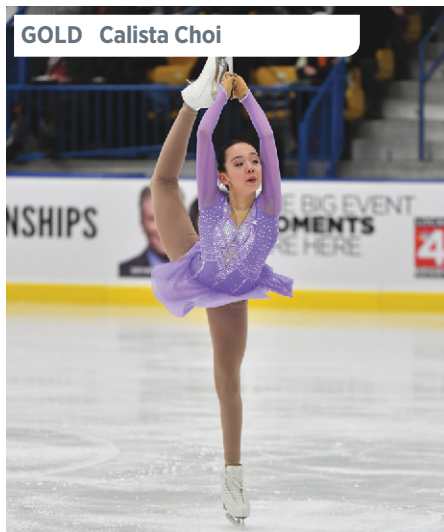
This season marks the last time that the juvenile, intermediate and novice skaters will compete at the U.S. Championships. A new camp structure has been set up to give these levels of skaters more opportunities for growth and competition.

"This will give them the chance to keep pushing each other," Dillon said. "It was fun to see them all compete, but now we can compete over multiple series of days with different kinds of competitions, and make this new competitive structure benefit these athletes."

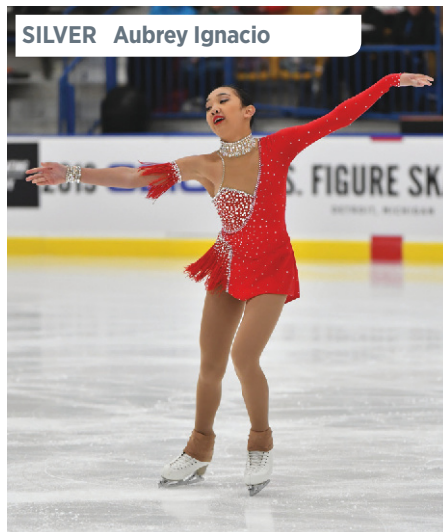


## NOVICE LADIES

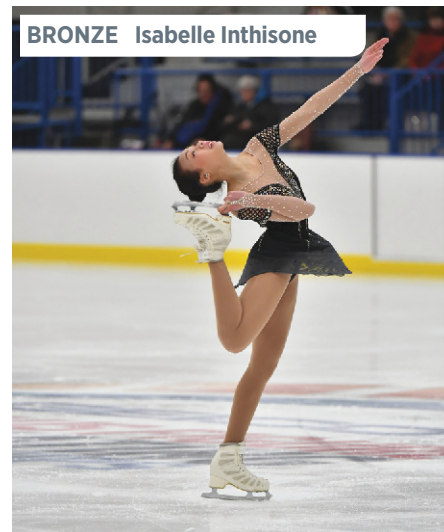
**GOLD** Calista Choi



**SILVER** Aubrey Ignacio



**BRONZE** Isabelle Inthisonne



PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

# A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

Choi delivers 'emotional' free skate to garner title

**BY MARISSA PEDERSON**

Calista Choi (Skokie Valley SC) basked in the moment in the kiss and cry.

In her third U.S. Championships appearance, she had finally made her way to the top of the podium, and was nothing but grateful to be there.

"The best part has been just making it to the U.S. Championships," she said after her free skate to "Ladies in Lavender" by Joshua Bell and Nigel Hess. "It is fortunate for all of us to make it here since it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

The 14-year-old entered the national stage in 2017, placing 11th in the intermediate division in Kansas City, Missouri. After adding triple jumps to her repertoire in 2018, Choi grabbed the pewter medal at the novice level in San Jose, California.

At the Detroit Skating Club, she delivered two nearly perfect skates to secure gold.

"This is probably the best two performances I have ever had at the U.S. Championships and I'm so happy with myself," she said. "I think my favorite part was the overall performance and putting my skating skills and emotions into it."

In Choi's free skate, she landed five triple jumps, including two in combination, and was awarded Level 4s for all of her remaining elements. The 2019 Midwestern Sectional champion had all but one positive grades of execution, winning both the short program and free skate with a total of 160.15 points. Despite a nearly

clean technical free skate, the Illinois-based skater shone brightest with her artistry, generating a segment-best 48.88 points for her components.

"I think this was a very emotional skate for me," she said. "It was great to put out a good performance."

Choi hopes to move up to the junior ranks next year.

"I want to continue working on being a better skater, performer, jumper and overall figure skater next season," she said.

Unlike Choi, 15-year-old Aubrey Ignacio (All Year FSC) was new to the U.S. Championships, claiming the silver medal with 149.33 points. Ignacio was crowned 2019 Pacific Coast Sectional champion in Salt Lake City, and brought that momentum to Detroit.

"It has been fun getting to know everybody and connecting with people I hadn't known before this," she said.

The Los Angeles native was in fourth place after the short program, and jumped up to the number-two spot after a sassy performance to "On Your Feet" by Gloria Estefan and the Miami Sound Machine. She had the crowd clapping along to her free skate.

"I had this music last year, also," Ignacio said. "I connected to it. It is fun and spunky."

Ignacio opened her program with a triple Lutz, followed by a triple Lutz-double toe loop combination.

"I wanted to do both of my Lutzes," she said. "I put a lot of work into it and it showed today. I want to get a triple-triple for next year

and work on getting all my triples consistent for the upcoming season," she said.

Isabelle Inthisonne (DuPage FSC) finished with 148.16 points and the bronze medal. Last season, she qualified for the U.S. Championships in the intermediate division but had to withdraw due to a hip flexor injury. Despite the setback, Inthisonne focused on getting back to the national stage.

"The experience is so amazing because it is something that you're proud of yourself for doing," she said. "You had to qualify, so it is something to be proud of just to make it here."

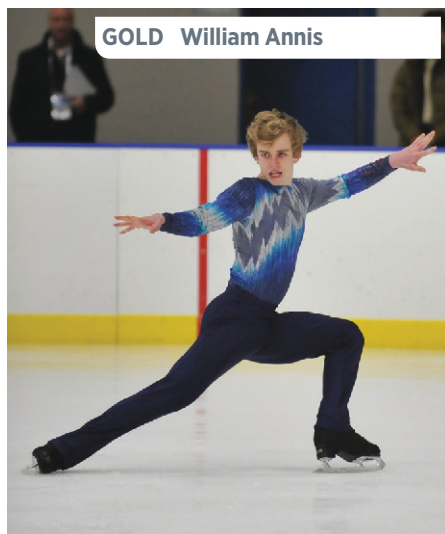
At 14 years old, Inthisonne was the only member on the podium to complete six triple jumps, including one triple toe loop-Euler-triple Salchow combination.

Laura Jacobson (SC of New York) was looking for redemption. The 15-year-old failed to qualify for the U.S. Championships in 2017 and 2018, and missed the podium as a juvenile skater in 2016 by just .01 point.

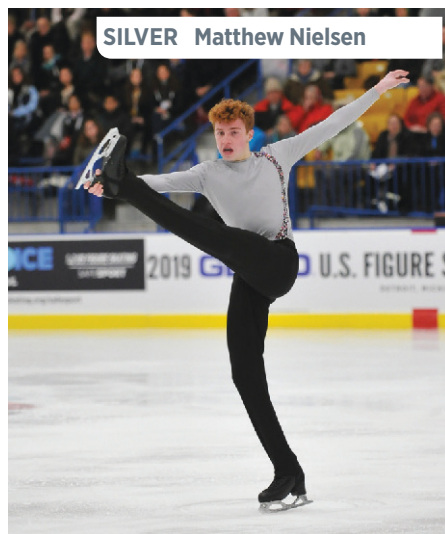
"This is a better outcome than my first nationals," she said. "It was hard for me because I was in juvenile and was still learning. There is so much to learn in this sport, so this time around I am happy with how I placed and how I presented myself, and I am excited to hopefully come back next year."

In her free skate to a beautiful cover of "Yellow" by Coldplay, Jacobson bumped up from sixth to fourth place to claim the pewter medal with 139.52 points.

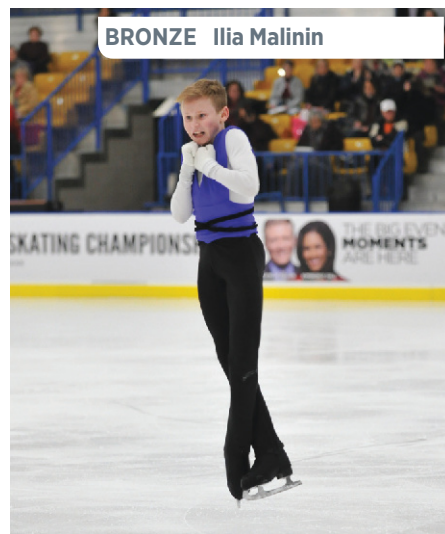




**GOLD** William Annis



**SILVER** Matthew Nielsen



**BRONZE** Ilia Malinin

PHOTOS BY DIXIE KNUDSON

## A SHARK ATTACK

Free skate to *Jaws* sews up title for Annis

BY TROY SCHWINDT

“You’re going to need a bigger boat.” That famous line from the 1975 movie *Jaws* played out in the free skate of champion William Annis (Yarmouth Ice Club) in Detroit.

Annis portrayed the infamous man-eater, which scared the daylight out of moviegoers and kept people out of the ocean during the blockbuster’s epic run.

The just-turned 14-year-old performed to the ominous music from the movie soundtrack, combining his acting talent with exceptional technical skill — he landed a triple Axel in both programs — to win his second national title in three years with a score of 168.08.

Annis captured the juvenile crown in 2017.

Matthew Nielsen (Strongsville SC) won the free skate and silver medal, while Ilia Malinin (Washington FSC) claimed the bronze medal.

“I really like sharks but I don’t want to go swimming with one,” Annis joked. “But I heard the music and wondered has anyone ever skated to this? Is this actually good skating music? I asked my coach (Debra Minahan), and she wasn’t sure. But then she listened to it and she liked it, too. So we picked *Jaws*.”

“He’s really embraced it and made it his own,” Minahan said.

Annis skated a clean short program to take a 1.67 point lead into the free skate. His free skate was technically ambitious, with one significant error toward the end on a planned

triple Lutz-double toe loop. His two triple Axels combined for 25.43 points.

“When I do take my time, I land my triple Axel,” Annis said. “I can’t just rush through it.”

Minahan credits a thorough off-ice regimen that includes quickness drills with his feet, rotational movements, cardio exercises and stretching for his well-balanced technical package.

“I felt great that he was able to complete two good ones (triple Axel) in the short and long,” Minahan said. “That was the first time with that happening. He started doing that in competition in July. For the most part, even when he’s not landing it, it was clean. He would get a bonus point.”

Skating last, Nielsen landed five triple jumps — two in combination — in his program to “Who Wants to Live Forever” by The Tenors. His free skate score of 109.81 bumped him up to second place with a total score of 167.64.

“It wasn’t exactly my best, but I’m happy with how it went,” said Nielsen, who earned the silver medal in the intermediate division in 2018. “I totally missed my Axel combo and I missed my triple toe on the end of it — I lost points on the second Axel as well.”

Nielsen’s skating, he said, has been “getting progressively better.” He finished seventh in the intermediate division in 2017.

“As I keep doing this, I get better at handling my nerves, at being more consistent,” he said.

Off the ice, the skater from Wooster, Ohio, performs flips on his trampoline, in gymnastics and diving.

“A lot of diving is like twisting, so they (skating) correspond well with each other,” Nielsen said.

Malinin, the 2017 intermediate champion, finished second in both segments with a total score of 167.05. Mistakes on two jumping passes proved costly in the tight race for the gold medal. He popped his opening triple Lutz-triple toe loop combination, and he fell on another jumping pass midway through his program to *House of Flying Daggers* by Shigeru Umebayashi.

“I feel kind of OK,” he said. “I got a little higher component scores this time than usual.”

Malinin, who is coached by his mother Tatyana Malinina in Reston, Virginia, would like to get his jumping arsenal more consistent heading into next season as a junior-level skater.

“I want to learn how to get my jumps, so that no matter what happens, you can do them really well,” he said. “I’m going to work more on the triple Axel and a quad toe.”

Joseph Klein (Skokie Valley SC) demonstrated strong skating and presentation skills en route to the pewter medal and an overall score of 154.39.

“We do a lot of work on components and skating skills because I don’t have as high level of jumps as a lot of the other guys in my program, so a lot of times my skating comes in handy,” Klein said.

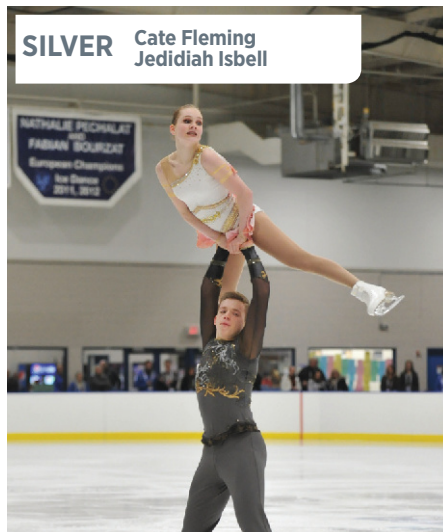


## NOVICE PAIRS

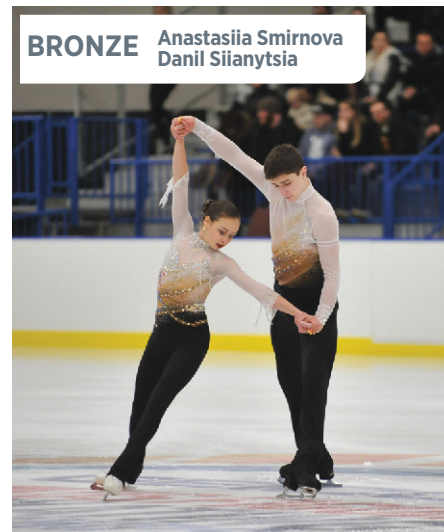
**GOLD** Isabelle Goldstein/  
 Keyton Bearinger



**SILVER** Cate Fleming  
 Jedidiah Isbell



**BRONZE** Anastasiia Smirnova  
 Danil Siianytsia



PHOTOS BY DIXIE KNUDSON

# HOME SWEET HOME

Goldstein and Bearinger fight back to earn crown

BY TAYLOR DEAN

After finishing second in the short program, Isabelle Goldstein and Keyton Bearinger (Detroit SC) proclaimed they were ready to fight for gold.

"We're going to put it all on the line, and we're going to nail some awesome elements," Goldstein said.

And fight, they did.

The duo used their home-ice advantage and enthusiastic cheers from the crowd for motivation to score 85.93 points in the free skate, boosting them to first in the segment and a top overall score of 134.28.

Goldstein, 15, and Bearinger, 20, agreed it was their throw triple Salchow that helped them win the event despite a sprained ankle Goldstein had suffered two weeks earlier.

"We had to take one of our elements out — a throw triple loop," Goldstein said. "So we just focused on the Salchow."

This was the team's fourth U.S. Championships together. They stood on the podium last in 2016, when they placed fourth at the intermediate level.

Craig Joeright, one of the duo's coaches, highlighted Goldstein's and Bearinger's development with each other, both technically and emotionally.

"Their chemistry on the ice is a lot better," he said. "They really look like a pairs team now."

Incorporating a triple twist and more throw triple jumps, Joeright said, is a goal as the team moves up to the junior ranks domesti-

cally and the Junior Grand Prix circuit, but not before Goldstein's ankle heals.

Cate Fleming and Jedidiah Isbell (SC of Boston) also dealt with a foot injury, and they persevered to win the silver medal with an overall score of 131.35. The injury to Isbell occurred on a botched landing in practice that inflamed an overuse injury; Isbell was not able to practice any jumps until two weeks prior to the U.S. Championships.

"It's been a series of small injuries, and I have some tendinitis," Isbell said. "But when I'm home again we're going to reevaluate, hopefully become pain-free again and everything will go back to normal."

Fleming, 13, and Isbell, 16, have been together for several seasons, and this is their third time on the U.S. Championships podium.

The team's coach, Melanie Lambert, has watched them grow from the beginning. They were reminiscing before the free skate, looking at old pictures of the two skaters together.

"They really were babies when they first started out," Lambert laughed. "Cate was looking for a partner, and he (Isbell) had walked into the rink, and I went, 'There's a boy!' And the rest is history."

Fleming and Isbell plan on moving up to the junior level with a goal of receiving some Junior Grand Prix Series assignments.

After skating together for only six months, Anastasiia Smirnova (Yarmouth IC), 14, and Danil Siianytsia (All Year FSC), 18, staked claim to the bronze medal. The team posted a

score of 129.45, nearly 25 points higher than their sectionals score, despite battling illness.

"It all went great, but it's still a learning process," coach Trudy Oltmanns said. "They're a good physical match and they look really nice together, but more importantly, they enjoy training and have a lot of fun together."

The team is prepared to move up to the junior level, Oltmanns said, as they make their elements more consistent, including side-by-side triple jumps, throw triple jumps and a triple twist.

Pewter medalists Alexandra Schneiderhahn (St. Louis SC) and Timmy Chapman (Central Florida FSC) have also been skating together for only six months. They finished with a score of 123.55.

"I saw him (Chapman) when I was training for the summer in Florida, and my coach just said I should try it out," Schneiderhahn said.

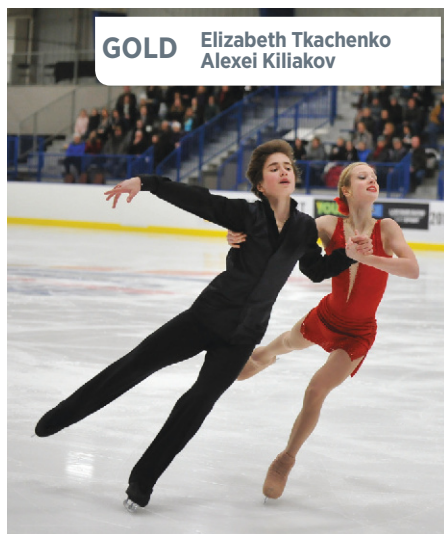
This is Schneiderhahn's first season competing pairs, but Chapman is more seasoned, having had two partners before joining forces with Schneiderhahn.

"This is my fourth nationals but our first together," he said. "We felt really calm here and definitely ready."

Schneiderhahn, 17, and Chapman, 18, want to keep skating together and continue improving.

"We haven't discussed yet if we're moving up to junior or staying at novice, but for now we just want to skate," Chapman said.

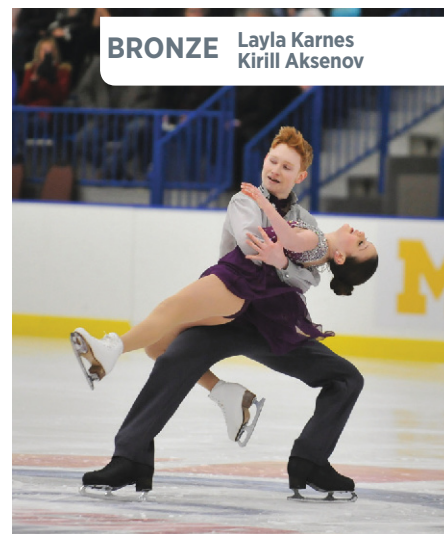




**GOLD** Elizabeth Tkachenko  
 Alexei Kiliakov



**SILVER** Jordan Lin  
 Morgan Sletten



**BRONZE** Layla Karnes  
 Kirill Aksenov

PHOTOS BY DIXIE KNUDSON

## ‘FUN TO PERFORM’

Tkachenko and Kiliakov rock ‘n’ roll to crown

BY LYNN RUTHERFORD

Alexei Kiliakov stood at the boards for 12 ice dance teams at the 2019 U.S. Championships, but watching one — son Alexei Jr. and partner Elizabeth Tkachenko — set his heart pounding like no other.

“Internally, you are more intense,” said the elder Kiliakov, one of the founders of Wheaton Ice Skating Academy (WISA) in Rockville, Maryland. “Maybe my blood pressure goes to 210 over 150.”

His wife, Elena Novak, WISA cofounder and choreographer for the teams, can hardly bear to watch.

“We [act] the same way when they compete, as when everyone else competes,” Novak said. “We just don’t show what happens inside, because they shouldn’t feel the vibe. That’s why I prefer not to stand by the boards when they compete. Alexei is better, because I am more emotional.”

All of the nail-biting was more than worth it in Detroit, when Tkachenko and Kiliakov (Washington FSC) won the title by a healthy six points. It is their third U.S. title, following wins on the juvenile (2015) and intermediate (2016) levels.

“Their personalities are different, but each knows how to light a fire in the other,” Novak said. “They have been together for so long (seven years), they know each other’s pluses and minuses, how to put each other in the right frame of mind for competitions.”

So, what’s different about them?

“She is a lot more energetic and outgo-

ing,” Alexei Jr. said. “I’m ...”

“He’s kind of slow,” Tkachenko interjected.

“I procrastinate,” Alexei Jr. admitted.

Tkachenko and Kiliakov placed a close second in the starlight waltz compulsory dance to their WISA training partners, Jordan Lin and Morgan Sletten, and won the second compulsory, the paso doble. They entered the free dance with a razor-thin .03 point lead.

That’s when the duo really cut loose, performing to an Elvis Presley medley including “A Little Less Conversation” that showed fine twizzles, flashy steps and the best lifts of the event. They won the free dance with 69.30 points and ended with 124.53 points total.

“We really like energetic programs,” Alexei Jr. said. “They’re fun to perform.”

“We just like to dance out there,” Tkachenko added. “We want to be entertaining.”

Lin and Sletten (Washington FSC), second after the compulsories, performed their free dance to violinist Lucia Micarelli’s “Nocturne/Bohemian Rhapsody.” The team earned high marks for their lifts and spin, but Sletten bobbled on his twizzles. They placed fourth in the free dance, and won the silver medal with 118.52 points.

“[There were] a few little spots that could have been improved, but I’m happy because I’ve finally done my twizzles in competition, which I struggled with,” Lin said.

“Boy, I haven’t done my twizzles like that, ever. There’s a first time for everything,” Sletten

said. “I wasn’t quite myself today but we still got second place, nothing to get mad about.”

Kiliakov was happy his skaters were able to shake off some rough practices.

“Yesterday was a long day during practice; there were a lot of mistakes,” the coach said. “They showed good character, they mobilized and they did very good.”

After finishing third in both compulsory dances, Layla Karnes (All Year FSC) and Kirill Aksenov (Skokie Valley SC) performed an elegant free dance to a waltz from the 2009 film soundtrack *Coco Before Chanel* that showed off deep knees and fine edges. They placed third in the free dance and won the bronze medal with 118.47 points, impressive considering they have skated together for only eight months.

“They’ve come such a long way in a short time; I can’t credit their work ethic, drive and determination enough,” Collin Brubaker, who coaches the team in Geneva, Illinois, with Jamie Whyte, said.

The skaters credit their fast rise to good communication, using a mix of languages.

“We’ve developed this English-Russian thing,” Karnes said. “We get along really well. We like a lot of the same things: animals and similar types of music.”

“I like everything about skating with Layla,” Aksenov said.

Elliana Peal and Ethan Peal (Skokie SC), who won the intermediate title last season, placed second in the free dance and fourth overall with 116.85 points.



# TV SCHEDULE

All times Eastern. Dates and times are subject to change.

## 2019 ISU WORLD FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20 | NBCSN | 12-2 p.m.  
THURSDAY, MARCH 21 | NBCSN | 1-3 p.m.  
THURSDAY, MARCH 21 | NBCSN | 3-5 p.m.  
FRIDAY, MARCH 22 | NBCSN | 7-9 p.m.  
FRIDAY, MARCH 22 | NBCSN | 1-3 p.m.  
SATURDAY, MARCH 23 | NBC | 8-10 p.m.  
SATURDAY, MARCH 23 | NBCSN | 2-4 p.m.  
SUNDAY, APRIL 14 | NBC | 3-6 p.m.

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(l-r) Isabeau Levito, silver; Lindsay Thorngren, gold; Hazel Collier, bronze; Tamnhi Huynh, pewter



Lindsay Thorngren

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

## A DIFFERENT STORY

Hard work on triples propels Thorngren to title

BY TROY SCHWINDT

Lindsay Thorngren (Ice House of New Jersey FSC) floated through her dramatic free skate, demonstrating speed, artistry and a jumping prowess that is typically found at the higher levels. The 13-year-old landed five triple jumps — three in combination — to claim the title with a career-best score of 146.27.

The seventh-grader at Buzz Aldrin Middle School in Montclair, New Jersey, finished nearly than five points higher than silver medalist Isabeau Levito (SC of Southern New Jersey), who was the 2018 juvenile girls champion. Hazel Collier (SC of Boston) rounded out a top-three sweep for skaters out of the Eastern Sectional, earning a bronze medal with a score of 135.79.

Thorngren's triumph felt extra special, as she missed out on qualifying for the 2018 U.S. Championships following a subpar free skate at sectionals that left her in seventh place.

"She really wanted to make it last year but it just didn't work out in the long (program)," her coach Julia Lautowa, a seven-time Austrian champion, said. "But all she had to do was get her triples clean, and we've been working so hard this whole year and it's coming along."

In Detroit, Thorngren started her free skate to the selection of "Nero" by Two Steps from Hell by falling on her opening triple Lutz-triple toe loop combination. Without missing a beat, she regrouped and landed the

combination just moments later.

Her spins, footwork and ice coverage helped to separate her from the rest of the field.

"I felt good about my performance, but there's always room for improvement," Thorngren said.

"Everything has come together, little by little," Lautowa said. "We've been fighting and fighting to get the jumps cleaner. She works so hard and trains every day, a lot of hours."

The charismatic Levito entertained the crowd with her fiery program to a "Libertango" selection. The 11-year-old delivered six triple jumps and sizzling choreography.

"She's a beautiful artist on the ice and it's easy for me to find her programs because I know the more stylish the music, she is going to be better performing," her coach Yulia Kuznetsova said. "So her music has to be really catchy. If it's too bland, she isn't going to go for it."

Following Eastern Sectionals, Kuznetsova told Levito that she would need to add more difficulty to her programs to vie for a title. They added a triple loop-triple toe combination and a triple flip to her free skate, and a triple-triple to her short program.

Levito, who is homeschooled, wasn't sure initially, she said, that she could take on such demanding programs.

"A lot of times I underestimate myself, which is not good to do," Levito said. "I had a

feeling I would be able to do it, but of course I can't tell the future. I needed a little time to see how I was practicing and how it was going. About halfway between sectionals and nationals, I was more like, 'I've got this.'"

Levito said she loves performing her "Libertango" free skate.

"I feel it brings out my sassiness," she said.

Kuznetsova has coached Levito since she was 3 years old and considers her to be like a daughter.

"She came to me in the Learn to Skate class," Kuznetsova said. "She fell in love with the sport. She loves everything that we are doing."

Collier, like Thorngren and Levito, delivered exceptional presentation skills in her program to selections from the musical *Hairspray*.

"Sometimes I try to focus more on the performance than the jumps," Collier, an eighth grader at Boston Latin School, said. "I love to compete and it's so fun for me to perform and show what I can do."

Collier skated to "The New Girl in Town" and "You Can't Stop the Beat" from the Broadway classic.

"I chose that because I like to skate to fast songs and it's just fun," she said. Her technical package included four triple jumps and two Level 4 spins.

Tamnhi Huynh (Dallas FSC) earned the pewter medal with 122.82 points.



## INTERMEDIATE MEN



(l-r) Daniel Martynov, silver; Robert Yampolsky, gold; Kai Kovar, pewter; Jacob Sanchez, bronze



Robert Yampolsky

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

## A NEW RESOLVE

Perseverance pays off for Yampolsky with gold medal

BY MARISSA PEDERSON

The third time was the charm for Robert Yampolsky (North Jersey FSC) who was crowned the champion on the second day of competition in Detroit. In his third U.S. Championships appearance, the 14-year-old topped the field with a combined score of 147.51 points, 14 more than the silver medalist.

“Last year I didn’t have any of my triples, so from last nationals to this year I just worked on getting my triples down,” Yampolsky said. “I am happy with how it turned out in my program this year since that is what I worked on.”

Yampolsky first came onto the national scene in 2017 in Kansas City, where he captured the silver medal in the juvenile boys competition. In 2018, the Livingston, New Jersey, native moved up to the intermediate division, but the two triples in his free skate were downgraded and he finished ninth at the competition in San Jose, California. Coming to Detroit, Yampolsky had a new resolve to nail a rigorous performance and demonstrate that his hard work had paid off.

“I like the difficulty of my program this season,” he said. “It is hard to throw that many triples and I am proud of it. This was my best

score ever.”

The 2019 Eastern Sectional champion landed all five triple jumps in his flamenco-inspired free skate by Farruca and both of his triples in the short program. His nearly perfect free skate was awarded all positive grades of execution and a Level 4 closing spin.

Also seeking redemption, Daniel Martynov (Northern ISC) earned the silver medal with 133.25 points. The 12-year-old competed with Yampolsky in the juvenile competition in 2017, finishing fifth. Martynov missed the U.S. Championships in 2018, placing sixth at the Midwestern Sectional Championships in the intermediate division.

The Chicago-based skater found his groove this season, winning the 2019 Midwestern Sectional Championships by more than 12 points, and claiming the second step on the podium. His instrumental free skate included three triple jumps and two Level 4 spins. He also received the highest program components score with 39.96 points.

“There are no words in my free skate, so I like that I am able to express myself through my movements and the music instead of to lyrics,” Martynov said. “This experience has been so amazing. It is great to be able to compete with all of these people.”

The youngest member on the podium, 11-year-old Jacob Sanchez (Hudson Valley FSC), picked up the bronze medal with an overall score of 131.96. The juvenile silver medalist last season, Sanchez got off to a great start this season as the Eastern Sectional runner-up.

Hailing from Montgomery, New York, the energetic skater had an inspiring free skate as the crowd clapped along to his rendition of *Riverdance*.

“Jason Brown was my inspiration for skating and I really look up to him,” Sanchez said. “When he skated his *Riverdance* program at 2014 nationals, I knew that I wanted to skate to that program one day at nationals, too. I loved doing it this season.”

With his career-best score under his belt, Sanchez was thrilled with the experience and his performance.

“The best part has been getting to show the nation what I can do, not just the audience but the people watching live,” he said. “I get to express myself through my skating.”

Kai Kovar (Wasatch FSC) earned the pewter medal, moving from fifth to fourth place after his free skate to music from *The Artist*. The 12-year-old scored 118.10 total points.





(l-r) Natasha Mishkutionok/Daniel Tioumentsev, silver; Faye Kropf/Sasha Lunin, gold; Kayla Black/Kamden Black, bronze; Aleksandra Prudsky/Enoch Chen, pewter

JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

sev (Dallas FSC) overcame a few challenges to score 68.81 points and earn the silver medal.

“We don’t skate together often, so I’m really proud of my partner and what we accomplished today,” Tioumentsev, who has skated with Mishkutionok for two years, said.

Tioumentsev, 16, lives in Colorado Springs, Colorado, while Mishkutionok, 13, resides in Dallas. The two get together to practice only a few times each month, most of the time working on their own in their respective hometowns.

“They don’t skate like normal pairs teams, so they did great and they handle it very well,” said Natalia Mishkutionok, the team’s coach and Natasha’s mother.

Sibling team Kayla and Kamden Black (Seattle SC) collected the bronze with 68.61 points. With three U.S. Championships under their belts, the Blacks arrived ready for another shot at the podium.

“We skated nearly perfect,” Kamden said. “No falls.”

Though they both compete singles, both agree they like pairs better.

“She (Kayla) loves pairs,” Barbara Murphy, the duo’s coach, said. “And her brother will do anything she will do, and they both love it.”

Aleksandra Prudsky and Enoch Chen (SC of Houston) rounded out the podium with a score of 56.79. After taking last year off, the team returned to make their second appearance at the U.S. Championships better than ever.

“We wanted to skate to our fullest potential and come back here and do well,” Chen said. “And here we are.”

## ‘AN AMAZING RESULT’

Kropf and Lunin make beeline to the top

BY TAYLOR DEAN

It started with an ice show.

Faye Kropf and Sasha Lunin (Fort Wayne ISC) first skated together in their club’s ice show last spring. Little did they know it would lead them winning the pairs title at the 2019 U.S. Championships just months later.

“They’re friends with my juvenile pairs team (Hailey Sundstrom and Andy Deng), and they wanted to do it just for fun,” Alena Lunin, the duo’s coach and Lunin’s mother, said. “And then after they asked if they could just try pairs, I said, ‘Why not?’”

At their first competition at Skate Milwaukee in July, Alena said they kept the difficult elements to a minimum.

“They were only skating pairs for about two months, but then at Skate Detroit we added more,” she said.

One week after Skate Milwaukee, Kropf, 14, and Lunin, 18, headed to Skate Detroit, where they won with 68.02 points, nearly 30 points more than the second-place finishers.

At the U.S. Championships, their score of 78.75 was a career-best.

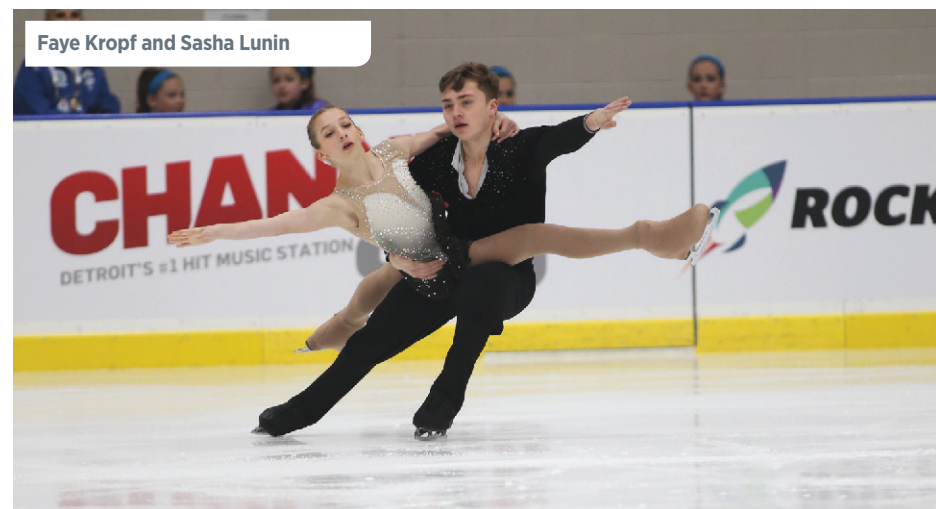
“I used to do singles in junior, but I wanted to make a change and try something different,” Lunin said. “For our first year in pairs, it’s really an amazing result.”

His partner, Kropf, had been skating for

only five years prior to teaming up. As an intermediate singles skater, she placed 10th at the 2019 Midwestern Sectional Championships. Though Lunin didn’t compete in singles this year, he placed eighth last year in the junior men’s division at the 2018 U.S. Championships.

“As a team, we have a lot to work on, but we’re excited about it,” he said.

2018 U.S. juvenile pairs champions Natasha Mishkutionok and Daniel Tioument-



Faye Kropf and Sasha Lunin

PHOTO BY GEORGE ROSSANO



## INTERMEDIATE ICE DANCE



(l-r) Leah Neset/Dimitry Tsarevski, silver; Nastia Efimova/Jonathan Zhao, gold; Zoe Sensenbrenner/Matthew Sperry, bronze; Jenna Hauer/Benjamin Starr, pewter



Nastia Efimova and Jonathan Zhao

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/US FIGURE SKATING

## ‘TURNED OUT WELL’

Persistence pays off for champions  
 Efimova and Zhao

BY TROY SCHWINDT

Not many teams at the intermediate level have been together for more than one or two years. But Nastia Efimova and Jonathan Zhao (Triangle FSC) share a partnership that started six years ago. That experience and connection to each other helped lift them to the title.

“My mom — coach Natalia Efimova — suggested we start skating together then because he was not doing so well in singles and his parents wanted him to stop skating, but this was the last solution and it turned out well,” Efimova, 12, said.

At the U.S. Championships in Detroit, they proved that the decision to continue was the right one by winning both pattern dances and the free dance to a Latin theme en route to an overall score of 105.67. The team which trains at the Iceplex in Raleigh, North Carolina, finished fourth a year ago at the U.S. Championships with a score of 86.48.

“Our coaches chose that music for us because we like to smile and we are good at doing more salsa, fun things,” Efimova said.

“I felt like we did better [than at sectionals],” Zhao, 16, said. “We were more coordinated and it was a lot more fun.”

Nathan Truesdell, who works with Natalia as one of the team’s coaches, said it was obvious

that they were having fun performing their free dance.

“You could see that they were dancing with each other; they weren’t just doing steps,” Truesdell said.

The competition marked their fourth U.S. Championships together.

Leah Neset (Magic City FSC) and Dimitry Tsarevski (Broadmoor SC) captured the silver medal with a score of 102.11. They performed to music from *Cirque du Soleil*, with Neset wearing blue and Tsarevski clad in green.

“We chose that music because it was a good connecting program,” their coach Elena Dostatni said. “Leah represents the idea of water while Dimitry represents the idea of earth, and together they are creating a new universe, and that’s the idea of the program.”

Dostatni was most happy technically, she said, with the team’s rotational lift.

“That’s a great accomplishment for us because we learned that lift after sectionals,” she said.

Dostatni has coached Tsarevski at the Broadmoor SC in Colorado Springs, Colorado, for the last two-plus years. More than six months ago he had an extended tryout with Neset, who hails from Minot, North Dakota.

“It’s been an amazing experience being

with such an amazing partner,” Tsarevski said.

Zoe Sensenbrenner (Peninsula SC) and Matthew Sperry (SC of Northern Virginia), the 2018 juvenile silver medalists, earned the bronze medal with a score of 88.26, performing to a French-themed waltz and to a clip from the soundtrack to the animated film *Happy Feet* for their free dance.

The duo trains under the coaching team of Alexei Kiliakov and at the same Maryland rinks as the championship-level teams of Lorraine McNamara and Quinn Carpenter, and Rachel Parsons and Michael Parsons.

“It’s a great learning opportunity to talk to them about their experiences competing and training,” Sperry said of the two elite teams.

In Detroit, Sensenbrenner, 12, said she was most pleased with her twizzles.

“It’s something I’ve been struggling with all season,” she said.

Sperry, 16, loved their overall footwork.

“I think it really matches the music well and flows nicely,” he said.

Jenna Hauer (SC of Wilmington) and Benjamin Starr (Charter Oak FSC), the 2018 U.S. juvenile champions, claimed the pewter medal with a score of 87.19.



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## JUVENILE GIRLS



PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

Also hailing from the Pacific Coast, Tia Hilbelink (Portland ISC) claimed the silver medal with 61.75 points in her program to “Assassin’s Tango” by John Powell and an instrumental medley by Pink Martini. The 12-year-old received nearly all positive grades of execution.

“I thought it was a great experience and I love being around all these skaters,” Hilbelink said. “My program went well and everything I had been working on turned out today.”

Under coach Shannon Damiano, Hilbelink concentrated especially hard on her closing spin, which earned a Level 4 and the highest GOE for the program (.91).

The SC of New York rounded out the podium with members Lilly Mills winning the bronze medal and Ava Ziegler securing the pewter medal.

Mills finished a mere .59 point behind Hilbelink. Hailing from Canastota, New York, the 12-year-old pulled out all the stops in her routine, landing a triple Salchow to open her program. She did not attempt the jump at the Eastern Coast Sectional Championships.

“I had been working hard on my triple Salchow and I landed it today, which was a big goal of mine,” Mills said.

The Eastern Sectional champion and top qualifier coming into the competition, Ziegler produced a solid performance, scoring 60.14 points. Despite falling on her triple Salchow, the 12-year-old finished with the second-highest program components score, with 28.00 points.

(l-r) Tia Hilbelink, silver; Kanon Smith, gold; Lilly Mills, bronze; Ava Ziegler, pewter

## ‘INSPIRATIONAL TO ME’

Smith soars to title aboard *The Polar Express*

BY MARISSA PEDERSON

Kanon Smith (All Year FSC) took the audience on a thrilling ride aboard *The Polar Express* en route to the first title of the 2019 GEICO U.S. Figure Skating Championships.

The 10-year-old scored a whopping 68.02 points in her free skate to win by more than six points. Her total was nearly 10 points better than the top sectional score.

Smith sported a black-and-white costume with furry accents in her performance inspired by the classic holiday film.

“I really like the *Polar Express*,” she said. “When I watched the movie, I decided I wanted to do it because it has pretty music and it was inspirational to me.”

As the Pacific Coast Sectional champion, Smith had the second-best qualifying score coming into the competition. At that event in Salt Lake City, she struggled with her triple toe loop and took a spill on the opening element. Despite the fall, Smith scored 57.96 points.

It was a different story at the Detroit Skating Club. The California native opened with a flawless triple toe loop and was awarded 1.09 additional points for her execution.

“I have been doing a lot of triple toes and a lot of doubles to help me build up to it,” she said.

Her coach Tammy Gambill was thrilled with Smith’s U.S. Championships debut.

“I am proud of Kanon with her first national performance,” Gambill said. “She has always been a little go-getter and always gives me 100 percent. She has a wonderful personality and loves to compete. I feel she has a bright future and I am excited for her.”



Kanon Smith





(l-r) Matthew Grossman, silver; Lucas Broussard, gold; Jonathan Hildebrandt, bronze; Nikita Prudsky, pewter



Lucas Broussard

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

## ‘I GOT THE JOB DONE’

Broussard skates clean program, jumps way to title

**BY TAYLOR DEAN**

Lucas Broussard (Highland SC) stretched out to his starting pose. Edouard Lalo’s “Cello Concerto” faded in and built up as the 12-year-old from Seattle moved across the ice.

Opening with an explosive double Axel-double toe loop-double loop combination, Broussard jumped his way to the title at the U.S. Championships.

“I got the job done,” Broussard said proudly from just behind the kiss and cry at the Detroit Skating Club.

Broussard and his choreographer, Corrie Martin, work together every year to find the right music.

“She chooses a theme for the year,” Broussard said. “Sometimes I’ll show her music, but she found this piece and I really liked it.”

He confidently landed double Axels, double Lutzes and a triple Salchow. He earned positive grades of execution on every element, which is what boosted him to a career-best score of 66.01.

With a smile, he said winning was “great,” but that wasn’t the highlight.

“Just being here, it’s so much fun being

out there on the ice,” he said.

Broussard finished nearly eight points ahead of silver medalist Matthew Grossman (Mitchell Johansson Method). Grossman, 13, recently moved from Miami to Boston, where he trains with Mark Mitchell and Peter Johansson in Revere, Massachusetts.

Skating to a Michael Jackson medley, Grossman enticed the audience, and cheers erupted each time he landed a jump.

The excitement continued as the audience clapped along to “Beat It,” the last song in the medley, as Grossman danced his way down the ice, completing a step sequence that earned him positive grades of execution from every judge.

This was Grossman’s second time at the U.S. Championships. At his debut last year, he scored 47.91 points, finishing in sixth place. The change this year? Adding a triple jump, which helped to boost his score by more than 10 points.

“I really wanted to land the triple Salchow and I was able to do it,” he said.

Jonathan Hildebrandt (SC of Boston), 13, delivered perhaps one of the most heartfelt performances en route to the bronze med-

al. Skating to “A Million Dreams” from the soundtrack to *The Greatest Showman*, chosen and choreographed by Scott Brown, Hildebrandt clearly enjoyed his time on the ice.

“I like the outcome of how I skated,” he said.

Despite a fall on his double Axel that kept his score one point under his total from the Eastern Sectional Championships, Hildebrandt still finished the program kneeling in front of the judges, arms outstretched and smiling ear to ear.

Hildebrandt finished with a score of 46.16, nearly three points ahead of pewter medalist Nikita Prudsky (SC of Houston), who skated to music from the 1981 Soviet movie *Say a Word for the Poor Hussar*.

His coach and father, Val Prudsky, said that the program is about a Russian soldier. Nikita Prudsky, clad in a colorful soldier costume, looked and acted the part as he skated through his program.

“I’m just impressed because I skated a clean program and it was a high score,” he said of his first U.S. Championships performance.



## JUVENILE PAIRS



(l-r) Ashley Stark/Kevin Ponceau, silver; Hailey Sundstrom/Andy Deng, gold; Madeleine Phan/Laz Lune, bronze; Dalila DeLaura/Ryan Xie, pewter



Hailey Sundstrom and Andy Deng

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/US FIGURE SKATING

## ‘SPEED AND QUALITY’

Sundstrom and Deng deliver a total package

BY TROY SCHWINDT

Seventh in juvenile pairs last year, Hailey Sundstrom and Andy Deng (Fort Wayne ISC) showed how far they have come with their winning performance to music from the classic *Fiddler on the Roof* on the opening day of the U.S. Championships in Detroit.

The 13-year-olds received Level 4s for their opening lift and combination spin, and finished with a program-best 1.10-point grade of execution for their choreographic sequence. Their score of 49.83 edged Ashley Stark and Kevin Ponceau (San Diego FSC) by .24 point. Performing last in the 12-team field, Madeleine Phan and Laz Lune (St. Moritz ISC) secured the bronze medal with 42.86 points.

“With *Fiddler on the Roof*, we were trying for something that was fun, but also kind of serious, too,” Deng, a student at Concordia Lutheran High School in Fort Wayne, Indiana, said.

Their coach, Alena Lunin, said the biggest difference for the pair from last season is the improved quality of their elements and skating skills.

“They also both compete in intermediate singles, so we really focus on speed and quality and make sure their levels are consistently there,” Lunin said. “And the overall performance — you know, it’s a package. They didn’t have the whole package last year.”

The only hiccup in their routine came on a fall by Sundstrom during their double Axels.

“She actually has a good double Axel,” Lunin said. “But when she really wants to get it done, she goes to the mistakes.”

Sundstrom, who enjoys drawing and doing Japanese homework (her mom is Japanese), attends Project Ballet in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Stark and Ponceau put together an entertaining program to the song “Rewrite the Stars” from the soundtrack to *The Greatest Showman*. They received Level 4 for both of their spins.

“It’s one of best programs we’ve ever done, practice or competition,” Stark said.

Both intermediate-level singles skaters, Stark and Ponceau joined forces last May.

“We started this season with different music,” their coach Tiffany Vise Baldwin said. “At the first competition, we had a critique of the judges and they were like, ‘We are not feeling

it; we want more of a connection.’ So we went back to the drawing board and created this program in about two weeks. We competed it at Glacier Falls (Summer Classic) and we were happy that we had that critique and changed the music.”

Vise Baldwin, a former Team USA pairs skater, said Stark and Ponceau communicate well with each other and are good friends off the ice.

“They have really focused on the in-between stuff, and a lot of times on their own, they go and practice and focus on the details in between the elements; they realize it’s the whole program and it’s not about each individual element,” she said.

Stark, who competed with a different partner last year in juvenile pairs, is home-schooled and in eighth grade, while Ponceau who is new to pairs, is a sophomore at Mount Carmel High School in San Diego.

Phan and Lune appeared stunned upon hearing that they had won the bronze medal. Their program to the song “Tightrope” from *The Greatest Showman* included Level 4 spins and a Level 3 lift.

“Both of us really enjoyed the movie so much and we wanted to describe our journey,” Lune said. “I feel like it fit nicely for us.”

Phan, 13, is a student at an area charter middle school, while Lune, 15, is a student at Berkeley City College.

Dalila DeLaura (SC of New York) and Ryan Xie (SC of Morris NJ) earned the pewter medal with a score of 42.07.





(l-r) Olivia Ilin/Dylan Cain, silver; Kiana Pan/Ilya Mondrowski, gold; Vanessa Pham/Jonathan Rogers, bronze; Rhiannon Rodriguez Avellan/Rogue Rodriguez Avellan, pewter

PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

FSC) led after the pattern dances, and finished as silver medalists with an overall score of 78.72. Skating to a Latin-inspired program, the youngest duo in the field — she's 9 and he's 10 — said they gained confidence with their finish on the podium.

"Last year we went to the U.S. Championships, and now being here this year, it tells us that, 'Hey, we're good at this,'" Cain said.

Though disappointed that they didn't take the title, the pair still recognized the accomplishment.

"Today may not have been our best skate but we had a lot of fun," Cain said. "This was a good experience for us."

Vanessa Pham, 15, (Memorial FSC of Houston) and Jonathan Rogers, 16, (Texas Gulf Coast FSC) won the free dance, skating to music from *West Side Story*, to finish as bronze medalists with 78.36 points. They were awarded 19.45 points for their program components, the highest in the field.

"We wanted to build off each other and build off our entire season," Rogers said. "There may be more pressure, but we are excited with how we performed."

Re-creating the love story of Maria and Tony, Pham and Rogers were awarded a Level 4 lift and Level 4 twizzles.

The brother-sister duo of Rhiannon Rodriguez Avellan, 13, and Rogue Rodriguez Avellan, 14, (Austin FSC), finished fourth with 74.15 points. They won the Midwestern Sectional Championships with a score of 85.34.

"We would have loved to have skated better, but for us to end on the podium is really exciting," Rogue said. "This has been a really memorable experience."

## 'CONFIDENCE AT ALL-TIME HIGH'

### Pan and Mondrowski find the golden ticket

BY MICHAEL TERRY

Kiana Pan (Northern Ice SC) and Ilya Mondrowski (Skokie Valley SC) had hoped to just make it to the podium at the U.S. Championships in Detroit. Instead, their overall score of 80.03 points carried them to the top of the medal stand.

"This is exciting," Pan said. "Our confidence is at an all-time high and hopefully we can carry this into next season."

Paired up last year, Pan, 12, and Mondrowski, 14, performed their free dance to a "Willy Wonka" theme. The Chicago-based duo received Level 4s for their rotational lift, synchronized twizzles and straight line lift. They scored 43.85 points in their free dance, more than three points higher than their sectional score.

"Our step sequence makes me feel like we're in the movie," Mondrowski said. "It's the part of the program that I enjoy the most."

Their coaches, sisters Alina Ponomarova and Kseniya Ponomaryova, felt the musical choice fit their young team well.

"We heard the song 'Pure Imagination' on the radio and we knew it is a good choice for Kiana and Ilya," Ponomarova said. "We played the song for them and they both liked it. The first part is lyrical and gentle, while the second part, 'Little Me,' is fast and mischievous, which perfectly describes them as a team and their personalities."

Pan and Mondrowski placed second

after the pattern dances and second in the free dance. Their overall score was less than a point better than it was at the Midwestern Sectional Championships, where they placed third.

"They have a good relationship," Ponomarova added. "They have opposite personalities, but it works well for them. Kiana is creative and Ilya is technical. They are also positive and supportive of each other. Their practices are always fun."

Olivia Ilin and Dylan Cain (Washington







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## SPOTLIGHT: CLUB SAFESPORT COMPLIANCE CHAIRS

Club SafeSport compliance chairs play an important role in athlete protection, as they are responsible for the implementation and coordination of the U.S. Figure Skating SafeSport Program within the local club. These chairs also serve as the liaison for the U.S. Figure Skating SafeSport Program.

Every U.S. Figure Skating member club must have a compliant SafeSport chair. If no chair is named, the club president automatically assumes the role. If a club fails to comply, the club will be suspended.

Among their many duties, Club SafeSport compliance chairs are responsible for verifying that all covered individuals participating in club and U.S. Figure Skating-sanctioned events and activities are SafeSport compliant. Such events include test sessions, competitions and ice shows.

These chairs attend webinars and workshops, and oversee the implementation of educational programs for all club members, parents/guardians and coaches.

Should there be a concern or suspected problem at the club, the chair may help prepare the complaint and then direct whether it should be handled by U.S. Figure Skating or the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

U.S. Figure Skating's SafeSport, Ethics and Grievance committees are responsible for administering various grievance processes in the areas of physical misconduct; emotional misconduct; bullying, threats and harassment; hazing; and willful toleration. All matters of sexual misconduct are under the direct jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

If you are unsure who your Club SafeSport compliance chair is, look for the new SafeSport posters or ask a club board member.



PHOTO BY MARK REIS

Every U.S. Figure Skating-member club has a SafeSport compliance chair, who makes sure all covered individuals have taken SafeSport training. They are part of the team committed to keeping skating fun and safe at your rink. If you have a question about SafeSport or a concern, talk to your club's SafeSport compliance chair.





Madison Chock and Evan Bates continued their late-season surge with a sterling free dance.

## GOLD AT LAST

Chock and Bates receive ultimate validation heading into Worlds

BY MARISSA PEDERSON

Madison Chock and Evan Bates are one of the world's most-decorated ice dance teams. Before the ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships 2019, the couple had stood on the podium twice at the World Championships, and four times in the past six years at the Four Continents Championships.

Yet, despite that success, the two-time Olympians had never found themselves on top. That changed last month in Anaheim, California, where the Montreal-based couple finally

struck gold.

"I normally would not put so much stock into one result or one competition, but this does feel like a big deal for us," Bates said. "We've been close for many years to having a signature moment or breakthrough win, and I think this might be it for us."

"One of many hopefully," Chock added. "We knew we were on a good path, but now this has confirmed it. We are on the right path; things are going according to plan and we want to keep on this trajectory."

After performing a season-best rhythm dance to move into second place, the couple stole the show with their sizzling free dance to a medley of "Fever" and Elvis Presley's "Burning Love." Gaining 126.25 points from the judges and a standing ovation from the crowd, the team set another season-best en route to an

PHOTOS BY JAV ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING



(l-r) Kaitlyn Weaver/Andrew Poje, silver; Madison Chock/Evan Bates, gold; Piper Gilles/Paul Poirier, bronze.

overall score of 207.42.

"I feel like this free skate lets us be free and express ourselves in a way that programs in the past haven't," Chock said. "We feel comfortable with this material and we feel it in our bodies and hearts and souls, which makes it easier to go out and perform knowing that we are just going to have fun."

The final team to skate, two-time and reigning U.S. champions Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue, experienced a shocking outcome to their so-far-undefeated season, scoring 119.71 points in their free dance to finish fourth in the segment and fourth overall with 201.66 points.

The World silver medalists led after the rhythm dance by less than one point over Chock and Bates. But their opening stationary lift traveled across the ice and was reduced to base value by the technical panel, costing them more than four points and a possible title.

"I have to say that there are not many times that you feel so strong after a performance and have it turn out this way," Hubbell said. "It's a lift that we have done over and over this season, so it was definitely shocking to hear that it was not counted as a stationary lift. It is definitely disappointing, but we are proud of our performance and that mark doesn't change that."

The defending Four Continents champions, Kaitlin Hawayek and Jean-Luc Baker, had another successful showing at the event, setting season-best scores for their rhythm dance (74.42), free dance (115.45) and overall score (189.87). The third Montreal-based team finished fifth.

"We feel good," Hawayek said. "We both felt like it was our strongest showing yet. We're still working on little details and levels and making sure that we're at the program's fullest potential by Worlds. We're happy for this stepping stone."

Two Canadian teams claimed the final podium spots, with Kaitlyn Weaver and Andrew Poje winning the silver medal and Piper Gilles and Paul Poirier claiming bronze.





## ON AN UPWARD TREND

Zhou secures bronze medal in 4C debut

BY TAYLOR DEAN

U.S. silver medalist Vincent Zhou arrived at his first Four Continents Championships prepared to go to battle against several of his longtime international rivals, including Olympic silver medalist Shoma Uno of Japan and two-time World bronze medalist Boyang Jin of China.

(l-r) Boyang Jin, silver; Shoma Uno, gold; Vincent Zhou, bronze



Vincent Zhou delivers a powerful free skate performance en route to the bronze medal.

Zhou started fast, winning the short program with a technical package that included an opening quad Lutz-triple toe combination that garnered 19.48 points, followed by a quad Salchow that generated 11.64 points.

His free skate, however, fell short with underrotation calls on two of his three quad attempts. Zhou finished fifth in the segment and, with an overall score of 272.22, secured the bronze medal. He placed 1.29 points behind Jin for the silver medal. Uno rebounded after being fourth in the short program to win the event.

"I'm proud of myself at this competition for continuing the upward trend I've put myself on," Zhou said. "I'm not satisfied with my performance but I'm also proud of myself for how I did. It was a good competition, a deep field, and I'm proud to be among the medalists here."

Zhou's next competition is later this month at the World Championships in Saitama, Japan, where he will be joined by teammates Jason Brown and Nathan Chen.

With the Four Continents Championships taking place so soon after the U.S. Championships, many Team USA skaters competing in Anaheim agreed that the post-nationals fatigue sets in quickly. If Brown was feeling it, he didn't show it.

He produced two crowd-pleasing performances, earning the second-highest combined

components score of the competition. Though a mistake on his triple Axel dropped him to sixth after the short program, Brown rallied in the free skate to place fourth in the segment and fifth overall with a total score of 258.89.

"I'm happy," Brown said. "I know I still left a couple of points on the table but every competition it's (quad) getting stronger," he said. "I'm so proud of my fight out there and scoring my season-best today."

It was the first time that he didn't double the jump in competition, adding he is content with the progress he is making.

"I'm working on the quad every single day," he said. "It's not quite there in the program yet but I'm landing them more and more out of the program."

It's been a whirlwind season for the Team USA men, perhaps most of all for Tomoki Hiwatashi. He planned a trip to see his father in Chicago after the U.S. Championships, but his pewter-medal finish and assignment to the Four Continents Championships changed his plans.

He opened his free skate in Anaheim with a quad toe loop-triple toe loop combination that received positive grades of execution; his powerful overall performance earned Hiwatashi a standing ovation.

"I'm glad that I did the greatest program I've ever done in my life here and I wish everyone had a great time watching me on the ice," he said.

Hiwatashi competes this month at the ISU World Junior Championships in Zagreb, Croatia.

## FIGHTING THROUGH

Cain and LeDuc's resolve strengthened by hard times

BY LYNN RUTHERFORD

Traveling to the Four Continents Championships in Anaheim, California, Ashley Cain listened to her favorite podcast, Sarah Day's The Health Code.

"It said, 'I don't want to be given easy days — I want to be given hard days, so I can become a much stronger person,'" Cain said. "And I think I took that mentality."

It's been a great season for Cain and partner Timothy LeDuc, but little has come easy. The highs: a bronze medal at Skate America and their first U.S. crown. The lows: Cain's scary fall from a lift in the free skate at an event in Croatia in early December, and her recovery from the resulting concussion.

"It's not like we were magically 100 percent after nationals; the recovery is ongoing for us physically and mentally," LeDuc said. "We continued to work and struggle through things as we prepared for this competition."

That struggle intensified the morning of the free skate, when Cain awoke, as she remem-



PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING





PHOTOS BY JAY ADEFF/U.S. FIGURE SKATING

**Ashley Cain and Timothy LeDuc perform their fun and energetic short program.**

bered, “in a fog.” Her practice was rough; she had to think through every element. But withdrawing wasn’t in the cards.

“There was never a point where I didn’t think I would get out there and at least give my best effort,” Cain said.

After practice, Cain went straight to the team physician. Showing signs of dehydration, she was given electrolytes and plenty of water. After resting and eating, she felt herself again, was cleared to compete — and rose to the challenge.

Performing an elegant program to the *W.E.* soundtrack, Cain and LeDuc notched a season-best 129.33 points, including two solid throws. Combined with their fourth-place short program, it gave them 196.82 points and fourth place overall.

China’s Olympic silver medalists Wen-jing Sui and Cong Han won the title with 211.11 points, just .06 point ahead of Kirsten Moore-Towers and Michael Marinaro of Canada. Cheng Peng and Yang Jin of China took third with 205.42 points.

After a seventh-place short program, Haven Denney and Brandon Frazier showed a solid triple twist and strong lifts in their free skate to music from *The Irrepressibles*, but Denney doubled an intended triple Salchow and missed a double Axel. Nevertheless, the 2017 U.S. champions gained a season-best 122.47 points and pulled up to fifth overall with 184.18 points.

“We sold exactly what we were trying to build for this season, and that’s the performance aspect,” Frazier said. “We’re not there yet, but now we feel like we have a starting base. And the next step is plugging in all the technical things.”

It was a disappointing event for Tarah Kayne and Danny O’Shea. The 2016 U.S. champions had hoped to end the season on a high

note after a mistake on a lift cost them a chance at their second U.S. title a few weeks earlier.

In Anaheim, mistakes in the opening section of their *Swan Lake* free skate — including a rough landing on the triple twist, followed by Kayne’s falls on a triple Salchow and throw triple loop — left them in sixth place with 180.36 points.

“Not my best showing,” Kayne said, adding, “Our twists have been much better recently, so to have that shaky start to the program, I immediately tried to focus and get back into it and it just didn’t happen.”

## A MISSED OPPORTUNITY

Tennell, Bell start fast, falter in free skate

BY NICK MCCARVEL

A week before the ISU Four Continents Championships, Bradie Tennell spent her 21st birthday wrapped up cozy in a blanket at home in Chicago. It was too frigid to go out — as temperatures dipped to record lows. And besides, she didn’t mind the quiet night in the quick turnaround following U.S. Championships.

It’s been a lightning-fast maturation process for Tennell, who at Skate America in 2017 burst onto the scene (then just 19) with a bronze medal, then winning a national title a few weeks later and booking her spot at the Olympic Games in South Korea.

When she arrived at Honda Center for her debut Four Continents, Tennell was one of a few skaters that experts said could break a second consecutive Japanese sweep of the podium, with heavy favorites Rika Kihira and Kaori Sakamoto joined by countrywoman Mai Mihara.

Fellow American Mariah Bell was another. While her rise has been more steady, Bell has been a consistent force this season, and — save for a fall for each of them in their Detroit free skates — either Tennell or Bell could have been U.S. champion, but instead finished second and third behind wonderkid Alysa Liu.

It was Tennell and Bell, however, that looked to play those gleeful roles of “spoilers” after the ladies short program on Thursday afternoon, each skating with power and precision, and Bell — after landing a clean triple flip — letting go with a punctuated fist pump mid-program. This is the kind of skating the U.S. can deliver on the international stage.

“I’m extremely happy with how I did,” Tennell said after posting the top score in the short program. “It’s exactly how I train at home and it’s what I wanted to do here, to go out there and trust myself and trust my training.”

Under the lights on Friday night, it was a powerhouse final group. While Mihara had

produced a 141.97 in the penultimate group — putting her in position for the podium — it was 18-year-old Elizabet Tursynbaeva, from Kazakhstan, who set the tone for the last few skaters: She attempted a quadruple Salchow in her opening jumping pass. While she rotated on the jump, she fell.

There would be no such falls for Kihira, who — after popping her famed triple Axel in the short program — was steely in the free. Her electric free skate — nearly flawless — scored a 153.14 and threw down a marker nearly impossible to beat. And it proved to be.

Bell, third after the short program, skated next, and while she was perfect on a double Axel-triple toe combination, she’d suffer an uncharacteristic fall on her triple loop. It was just enough of a mistake to assure her no podium finish.

Much like in Detroit, Tennell faltered in the free, too. Her downfall came in a hard-to-execute triple Lutz-triple loop combination, Tennell singling the loop. She would be called for three underrotations to follow.

In the end: Tennell fifth, Bell sixth. Team USA’s Ting Cui, also making her Four Continents debut, finished seventh in the short program, 14th in the free skate for an 11th-place overall finish.

The night — and event — still could have belonged to defending champ Sakamoto, and five jumps in it looked as though it might. But she popped a double Axel in the second half of the program. In the kiss and cry, she’d bury her head in her hands, 0.33 point from the podium.

Kihira, with the win, continues a breakout season at 16, while Tursynbaeva and Mihara were rewarded for stunning free skates to finish inside the top three, as well.

**Bradie Tennell displays the major strides she’s made to her artistry this season.**







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# QUALITY DRIVEN

Skaters move sport forward with their passion, camaraderie, perseverance

*Editor's note: Lexi Rohner penned the first Adult Corner column in the fall of 2006, and has remained a passionate voice for the adult skating community in SKATING magazine. This is Lexi's final column, and I'd like to thank her for her hard work and consistency over the years. She is handing over the column duties to Aviva Cantor, who is excited to continue the rich tradition that Lexi established.*

## BY LEXI ROHNER

Passion. Camaraderie. Perseverance.

These are words I have heard often over the past 25 years, and without fail, and no matter what one's life is off the ice, they represent what's in the heart of adult skaters.

Those qualities have taken the adult skating program from grassroots to development, and from informal to ad hoc committee to a formal committee. The program grew to form a national championship and sectional qualifying competitions, international competition and it became the inspiration for adult skaters in foreign countries.

The United States is the global leader in adult skating, paving the way for competitions and growth worldwide. With a strong pulse, this community continues to evolve and progress in ways we could not have predicted at the outset.

- 25 U.S. Adult Championships
- 14 championship locations
- 11,066 competitors
- 16,932 starts
- 1,493 championship starts
- 15,439 nonqualifying starts
- 21 sectional championships
- 3,594 age class I competitors
- 3,948 age class II competitors
- 3,380 age class III competitors
- 2,011 age class IV competitors
- 702 age class V competitors



- 12 perpetual trophies
- 1 seven-time championship dance gold medalist team
- 2 six-time singles championships gold medalists (men's and ladies)
- 5 additional awards: lifetime competitor recognition, club team trophies, adult special achievement, Skate Forever Young awards and the Yvonne M. Dowlen Trophy

These numbers speak to the passion, camaraderie and perseverance of the adult skating community. Adult skating has moved from a struggle for recognition, to a place of acceptance. Everyone who has participated can be proud of what has occurred.

Through the many stories featured in this column, you have had the opportunity to get to know adult skaters. We have profiled adult skaters who are pilots, attorneys, mothers competing after having children, best friends, medical professionals, artists, couples, filmmakers, military personnel, teachers, writers, ice show producers, club supporters, adult skaters in other countries, and many others. As the future of adult skating takes shape, many exciting initiatives are around the bend.

Below are some of my favorite quotes from interviews I have conducted for this column:

"Expressing yourself in no other way possible with people who share and understand each other is a remarkable experience."

— Phyllis Friello, Adult skater

"Skating taught me to push and believe in myself. Age is a limitation of the mind."

— Kathleen Westmoreland, Adult skater, judge  
(Westmoreland passed all adult moves tests in one session per month after graduating with her MBA.)

"What we are able to achieve in life is typically limited only by ourselves."

— Lynn Stone, Adult skater, announcer

"Skating provided exercise and has expanded my creative scope in unimaginable ways."

— Sharidan Williams-Sotelo, Adult skater, skating film editor

"Adult competitors don't let expectations hold us back and don't let ourselves lose something we find important and fulfilling. It helps us understand other people and support them in their dreams, whether friends, our children, or even our parents."

— Lynne Kuechle, Adult skater, judge

**#SkateForeverStrong** 



"Skaters at my rink pretty much just consider me one of them, whereas several years ago this was not the case. The sport has gone from being just for the young, to being for the young at heart."

— Gloria Lewis, Adult skater, judge

It has been my privilege to create this column, to connect with so many in adult skating, and bring their stories to light here. I have deep gratitude to the editors with whom I have worked at SKATING magazine. Most especially, I thank Troy Schwindt, the current editor, for providing the space to share all about this community, and having consistent coverage of competitions.

I am appreciative of the wonderful people who have walked before me as chair of the Adult Skating Committee and the groundwork they laid that allowed this column to come about. I am particularly grateful to Lori Fussell, who has taken her place as ASC chair with a passion and fervor for skating to which we can all relate. She has spearheaded many of the exciting changes that will take place, and I look forward to seeing what evolves over the next 25 years.

Moving forward, there are fantastic social media plans for adult skating, including more stories, profiles and opportunities. Watch for the "Skate Forever Strong" and "Lifetime Competitor Award" segments, as these will be just the start of what is to come.

With that, I am handing the reins of the Adult Corner to the capable Aviva Cantor. Aviva will share adult skating news and more, taking this column wherever adult skating is going. I want to thank you all for reading and being supportive over the past couple of decades. You are what makes this column special. I am thankful for the opportunity to be a conduit to what the adult skating population has to say.



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**MEMBERSHIP PACKAGES INCLUDE:** Exclusive invitations to member-only events with Team USA athletes, A subscription to SKATING, U.S. Figure Skating calendar and FOFS gear, Ticket priority and hospitality passes

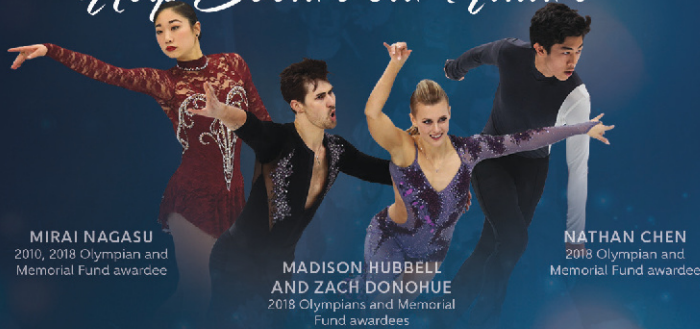


“There’s nothing better than going to a competition and feeling like we have friends who continue to come back and support us. It’s so exciting to see their faces and meet them in person.”

JEAN-LUC BAKER WITH KAITLIN HAWAYEK



*Help Secure our Future*



**MIRAI NAGASU**  
2010, 2018 Olympian and Memorial Fund awardee

**MADISON HUBBELL AND ZACH DONOHUE**  
2018 Olympians and Memorial Fund awardees

**NATHAN CHEN**  
2018 Olympian and Memorial Fund awardee

— BY HONORING OUR PAST —



**PEGGY FLEMING**  
1968 Olympic champion and Memorial Fund awardee

**MERYL DAVIS AND CHARLIE WHITE**  
2014 Olympic champions and Memorial Fund awardees

**SCOTT HAMILTON**  
1984 Olympic champion and Memorial Fund awardee

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For more information or to give, visit [www.1961MemorialFund.com](http://www.1961MemorialFund.com)



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**STAR**



## U.S. Figure Skating S.T.A.R.S. Program 2019 Dates & Locations

April 5-6 • Salt Lake City, Utah  
(HPMS only)

April 26 • Irvine, CA

April 28 • Walnut Creek, CA

May 4 • Alpharetta, GA

May 4 • Saugerties, NY

May 5 • Houston, TX

May 9 • Colorado Springs, CO

May 11 • Hackensack, NJ

May 18 • Pittsburgh, PA

June 1 • Provo, UT

June 9 • Coral Springs, FL

June 21 • Indian Trail, NC

July 2 • Colorado Springs, CO

July 13 • Laurel, MD

July 13 • East Lansing, MI

July 19 • Bensenville, IL

July 20 • Euless, TX

July 21 • Sun Valley, ID

July 25 • Littleton, CO

July 28 • Maple Grove, MN

August 3 • Hillsborough, NC

August 3 • Dearborn, MI

August 4 • Morristown, NJ

September 14 • Ellenton, FL  
(HPMS only)

## Standardized Testing of Athleticism to Recognize Skaters (S.T.A.R.S.)

evaluates your athleticism in areas important to skating performance and helps identify areas needing improvement. The S.T.A.R.S. combine includes a

- Dynamic Warm-Up Class
- Sports Science Seminar
- Detailed Athlete Report

## High Performance Movement Screen (HPMS)

evaluates your ability to move your body in ways fundamental to skating technique, and measures your mobility, stability, symmetry and balance.

Participants receive a

- Detailed Athlete Report
- Video-based feedback for corrective exercises

**S.T.A.R.S.** is open to U.S. Figure Skating athletes ages 6 and up who have passed pre-preliminary moves.

**HPMS** is open to U.S. Figure Skating athletes who have passed juvenile moves in the field, and to adult skaters.

Registration opens March 1st.

To register visit: [STARScombine.org](http://STARScombine.org)



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PROGRAM**  
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# The Legacy Collection


*Michelle Kwan*

Michelle Kwan SKATING magazine cover collection is now available.

Michelle Kwan, the most-decorated athlete in U.S. Figure Skating history, has appeared alone on the cover of SKATING magazine a record eight times in an inspiring career that spanned more than two decades. For the first time, these eight covers are available for you to enjoy and treasure. This timeless collection is sure to evoke memories, featuring the skating icon as a 13-year-old rising star through her induction into the hall of fame. As an added bonus, Michelle is featured on a beautiful replica cover that is only available in this collection. Each of the nine covers has been reproduced on a high-quality paper, perfect for placing in 8 x 10 frames. It's the ideal gift for Michelle Kwan fans or a beautiful way to dress up your home or office.

**The entire package, including a personal letter from Michelle, is shrink-wrapped for shipping purposes and available for \$24.99 (this cost includes shipping).**

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[www.LearnToSkateUSA.com](http://www.LearnToSkateUSA.com)







Above, Brittney Rivelli shows a group of students proper gliding technique. Right, Lexi Quinn, left, bonds with Madeline Bourgeios.



# SIGN UP NOW!

Camps offer skaters, coaches a comprehensive range of instruction, information

U.S. Figure Skating's Synchronized Skating & Skating Programs and High Performance Departments are excited to host spring and summer camps dedicated to helping skaters improve their performance, interpretation to music, skating skills and team skills on the ice. Faculty will include national and international coaches, instructors and officials.

Athletes will be assigned to group classes of similar level, age and gender. All athletes will have the opportunity to work with the entire faculty.

Coaches are encouraged to attend. There are coaches' tracks available at each camp and coaches will have the opportunity to observe their students during several classes.

- 2019 Athlete Acceleration Summit — April 26–28, in Irvine, California
- 2019 Eastern DREAM Camp — July 14, in Laurel, Maryland
- 2019 National Synchronized Skating Summit — July 19–21, in Bensenville, Illinois
- 2019 Midwestern DREAM Camp — July 27, in Maple Grove, Minnesota

To learn more, visit [www.usfigure skating.org/Athletes/Camps](http://www.usfigure skating.org/Athletes/Camps).

The following DREAM athletes, coaches and skaters reveal what they learned and experienced as participants in past camps.

### *What did you like about teaching the DREAM camp athletes?*

This past summer, I had the opportunity to lead both on- and off-ice classes at the Midwest DREAM Camp. I am grateful to have connected with many young athletes and strengthened the connection that we all share through the sport. Leading a power class was the highlight of the camp for me. Growing up, power classes were always something I looked forward to because my coach was able to incorporate encouraging music into unique drills, making each lap around the ice more enjoyable than strenuous. For the Midwest DREAM Camp, I prepared a variety of drills to emphasize edge quality and power, paired with songs that most of the athletes knew word for word. The level of joy and determination that filled the rink that weekend was empowering, and having the opportunity to share the ice and connect with so many young athletes was invaluable.

*Brittney Rivelli, DREAM athlete, Starlights junior*

### *How have you met former teammates/friends through these camps?*

Through the DREAM program, I have met some wonderful people and built friendships that mean the world to me. Emily Kirillov is one of my favorite people; we keep in touch and wish each other much success. We are friends and competitors.

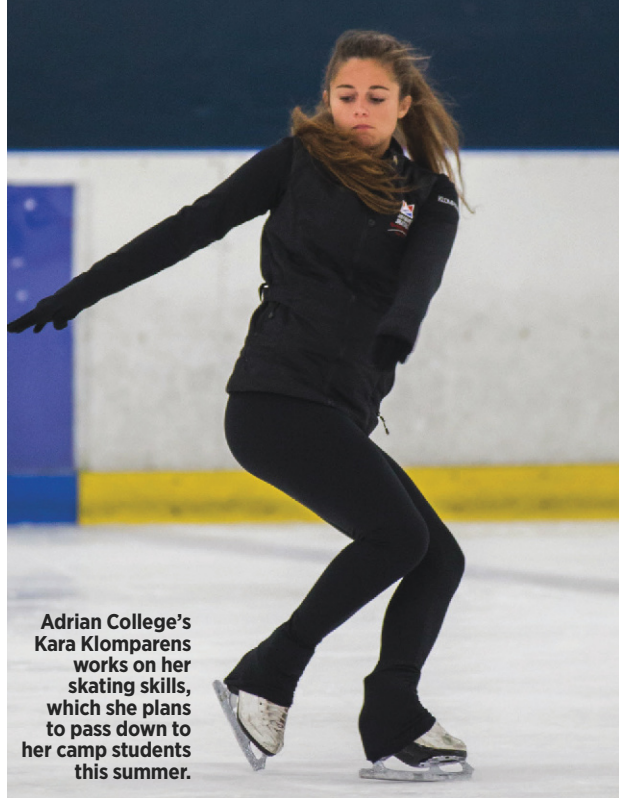
*Rachel Lynn Teets, DREAM athlete, Crystallettes senior*

### *What was your experience at the 2018 Athlete Acceleration Summit, and how did it differ from the 2017 National Synchronized Skating Summit?*

The main difference was the Synchronized Skating Summit was tailored toward synchronized skaters, and incorporated many team elements in its classes, while the Athlete Acceleration Summit united all five disciplines of skating. It was fascinating to see the similarities among all the figure skating disciplines, and the interaction of all the disciplines in the various on-ice and off-ice classes. At the Athlete Acceleration Summit, I had the opportunity to assist the amazing faculty in leading different types of classes.

*Emily Kirillov, DREAM athlete, Skyliners senior*





Adrian College's Kara Klomprens works on her skating skills, which she plans to pass down to her camp students this summer.



Left, DREAM skaters Rachel Lynn Teets and Emily Kirillov have grown up together through skating. Right, Erin Quinn, right, shares the ice with Kaitlyn Bushnell, center, and Kelsey Bialo at a recent DREAM camp.



### ***What are you looking forward to this summer at the camps?***

Working with all of our great skaters and coaches to help promote synchronized skating in young athletes and show how beautiful and unique our sport is.

*Kara Klomprens, DREAM athlete, Adrian College senior*

### ***How did you benefit from the 2017 National Synchronized Skating Summit and the 2018 Athlete Acceleration Summit?***

A benefit of both camps was the focus on synchronized skating versus individual skating. I love both disciplines, so working on both and integrating them during my competition season was fun and beneficial. I liked the unique coaching differences between the instructors and how they approached skaters for their desired training outcomes.

*Rilynn Cox, Hockettes intermediate*

### ***As a coach, how did you feel these camps helped you become the coach you are now?***

I found both camps to be beneficial in

different ways. During the Synchronized Summit Camp, I was both a presenter and able to attend some of the classes. Talking to coaches of the winning teams was helpful because you could relate to their experiences and get some immediate ideas about structure and functions of team skating. We also focused on the called elements during a season when there were new things being introduced. The off-ice work that the skaters did was also helpful, because it gave us a way to warm up as a team that everyone could benefit from.

The Athlete Acceleration Summit was so interesting to me from a coach's perspective, because I was able to work with some of the top professionals in the sport, many of whom I had never been exposed to before. The focus on components lends itself to work well for all disciplines, and I felt that I was able to get a lot of great ideas to work on the skating skills component that were different from the same drills that we had been doing for a while.

Our team noticed an improvement in their skating skills score so far this season, and I think working on edges and power from a different approach helped them. It was also

beneficial to interact with the other coaches, because we all share students. Understanding the demands that singles, pairs, dance puts on the skaters helped me to adjust the synchro schedule to value their time with their individual coaches.

I feel that both of these events are helpful to U.S. Figure Skating coaches, and I appreciate the support that our federation gives to us through these types of opportunities. I hope to attend both again in the future.

*Erin Donovan, director of the Hockettes synchronized skating teams*

### ***What was your favorite part of the DREAM Camp?***

The DREAM Camp was an amazing experience, because the DREAM skaters really helped us with skating skills, and the coaching staff was great. They are great role models, and provide a fun and encouraging environment for us to skate in for the day.

*Erin and Lexi Quinn, CNY Blizzard open juvenile*





# SKATING

## KIDS ZONE

PUZZLES BY  
JOEL KAPLOW

Answers on page 80

### GO FIGURE

BY GENE BROWNING



M E A L V T P V X V K U K F L  
 A U A U S S Y N C H R O S L C  
 D H G F G D U H H Y R M E H H  
 I O A B L L Q T P H M R Y E O  
 S N J L C L S H W E R K Y R C  
 O O L E Y G E M P A W I A K K  
 N D T C G S I B H E U T R V A  
 H H J I W Y A A H I W G E T N  
 U C M J T F N L Y A D B E R D  
 B A N A R N X P I K I W G F B  
 B Z K J A F W S X U D R L H A  
 E X Z H B M W U Z M E N A J T  
 L S D L R O W R O I N U J M E  
 L J K L X Y S W E S Z H U P S  
 T O M O K I H I W A T A S H I

### WORD SEARCH

Hi skaters! Try to find and circle the listed words hidden in the box of letters. The words will appear in a straight line in any direction (up, down, forward, backward or diagonally), and some words may overlap and share letters. Find them all and you'll be on top of the medal podium!

- ALYSA LIU
- CHOCK AND BATES
- HANNA HARRELL
- JUNIOR WORLDS
- MADISON HUBBELL
- MARIAH BELL
- PEWTER
- TOMOKI HIWATASHI
- US SYNCHROS
- ZACH DONOHUE

### KIDS SPOTLIGHT

#### SOPHIA CRAIUTU

**Age:** 11

**Hometown:** Bloomington, Indiana

**Club:** Lincoln Center SC

**Level:** Pre-preliminary freestyle, juvenile moves in the field

**Coach:** Liz Fernandez

**Favorite skaters:** Gracie Gold, Nathan Chen

**Favorite moves:** Double toe loop, cannonball spin

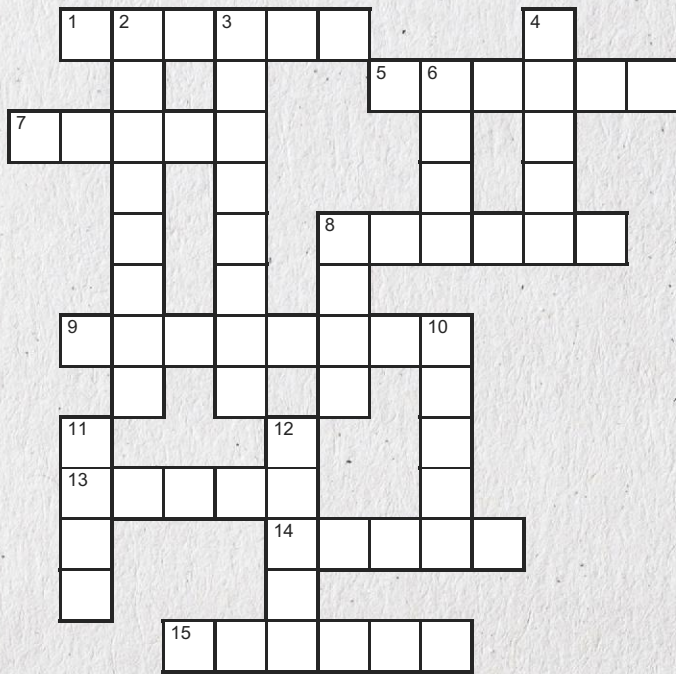
**How I got started:** When I moved to Princeton, New Jersey, for a year, I started skating there and I loved it.

**Most memorable moment:** When I landed my first Axel.

**Hobbies:** Baking, classical guitar, painting







**ACROSS**

- 1 At the Olympics and Worlds, fourth-place finishers receive no award, but at the U.S. Championships, a \_\_\_ medal is placed around the neck of the skater.
- 5 In Detroit, Madison Hubbell and Zach Donohue ice danced their way to the top of the U.S. Championships podium for the \_\_\_ year in a row.
- 7 After competing in 11 straight

- U.S. Championships and winning seven medals, \_\_\_ Nagasu sat this season out while recovering from hip surgery.
- 8 They must be doing something right. The coaching team of Marie-France Dubreuil, Patrice Lauzon and Romain Haguenauer trained the medalists who landed in the top three spots on the ice dance podium in Detroit. They are based in Montreal,

**DOWN**

- 2 The Four Continents Championships, which invites the Americas, Asia, Africa and Oceania, took place last month. The remaining continent competed at the \_\_\_ Figure Skating Championships in January.
- 3 Alysa Liu wowed the world in January when she became the

- Quebec, \_\_\_.
- 9 Nathan Chen's coach, Rafael Arutunian, is in California. Nathan is attending Yale University in Connecticut, 3,000 miles away. No problem, because they communicate electronically. Do they use FactTime, FaceTime or PeakTime for training?
- 13 The 2019 U.S. Figure Skating Championships took place in January in Detroit, Michigan, at the Little Caesars \_\_\_.
- 14 For his third U.S. gold in a row, Nathan Chen ended up with an astonishing margin of victory over silver medalist Vincent Zhou. Did he win by almost forty, fifty or sixty points?
- 15 Starting next season, the U.S. Championships will no longer include the younger skaters at the juvenile, intermediate and novice levels, who will compete elsewhere. This leaves just the junior and \_\_\_ levels.

- youngest skater ever to land on top of the ladies podium at the U.S. Championships, which began in 1914. How young is Alysa?
- 4 Next month, Helsinki, Finland, will host the twentieth \_\_\_ Synchronized Figure Skating Championships.
- 6 Due to Madison Chock's ankle surgery, she and partner \_\_\_ Bates missed out on most of the skating season, with only one competition before Detroit. Regardless, they still snagged the ice dance silver!
- 8 In January, Ashley \_\_\_ and Timothy LeDuc grabbed the U.S. pairs gold for the first time.
- 10 In Detroit, Alysa Liu landed \_\_\_ triple jumps in her free skate, which included a record-breaking two triple Axels!
- 11 After Nathan Chen's astounding free skate performance at the U.S. Championships, which included four quads, NBC commentator \_\_\_ Lipinski was simply stunned when she said, "This is not human." She was also happy to see her "youngest U.S. gold medalist" record of 1997 finally fall to Alysa Liu.
- 12 Despite popping his one planned quad into a double during his free skate in Detroit, \_\_\_ Brown still managed a bronze-medal finish. Artistry counts for something.

**If you would like to be featured in the KIDS Spotlight, email your information to [tdean@usfigureskating.org](mailto:tdean@usfigureskating.org) and include action and nonaction skating photographs of yourself. Include in your submission your name, address, home phone number (not for publication) and U.S. Figure Skating member number. Complete as many of the categories that you see printed in the KIDS Spotlight as you want, and we might feature you.**

**KIDS SPOTLIGHT**  
**PAIGE MAGLALANG**

**Age:** 10  
**Hometown:** Baltimore, Maryland  
**Club:** Worthington Valley FSC  
**Level:** Pre-preliminary freestyle, juvenile moves in the field  
**Coaches:** Kirsten West, Viktor Pfeifer  
**Favorite moves:** Axel, double Salchow, double loop  
**Favorite skaters:** Nathan Chen, Adam Rippon, Evgenia Medvedeva  
**Goal:** To be the first Filipino American to compete in the Winter Olympics for ladies figure skating.  
**Hobbies:** Gymnastics, drawing, shopping





# RESULTS

## 2019 GEICO U.S. FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS

LITTLE CAESARS ARENA,  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN, JAN. 18-27

**Competition officials:** Samuel Auxier, Carrie Bacasa, Anthony Bardin, Ann Barr, Aristeo Brito, Todd Bromley, Jessica Bussgang, Sheren Chiang, Carolyn Clausius, Deveny Deck, Allison Duarte, Lori Dunn, Alexander Enzmann, Christian Erwin, Dawn Eyerly, Megan Faulkner, Lynn Goldman, Dana Graham, Deborah Hagenauer, Eric Hampton, Lisa Hernand, Taffy Holliday, Jed Hopkins, Robert Horen, Steven Hsu, Laurie Johnson, Sara Kastner, Susan Keogh, Brenda Kickertz, Kathleen Krieger, Larry Kriwanek, Terry Kubicka, Kitty DeLio LaForte, Whitney Luke, Hal Marron, Jenny Mast, Stefanie Mathewson, Elyse Matsumoto, Coleen Mickey, John Millier, Mariam Mohajer-Rahbari, Colette Nygren, Lauren O'Toole, Lorrie Parker, Richard Perez, Tracey Poletis, Shawn Rettstatt, Julia Rey, Michael Ricigliano, Sharon Rogers, Nancy Ruedebusch, Goleen Samari, David Santee, Russ Scott, Jennifer Simon, Andrew Skillington, Katherine Specht, Kanae Tagawa, Gale Tanger, Scott Wendland, Mary-Elizabeth Wightman, Jacqueline Wilkicki, Doug Williams, Karen Wolanchuk, Carol Wooley

### Championship Ladies

#### Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Alysa Liu, 217.51, 2, 1
2. Bradie Tennell, 213.59, 1, 4
3. Mariah Bell, 212.40, 3, 2
4. Hanna Harrell, 203.11, 5, 5
5. Ting Cui, 194.30, 12, 3
6. Megan Wessenberg, 182.55, 7, 6
7. Amber Glenn, 180.73, 4, 8
8. Starr Andrews, 175.70, 8, 7
9. Emmy Ma, 174.82, 6, 9
10. Akari Nakahara, 166.76, 10, 10
11. Brynne McIsaac, 157.34, 11, 13
12. Sierra Venetta, 152.93, 18, 11
13. Rena Ikenishi, 152.70, 16, 12
14. Heidi Munger, 151.85, 15, 14
15. Hannah Miller, 148.38, 14, 15
16. Courtney Hicks, 145.95, 13, 16
17. Julia Biechler, 133.88, 17, 17
18. Pooja Kalyan, 58.64

### Championship Men

#### Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Nathan Chen, 342.22, 1, 1
2. Vincent Zhou, 284.01, 3, 2
3. Jason Brown, 273.08, 2, 3
4. Tomoki Hiwatashi, 253.28, 4, 4
5. Aleksei Krasnozhan, 234.52, 5, 5
6. Timothy Dolensky, 228.94, 6, 7
7. Andrew Torgashev, 225.97, 9, 6
8. Sean Rabbitt, 217.84, 7, 9
9. Alexander Johnson, 216.48, 11, 8
10. Jimmy Ma, 206.92, 10, 11
11. Emmanuel Savary, 202.45, 13, 10
12. Camden Pulkinen, 199.87, 8, 15
13. Jordan Moeller, 197.82, 14, 12
14. Kevin Shum, 196.11, 12, 13
15. Daniel Kulenkamp, 188.93, 16, 14
16. William Hubbart, 186.02, 15, 16
17. Sebastien Payannet, 169.14, 17, 18
18. Ben Jalovick, 167.51, 19, 17
19. Tony Lu, 144.99, 18, 20
20. Andrew Austin, 131.39, 20, 19

### Championship Pairs

#### Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Ashley Cain/Timothy LeDuc, 212.36, 2, 1
2. Haven Denney/Brandon Frazier, 201.64, 3, 2
3. Deanna Stellato-Dudek/Nathan Bartholomay, 199.92, 4, 3
4. Tarah Kayne/Danny O'Shea, 198.64, 1, 4
5. Jessica Calalang/Brian Johnson, 183.42, 6, 5
6. Audrey Lu/Misha Mitrofanov, 182.42, 5, 6
7. Alexa Knierim/Christopher Knierim, 171.42, 7, 7

8. Nica Digerness/Danny Neudecker, 163.63, 9, 9
9. Erika Smith/AJ Reiss, 162.52, 10, 8
10. Winter Dearnorff/Max Settlege, 154.80, 12, 10
11. Chelsea Liu/Ian Meyh, 154.69, 8, 12
12. Allison Timlen/Justin Highgate-Brutman, 153.12, 11, 11
13. Olivia Serafini/Mervin Tran, 137.95, 13, 13

### Championship Dance

#### Pl. Name, TS, RD, FD

1. Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue, 215.88, 1, 1
2. Madison Chock/Evan Bates, 211.52, 2, 2
3. Kaitlin Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker, 196.95, 3, 3
4. Lorraine McNamara/Quinn Carpenter, 191.10, 5, 4
5. Christina Carreira/Anthony Ponomarenko, 190.01, 4, 5
6. Rachel Parsons/Michael Parsons, 170.26, 6, 7
7. Karina Manta/Joseph Johnson, 159.97, 7, 6
8. Lydia Erdman/Yuri Vlasenko, 124.92, 8, 8
9. Elicia Reynolds/Stephen Reynolds, 111.69, 9, 9
10. Nicole Takahashi/Oleg Altukhov, 91.31, 12, 10
11. Annah Binotto/Shiloh Judd, 90.64, 11, 11
12. Bailey Melton/Ryan O'Donnell, 88.53, 10, 12

### Junior Ladies

#### Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Gabriella Izzo, 172.42, 1, 2
2. Audrey Shin, 165.61, 6, 1
3. Emilia Murdock, 154.48, 2, 4
4. Sarah Jung, 150.88, 4, 5
5. Wren Warne-Jacobsen, 150.13, 7, 3
6. Emily Zhang, 146.64, 5, 7
7. Noelle Rosa, 144.91, 8, 6
8. Amie Miyagi, 133.58, 3, 10
9. Caitlin Ha, 132.68, 9, 8
10. Alyssa Rich, 128.02, 10, 9
11. Akane Eguchi, 118.56, 12, 11
12. Stephanie Ciarochi, 116.53, 11, 12

### Junior Men

#### Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Ryan Dunk, 201.43, 2, 1
2. Dinh Tran, 196.03, 4, 2
3. Joonsoo Kim, 187.95, 1, 4
4. Peter Liu, 182.32, 5, 3
5. Lucas Altieri, 172.87, 6, 7
6. Joseph Kang, 170.98, 11, 5
7. David Shapiro, 166.85, 7, 8
8. Max Lake, 165.69, 12, 6
9. Alex Wellman, 163.20, 9, 9
10. Eric Sjoberg, 161.99, 10, 10
11. Luke Ferrante, 161.89, 3, 11
12. Chase Finster, 132.25, 8, 12

### Junior Pairs

#### Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Laiken Lockley/Keenan Prochnow, 163.35, 1, 1
2. Kate Finster/Balazs Nagy, 149.48, 2, 2
3. Isabelle Martins/Ryan Bedard, 141.97, 3, 3
4. Maria Mokhova/Ivan Mokhov, 136.61, 4, 4
5. Grace Knoop/Blake Eisenach, 128.87, 5, 5
6. Ainsley Peterson/Matthew Rounis, 124.35, 6, 6
7. Sarah Rose/Jim Garbutt, 119.76, 8, 7
8. Evelyn Grace Hanns/Kristofer Ogren, 116.15, 7, 8
9. Cora DeWyre/Jacob Nussle, 103.61, 9, 9

### Junior Dance

#### Pl. Name, TS, RD, FD

1. Caroline Green/Gordon Green, 172.54, 1, 2
2. Avonley Nguyen/Vadym Kolesnik, 171.06, 2, 1
3. Eliana Gropman/Ian Somerville, 155.46, 4, 3
4. Oona Brown/Gage Brown, 153.67, 3, 4
5. Molly Cesanek/Yehor Yehorov, 144.23, 5, 5
6. Jocelyn Haines/James Koszuta, 136.64, 7, 6
7. Ella Ales/Daniel Tsarik, 132.24, 6, 9
8. Sophia Elder/Christopher Elder, 131.94, 8, 7
9. Katarina Wolfkostin/Howard Zhao, 127.63, 9, 8
10. Katarina DelCamp/Maxwell Gart, 121.52, 11, 10
11. Alina Efimova/Alexander Petrov, 119.73, 10, 11
12. Claire Purnell/Lucas Purnell, 108.10, 12, 12
13. Samantha Udell/Garrett Udell, 53.96, 13, 13

### Novice Ladies

#### Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Calista Choi, 160.15, 1, 1
2. Aubrey Ignacio, 149.33, 4, 2
3. Isabelle Inthisonne, 148.16, 3, 3

4. Laura Jacobson, 139.52, 6, 4
5. Indi Cha, 138.62, 8, 5
6. Allison Zheng, 133.81, 7, 6
7. Alena Budko, 130.55, 2, 10
8. Arianna Concepcion, 129.21, 9, 7
9. Emily Zhang, 127.41, 5, 9
10. Kate Wang, 124.14, 10, 11
11. Alyssa Chan, 118.97, 11, 12
12. Abby Slovin, 117.55, 12, 8

### Novice Men

#### Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. William Annis, 168.08, 1, 3
2. Matthew Nielsen, 167.64, 4, 1
3. Ilia Malinin, 167.05, 2, 2
4. Joseph Klein, 154.39, 3, 6
5. Liam Kapeikis, 151.94, 8, 4
6. Eric Prober, 151.81, 5, 5
7. Henry Privett-Mendoza, 138.69, 6, 8
8. Daniel Tioumentsev, 137.46, 7, 9
9. Philip Baker, 131.16, 9, 10
10. Daniel Argueta, 127.44, 12, 7
11. Samuel Mindra, 123.29, 10, 11
12. Samir Mallya, 121.12, 11, 12

### Novice Pairs

#### Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Isabelle Goldstein/Keyton Beringer, 134.28, 2, 1
2. Cate Fleming/Jedidiah Isbell, 131.35, 1, 3
3. Anastasiia Smirnova/Danil Sianytzia, 129.45, 3, 2
4. Alexandra Schneiderhahn/Timmy Chapman, 123.55, 5, 5
5. Sarah Burden/Jake Pagano, 123.17, 4, 6
6. Campbell Young/Mikhail Gumba, 120.51, 6, 7
7. Taylor Nordquist/Mark Sadusky, 119.89, 7, 4
8. Zoe Larson/Nick Hubbart, 98.93, 8, 8
9. Alexandra Fakhroudinov/Christopher Aaron Singletary, 89.95, 9, 9
10. Ariana LoPinto/Joshua Levitt, 73.28, 10, 11
11. Anastasia Lestina/Benjamin McLemore, 68.79, 11, 10

### Novice Dance

#### Pl. Name, TS, P1, P2, FD

1. Elizabeth Tkachenko/Alexei Kiliakov, 124.53, 2, 1, 1
2. Jordan Lin/Morgan Sletten, 118.52, 1, 2, 4
3. Layla Karnes/Kirill Aksenov, 118.47, 3, 3, 3
4. Elliana Peal/Ethan Peal, 116.85, 4, 4, 2
5. Claire Cain/Andrei Davydov, 102.70, 5, 6, 7
6. Anna Nicklas/Max Ryan, 99.23, 8, 7, 5
7. Kelsey Schaub/Anthony Haddad, 97.34, 7, 9, 6
8. Cordelia Pride/Benjamin Lawless, 96.85, 6, 8, 8
9. Maria Brown/Marius Driscoll, 88.23, 10, 5, 9
10. Breeley Taylor/Tyler Vollmer, 83.96, 11, 10, 10
11. Katherine Bronov/Oleksandr Kolosovskiy, 77.76, 9, 11, 11
12. Lauren Miller/Alexander Bator, 53.44, 12, 12, 12

### Intermediate Ladies

#### Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Lindsay Thorngren, 146.27, 1, 1
2. Isabeau Levito, 141.85, 2, 2
3. Hazel Collier, 135.79, 3, 3
4. Tamnhi Huynh, 122.82, 9, 4
5. Gloria Xia, 118.84, 5, 5
6. Hannah Herrera, 114.71, 4, 6
7. Hannah Lofton, 108.26, 7, 9
8. Katherine Ong, 108.07, 8, 8
9. Elsa Cheng, 106.39, 6, 10
10. Morgan Heavrin, 104.82, 12, 7
11. Amber Barth, 97.84, 10, 11
12. Lindsay Mattenson, 92.07, 11, 12

### Intermediate Men

#### Pl. Name, TS, SP, FS

1. Robert Yampolsky, 147.51, 1, 1
2. Daniel Martynov, 133.25, 2, 3
3. Jacob Sanchez, 131.96, 3, 2
4. Kai Kovar, 118.10, 5, 4
5. Andriy Kratyuk, 112.72, 4, 8
6. Bryan Lehmann, 109.24, 6, 6
7. Daniel Borisov, 105.78, 7, 7
8. Michael Xie, 105.29, 8, 5
9. Andy Deng, 97.57, 10, 9
10. Nhat-Viet Nguyen, 88.83, 11, 10
11. Yuki Horiko, 88.49, 9, 11



# RESULTS

12. Allan Fisher, 82.17, 12, 12

## Intermediate Pairs

### Pl. Name, TS

1. Faye Kropf/Sasha Lunin, 78.75
2. Natasha Mishkutionok/Daniel Tioumentsev, 68.81
3. Kayla Black/Kamden Black, 68.61
4. Aleksandra Prudsky/Enoch Chen, 56.79
5. Estelle Schwab/Jaden Schwab, 55.55
6. Megan Voigt/Levon Davis, 48.06
7. Audrey Duggleby/Daimion Davis, 47.85
8. Meryl Shackett/Matthew Kennedy, 42.30
9. Calli Blumenthal/Blake Edwards, 41.90
10. Sage Kerst/Samuel Alen, 39.86
11. Alexis Slack/Jordan Gillette, 39.22
12. Alexis Balog/Nathan Rothenberger, 32.71

## Intermediate Dance

### Pl. Name, TS, P1, P2, FD

1. Nastia Efimova/Jonathan Zhao, 105.67, 1, 1, 1
2. Leah Niset/Dimitry Tsarevski, 102.11, 2, 2, 2
3. Zoe Sensenbrenner/Matthew Sperry, 88.26, 4, 3, 5
4. Jenna Hauer/Benjamin Starr, 87.19, 8, 5, 3
5. Avery Landis/Kenny Eckert, 85.83, 3, 7, 4
6. Emma L'Esperance/Mika Amdour, 80.63, 6, 4, 8
7. Romy Malcolm/Davis Ortonward, 79.86, 5, 9, 7
8. Hope Noelle Lassiter/Luke Anderson, 77.10, 7, 10, 6
9. Giulia Paolino/Noah Lafornara, 74.00, 10, 6, 10
10. Kristina Bland/Gabriel Francis, 73.27, 11, 8, 9
11. Alexandra Ortiz/Clayton Ramsey, 64.60, 9, 11, 11

## Juvenile Girls

### Pl. Name, TS

1. Kanon Smith, 68.02
2. Tia Hilbelink, 61.75
3. Lilly Mills, 61.16
4. Ava Ziegler, 60.14
5. Ava Neuhaus, 55.52
6. Kaylee Dobson, 54.05
7. Sonia Baram, 50.04
8. Ella Wingler, 48.54
9. Nicole Shalae, 48.39
10. Amy Cui, 46.45
11. Emma Dickau, 46.42
12. Gabriela Summer Panaligan, 42.85

## Juvenile Boys

### Pl. Name, TS

1. Lucas Broussard, 66.01
2. Matthew Grossman, 58.08
3. Jonathan Hildebrandt, 46.16
4. Nikita Prudsky, 43.53
5. Tao MacRae, 42.53
6. Mark Williams, 41.57
7. Jason Hu, 40.47
8. Charles Huang, 37.44
9. Matthew Soifer, 35.61
10. Antonio Monaco, 34.71
11. Addison Apisarnthanarax, 34.22
12. Vaclav Vasquez, 33.15

## Juvenile Pairs

### Pl. Name, TS

1. Hailey Sundstrom/Andy Deng, 49.83
2. Ashley Stark/Kevin Ponceau, 49.59
3. Madeleine Phan/Laz Lune, 42.86
4. Dalila DeLaura/Ryan Xie, 42.07
5. Melania Delis/Allan Fisher, 40.88
6. Olivia Jacobs/Matthew Ho, 40.76
7. Caitlin Levine/Bryan Lehmann, 40.34
8. Emily Renzi/Zachary LoPinto, 40.32
9. Morgan Hilbrich/Michael Poland, 39.02
10. Annie Bai/Andrew Bai, 38.47
11. Olivia Mendoza/Aiden Elswick, 37.58
12. Briella Doherty/Hans-Erik Jerosch, 26.41

## Juvenile Dance

### Pl. Name, TS, P1, P2, FD

1. Kiana Pan/Ilya Mondrowski, 80.03, 5, 2, 2
2. Olivia Ilin/Dylan Cain, 78.72, 1, 1, 3
3. Vanessa Pham/Jonathan Rogers, 78.36, 3, 6, 1
4. Rhiannon Rodriguez Avellan/Rogue Rodriguez Avellan, 74.15, 4, 5, 4
5. Annelise Stapert/Maxim Korotcov, 71.89, 2, 9, 5
6. Anna Sophia O'Brien/Steven Wei, 67.90, 6, 3, 8
7. Xenia Monti/Gaetano Monti, 67.17, 10, 4, 7

8. Caroline Mullen/Brendan Mullen, 65.90, 7, 8, 9
9. Julia Epps/Blake Gilman, 64.73, 9, 7, 10
10. Bella Golomb/Skylar Weirens, 62.45, 11, 11, 6
11. Angela Sha/Andrew Xu, 61.48, 8, 10, 11
12. Isabella Bickenbach/Drake Tong, 52.66, 12, 12, 12

## MOZART CUP

Salzburg, Austria, Jan. 17-20

### Senior

#### Pl. Team, Country, TS, SP FS

1. Nova, CAN, 215.86, 3, 2
2. Marigold Ice Unity, FIN, 215.04, 4, 1
3. Crystal Ice, RUS, 213.50, 2, 4
4. Team Unique, FIN, 211.40, 1, 5
5. **Haydenettes, USA, 208.63, 5, 3**
6. Skyliners, USA, 194.23, 6, 6
7. Team Berlin 1, GER, 158.53, 7, 7
8. Olympic, CZE, 126.88, 8, 8
9. Team Passion, HUN, 123.98, 9, 9
10. Team Illumination, NED, 103.98, 10, 12
11. NOVA, AUS, 100.63, 11, 10
12. Starlight Team, SUI, 99.28, 12, 11
13. Zagreb Snowflakes, CRO, 90.47, 13, 14
14. Sweet Mozart, AUT, 88.73, 14, 13

### Junior

#### Pl., Team, Country, TS, SP FS

1. Crystal Ice, RUS, 194.46, 1, 1
  2. **Skyliners, USA, 181.41, 2, 2**
  3. Team Mystique, FIN, 170.62, 3, 4
  4. Nexxice, CAN, 162.01, 4, 3
  5. Nova, CAN, 142.40, 5, 5
  6. **Hockettes, USA, 137.40, 6, 6**
  7. Jeanne d'Arc, FRA, 131.17, 7, 7
  8. Fire Blades, FIN, 126.63, 8, 8
  9. Team Darlings, CZE, 120.42, 9, 9
  10. Team Estrejija, FIN, 116.10, 10, 10
  11. Team Convivium, SWE, 110.83, 11, 11
  12. Team Illuminettes, NED, 80.49, 12, 12
  13. Zagreb Snowflakes, CRO, 67.95, 13, 13
- U.S. officials:** Wendy Enzmann, Dann Krueger

## LEON LURJE TROPHY

Goteborg, Sweden, Jan. 25-27

### Senior

#### Pl. Team, Country, TS, SP FS

1. Paradise, RUS, 234.35, 1, 1
2. Helsinki Rockettes, FIN, 225.13, 2, 2
3. **Haydenettes, USA, 213.81, 4, 3**
4. Les Supremes, CAN, 209.90, 3, 4
5. **Miami University, USA, 185.19, 5, 5**
6. Hot Shivers, ITA, 162.92, 6, 6
7. Unity, SWE, 138.25, 7, 7
8. Skating Graces, GER, 119.53, 8, 8
9. NOVA, AUS, 102.12, 9, 9

### Junior

1. Sunrise 1, RUS, 196.08, 1, 1
  2. Fintastic, FIN, 187.95, 2, 2
  3. **Starlights, USA, 180.04, 4, 3**
  4. Musketeers, FIN, 177.69, 3, 4
  5. **Lexettes, USA, 168.00, 5, 5**
  6. Les Supremes, CAN, 161.90, 6, 6
  7. Sun City Swing, FIN, 136.12, 7, 7
  8. Spirit, SWE, 130.57, 8, 8
  9. Cool Dreams, SUI, 128.72, 9, 9
  10. Nova, SWE, 124.68, 10, 11
  11. Hot Shivers, ITA, 123.51, 11, 10
  12. Seaside, SWE, 113.97, 14, 12
  13. Unity, SWE, 107.95, 12, 15
  14. Convivium, SWE, 107.38, 13, 14
  15. Ice Infinity, FIN, 106.72, 15, 13
- U.S. officials:** Paula Ziegler, Kelley Ristau

## ISU FOUR CONTINENTS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Feb. 5-10, Anaheim, California

### Ladies

#### Pl. Name, Country, TS, SP, FS

1. Rika Kihira, JPN, 221.99, 5, 1
  2. Elizabet Tursynbaeva, KAZ, 207.46, 6, 3
  3. Mai Mihara, JPN, 207.12, 8, 2
  4. Kaori Sakamoto, JPN, 206.79, 2, 4
  5. **Bradie Tennell, USA, 202.07, 1, 5**
  6. **Mariah Bell, USA, 193.94, 3, 6**
  7. Eunsoo Lim, KOR, 191.85, 4, 8
  8. Yelim Kim, KOR, 187.93, 9, 7
  9. Veronik Mallet, CAN, 170.46, 12, 9
  10. Larkyn Austman, CAN, 165.21, 11, 12
  11. **Ting Cui, USA, 164.84, 7, 14**
- (22 ladies competed)**

### Men

#### Pl. Name, Country, TS, SP, FS

1. Shoma Uno, JPN, 289.12, 4, 1
  2. Boyang Jin, CHN, 273.51, 3, 2
  3. **Vincent Zhou, USA, 272.22, 1, 5**
  4. Keegan Messing, CAN, 267.61, 5, 3
  5. **Jason Brown, USA, 258.89, 6, 4**
  6. Junhwan Cha, KOR, 255.83, 2, 8
  7. Keiji Tanaka, JPN, 251.54, 7, 6
  8. **Tomoki Hiwataishi, USA, 236.79, 9, 7**
  9. Brendan Kerry, AUS, 224.44, 10, 9
  10. Nam Nguyen, CAN, 216.49, 8, 10
- (25 men competed)**

### Pairs

#### Pl. Name, Country, TS, SP, FS

1. Wenjing Sui/Cong Han, CHN, 211.11, 2, 1
  2. Kirsten Moore-Towers/Michael Marinaro, CAN, 211.05, 1, 2
  3. Cheng Peng/Yang Jin, CHN, 205.42, 3, 3
  4. **Ashley Cain/Timothy LeDuc, USA, 196.82, 4, 4**
  5. **Haven Denney/Brandon Frazier, USA, 184.18, 7, 5**
  6. **Tarah Kayne/Danny O'Shea, USA, 180.36, 5, 6**
  7. Evelyn Walsh/Trennt Michaud, CAN, 159.05, 6, 8
  8. Camille Ruest/Andrew Wolfe, CAN, 158.91, 8, 7
- Ice Dance**

#### Pl. Name, Country, TS, RD, FD

1. **Madison Chock/Evan Bates, USA, 207.42, 2, 1**
  2. Kaitlyn Weaver/Andrew Poje, CAN, 203.93, 3, 3
  3. Piper Gilles/Paul Poirier, CAN, 202.45, 4, 2
  4. **Madison Hubbell/Zachary Donohue, USA, 201.66, 1, 4**
  5. **Kaitlin Hawayek/Jean-Luc Baker, USA, 189.97, 5, 5**
  6. Laurence Fournier Beaudry/Nikolaj Sorensen, CAN, 186.91, 6, 6
  7. Shiyue Wang/Xinyu Liu, CHN, 169.11, 7, 7
  8. Hong Chen/Zhuoming Sun, CHN, 156.89, 8, 8
  9. Misato Komatsubara/Tim Koleto, JPN, 149.14, 9, 9
  10. Chantelle Kerry/Andrew Dodds, AUS, 138.53, 10, 10
- (12 teams competed)**

**(U.S. officials):** Samuel Auxier, David Santee, Kevin Rosenstein, Whitney Gaynor, Hal Marron, Jennifer Mast, Richard Dalley

## CORRECTION - UPDATE

## 2019 PACIFIC COAST SECTIONAL FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS

### Novice dance

#### Pl., Name, TS, P1, P2, FD

1. Layla Karnes/Kirill Aksenov, 109.39, 1, 1, 1
  2. Cordelia Pride/Benjamin Lawless, 97.65, 2, 4, 2
  3. Anna Nicklas/Max Ryan, 92.64, 4, 3, 3
  4. Breele Taylor/Tyler Vollmer, 92.57, 3, 2, 4
  5. Lauren Miller/Alexander Bator, 67.10, 6, 6, 6
- WD — Joseline Pretto Simmons/Dmitrijs Naudzuns

KEY: WD — Withdrawn



# CALENDAR

## MARCH

**21-24 | 2019 Skate Kansas City** held in Independence, MO, sponsored by Kansas City FSC. Contact [suzyshinn1131@gmail.com](mailto:suzyshinn1131@gmail.com) for more information.

**22-24 | 2019 Tidewater Colonial Classic** held in Chesapeake, VA, sponsored by Tidewater FSC. Contact [coach.mohr@gmail.com](mailto:coach.mohr@gmail.com) for more information.

**22-24 | North Star Open 2019** held in Westborough, MA, sponsored by North Star FSC. Contact [ecoughlin@northstaricesports.com](mailto:ecoughlin@northstaricesports.com) for more information.

**22-24 | 2019 Colonial Classic Competition** held in Chesapeake, VA, sponsored by Chilled Ponds Skating Academy. Contact [jillbstewartpsu@gmail.com](mailto:jillbstewartpsu@gmail.com) for more information.

**22-24 | Miami Open Competition** held in Oxford, OH, sponsored by Miami Skating Academy. Contact [VogelCD@MiamiOH.edu](mailto:VogelCD@MiamiOH.edu) for more information.

**23 | Galactic Ice Spring Skate Competition** held in Altoona, PA, sponsored by Galactic Ice Learn To Skate. Contact [Coachjohn88@gmail.com](mailto:Coachjohn88@gmail.com) for more information.

**23 | 12th Annual Learn to Skate Competition** held in Williamsville, NY, sponsored by Amherst SC. Contact [paddykim@aol.com](mailto:paddykim@aol.com) for more information.

**23 | 36th Annual Garren Invitational Competition** held in Troy, NY, sponsored by Hudson-Mohawk FSC. Contact [jpalladino2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jpalladino2@nycap.rr.com) for more information.

**23 | NEO Elementry School Championships** held in Mentor, OH, sponsored by Mentor Ice Arena Learn to Skate. Contact [waltersmr@yahoo.com](mailto:waltersmr@yahoo.com) for more information.

**23-24 | Massena Invitational Competition** held in Massena, NY, sponsored by Massena FSC Inc. Contact [angreene9984@gmail.com](mailto:angreene9984@gmail.com) for more information.

**23-24 | Albuquerque Open and Superskate Learn to Skate Competition** held in Albuquerque, NM, sponsored by Albuquerque FSC. Contact [amoore@thuntek.net](mailto:amoore@thuntek.net) for more information.

**23 | Jessamine Open 2019** held in Columbia, SC, sponsored by Palmetto Skate Club. Contact [angigrant@gmail.com](mailto:angigrant@gmail.com) for more information.

**23 | Ice World's Basic Skills & Beyond Competition 2019** held in Abingdon, MD, sponsored by Ice World Learn to Skate. Contact [skating@iceworld.com](mailto:skating@iceworld.com) for more information.

**24 | North Georgia Skate Classic** held in Cumming, GA, sponsored by Learn To Skate At The Ice. Contact [HaveanIceDayCF@aol.com](mailto:HaveanIceDayCF@aol.com) for more information.

**24 | Spiral into Spring** held in Great Neck, NY, sponsored by Great Neck Park District Skate School. Contact [jforte2010@gmail.com](mailto:jforte2010@gmail.com) for more information.

**29-31 | 2019 Morris Open** held in Morristown, NJ, sponsored by SC of Morris NJ. Contact [Kkd.davis@verizon.net](mailto:Kkd.davis@verizon.net) for more information.

**30 | Fiesta Skate 2019** held in Kirkland, WA, sponsored by Sno-King Ice Arena Kirkland. Contact [lisa@snokingkirkland.com](mailto:lisa@snokingkirkland.com) for more information.

**30 | Learn to Skate USA Team Competition** held in Chandler, AZ, sponsored by Ice Den Chandler. Contact [coachdanette@gmail.com](mailto:coachdanette@gmail.com)

for more information.

**30 | Rocket City Junior Classic** held in Huntsville, AL, sponsored by SC of Huntsville. Contact [hssta@hsviceplex.org](mailto:hssta@hsviceplex.org) for more information.

**30 | Chiller Spring Fest** held in Lewis Center, OH, sponsored by Chiller Skating School. Contact [dughes@thechiller.com](mailto:dughes@thechiller.com) for more information.

**30 | 2019 NEICC High School Challenge Cup** held in Reading, MA, sponsored by New England Interclub Council. Contact [suelalone@gmail.com](mailto:suelalone@gmail.com) for more information.

**30 | Janice Smith Memorial Basic Skills Competition** held in Hamburg, NY, sponsored by Skate Great. Contact [coachjess51@yahoo.com](mailto:coachjess51@yahoo.com) for more information.

**30-31 | National High School Final** held in Brighton, MI, sponsored by Ice House Skating Academy. Contact [goetzie7@hotmail.com](mailto:goetzie7@hotmail.com) for more information.

**30-31 | 2019 Powerade State Games** held in Indian Trail, NC, sponsored by Carolinas FSC. Contact [Daniel.fashton@gmail.com](mailto:Daniel.fashton@gmail.com) for more information.

**31 | LTS USA Team Competition** held in Scottsdale, AZ, sponsored by Ice Den Scottsdale. Contact [dpiepenbrink-mccosh@coyotesice.com](mailto:dpiepenbrink-mccosh@coyotesice.com) for more information.

## APRIL

**5-7 | Sugar Skate 2019** held in Sugar Land, TX, sponsored by Texas Gulf Coast FSC. Contact [Ms.Wendy.Barnard@gmail.com](mailto:Ms.Wendy.Barnard@gmail.com) for more information.

**6 | 2019 Spring Classic** held in Sherwood, OR, sponsored by Carousel Sherwood FSC. Contact [alysa@sherwoodicearena.com](mailto:alysa@sherwoodicearena.com) for more information.

**7 | On the Edge Competition** held in Hagerstown, MD, sponsored by Hagerstown Edge Skating Academy. Contact [skatedirector@hagerstownice.org](mailto:skatedirector@hagerstownice.org) for more information.

**7 | Champions 20th Annual Basic Skills Competition** held in Cromwell, CT, sponsored by Champions Learn to Skate. Contact [pamartin1002@gmail.com](mailto:pamartin1002@gmail.com) for more information.

**11-14 | 34th Florida Open Championships and Compete USA Competition** held in Orlando, FL, sponsored by Central Florida FSC. Contact [kerribeth1@gmail.com](mailto:kerribeth1@gmail.com) for more information.

**12-13 | Reach for the Peaks** held in Provo, UT, sponsored by Peaks FSC. Contact [linda.pattberg@gmail.com](mailto:linda.pattberg@gmail.com) for more information.

**12-14 | Skate Nashville 2019** held in Nashville, TN, sponsored by Nashville FSC. Contact [thymewood@bellsouth.net](mailto:thymewood@bellsouth.net) for more information.

**12-14 | 2019 Springfest** held in Vancouver, WA, sponsored by Portland ISC. Contact [MGER-LACK@MSN.COM](mailto:MGER-LACK@MSN.COM) for more information.

**12-14 | 2019 Southern Connecticut Open** held in Darien, CT, sponsored by SC of Southern Connecticut. Contact [helaine.walker@skatescsc.com](mailto:helaine.walker@skatescsc.com) for more information.

**13 | The Winner's Circle Compete USA Competition** held in Austin, TX, sponsored by Chaparral Ice Learn to Skate. Contact [kathy@chaparralice.com](mailto:kathy@chaparralice.com) for more information.

**13 | 2019 Hodag Skate Classic** held in Rhineland, WI, sponsored by Rhineland FSC. Contact [brunette33@gmail.com](mailto:brunette33@gmail.com) for more information.

**13 | 2019 Spring Funtastics** held in Arvada, CO, sponsored by Alpine SC. Contact [cmzeles@gmail.com](mailto:cmzeles@gmail.com) for more information.

**13-14 | Orange Twist Open** held in Riverside, CA, sponsored by Riverside Icetown Skating Academy. Contact [mknutson@icetown.com](mailto:mknutson@icetown.com) for more information.

**14 | Dreams Begin Here** held in Antioch, TN, sponsored by Scott Hamilton Skating Academy. Contact [ptrujillo@nashvillepredators.com](mailto:ptrujillo@nashvillepredators.com) for more information.

**24-28 | Skate Dallas** held in Plano, TX, sponsored by Dallas FSC. Contact [Detail0216@yahoo.com](mailto:Detail0216@yahoo.com) for more information.

**26-28 | 2019 Boise Ice Classic** held in Boise, ID, sponsored by Boise FSC. Contact [nsrados@gmail.com](mailto:nsrados@gmail.com) for more information.

**27 | 8th Annual Southport Spring Classic** held in Vernon Hills, IL, sponsored by Southport SC. Contact [elainejohnson67@sbcglobal.net](mailto:elainejohnson67@sbcglobal.net) for more information.

**28 | Skate into Spring 2019** held in San Antonio, TX, sponsored by Northwoods Learn to Skate. Contact [bstandifer@northwoodsice.net](mailto:bstandifer@northwoodsice.net) for more information.

**28 | Vineyard Open & Compete USA** held in Oak Bluffs, MA, sponsored by Martha's Vineyard FSC. Contact [janelizabeth.taylor@gmail.com](mailto:janelizabeth.taylor@gmail.com) for more information.

**28 | Skate Dallas Compete USA** held in Plano, TX, sponsored by Dallas FSC. Contact [Detail0216@yahoo.com](mailto:Detail0216@yahoo.com) for more information.

## MAY

**4 | CIFSC Spring Learn to Skate Competition** held in Oaks, PA, sponsored by Center Ice of Oaks FSC. Contact [karynlcanning@comcast.net](mailto:karynlcanning@comcast.net) for more information.

**4-5 | 2nd Annual Compete USA Competition** held in Yorba Linda, CA, sponsored by The Rinks-Yorba Linda ICE. Contact [sjude@the-rinks.com](mailto:sjude@the-rinks.com) for more information.

**4-5 | Battle of the Blades** held in Ft Wayne, IN, sponsored by Fort Wayne ISC. Contact [alunin@icesports.com](mailto:alunin@icesports.com) for more information.

**4-5 | 2019 Pigtail Classic** held in Springdale, AR, sponsored by Ozark FSC. Contact [rkaicesk8@yahoo.com](mailto:rkaicesk8@yahoo.com) for more information.

**5 | Fond Du Lac 2019 Compete USA Competition** held in Fond Du Lac, WI, sponsored by Fond Du Lac FSC. Contact [angdowidat@yahoo.com](mailto:angdowidat@yahoo.com) for more information.

**5 | Ice House Basic Skills Competition held in Hackensack, NJ.**, sponsored by Ice House Skating School. Contact [icesk8boy@aol.com](mailto:icesk8boy@aol.com) for more information.

**10-12 | Skate Vegas** held in Las Vegas, NV, sponsored by Vegas Golden Knights Center of Excellence. Contact [Mfrefreter@gmail.com](mailto:Mfrefreter@gmail.com) for more information.

**10-12 | Northern Blast 2019** held in Woodridge, IL, sponsored by Northern Ice SC. Contact [helen.biggers@gmail.com](mailto:helen.biggers@gmail.com) for more information.



## TESTS PASSED

### Senior moves in the field

Daphne Achilles — Sun Valley FSC  
 Brittlyn Anderson — Carolinas FSC  
 Cheyenne Arnesen — Oval FSC  
 Madeline Ashton — Carolinas FSC  
 Macee Barber — Magic City FSC  
 Jillian Beksinski — SC of New York  
 Alexa Binder — Pines FSC  
 Anna Blonquist — Peaks FSC  
 Daniel Borisov — Braemar-City of Lakes FSC  
 Natasha Burns — FSC of Southern California  
 Julianna Calvello — Yonkers FSC  
 Kaitlyn Chuang — Washington FSC  
 Kira Diaz — Chicago FSC  
 Lauren Eickman — Border Blades FSC  
 Sophie Ellis — Richmond FSC  
 Elizabeth Fedorchak — Bismarck FSC  
 Skyler Freitas — Keene FSC  
 Sarah Geiger — Florida Everblades FSC  
 Grace Goers — Starlight Ice Dance Club  
 Mackenzie Gottberg — Farmington Hills FSC  
 Anna Kate Graban — Shaker FSC  
 Emily Hao — Dallas FSC  
 Naomi Harkey — Peninsula SC  
 Olivia Hartnett — Peninsula SC  
 Sofia Hofmann — Peninsula SC  
 Jennifer Huang — St. Moritz ISC  
 Ashlyn Huber — Kingsgate SC  
 Sarah Jamieson — Birmingham FSC  
 Grace Kaung — Lake Minnetonka FSC  
 Simone Klein — Skating Club of Boston  
 Meredith Klepper — Rye FSC  
 Alissa Knudson — Bismarck FSC  
 Lyra Koutlas — Starlight Ice Dance Club  
 Vivian Kuang — St. Moritz ISC  
 Madilyn LaFever — Onyx-Suburban SA  
 Joyce Lee — SC of Northern Virginia  
 Abigail Lucas — Mitchell Johansson Method  
 Kendall Lucas — DuPage FSC  
 Peyton Lucas — DuPage FSC  
 Emerson Luczak — Onyx-Suburban SA  
 Vivian Luo — ISC of Indianapolis  
 Emily Lyon — Tidewater FSC  
 Hannah Elyssa Maloy — DuPage FSC  
 Isabelle Martins — Chicago FSC  
 Sloan Mayer — All Year FSC  
 Erin McAlinden — Plymouth FSC  
 Molly McNamara — FSC of Park City  
 Demi Melendez — Utah FSC  
 Viviana Moreno — Salt Lake Figure Skating

Amanda Moyer — University of Delaware FSC  
 Nicole Nemerson — DuPage FSC  
 Diana Nightingale — Hayden Rec. Centre FSC  
 Grace Pierpont — Lake Minnetonka FSC  
 Lexi Popkin — Pines FSC  
 Natalie Raab — Richmond FSC  
 Elizabeth Rowe — Gardens FSC of Maryland  
 Ava Roy — FSC of Bloomington  
 Rachel Scheske — Plymouth FSC  
 Madison Sciera — Cortland FSC  
 Eliza Shepard — Salt Lake Figure Skating  
 Samantha Shick — Hayden Rec. Centre FSC  
 Emily Smiley — Detroit SC  
 Viola Grace Smitman — ISC of Indianapolis  
 Eli Sparrow — Philadelphia SC & HS  
 Madeleine Stinson — FSC of Park City  
 Sabrina Talghader — Braemar-City of Lakes FSC  
 Madison Tan — Eden Prairie FSC  
 Hope Terpilowski — Highland SC  
 Hailey Tien — Frederick FSC  
 Summer Tran — Orange County FSC  
 Sarah Wade — Skokie Valley SC  
 Annie Wang — Ann Arbor FSC  
 Carly Wholihan — Ann Arbor FSC  
 Ava Williams — Atlanta FSC  
 Cassie Williams — Duluth FSC  
 Kristin Williams — Duluth FSC  
 Libby Williams — Broadmoor SC  
 Elise Wilsey — Niagara University SC  
 Shelby Wright — Channel Islands FSC  
 Courtney Zozulia — Skokie Valley SC

### Adult gold moves in the field - Adult 21+

Jenni Klock Morel — San Diego FSC  
 Elisabeth Peier — FSC of Southern California  
 Riley Terшел — Carolinas FSC

### Senior moves in the field - Adult 25+

Lauren Glabor — St. Moritz ISC, Inc.

### Special Olympics/

### Therapeutic Skating Gold MITF

Erin Hart — Springfield FSC  
 Senior free skate  
 Kristen Barclay — St. Moritz ISC  
 Julia Bennett — Starlight Ice Dance Club  
 Alexa Bouts — Columbus FSC  
 Kaya Chakraborty — Detroit SC  
 Abby Donahue — Onyx-Suburban SA  
 Madison Doran — Lone Star FSC  
 Isabel Holloway — Detroit SC  
 Charlene Hsiung — Onyx-Suburban SA

Kylie Kronstedt — Wisconsin Rapids FSC  
 Katharina Prasetya — Fort Collins FSC  
 Bianca Rowland — Skokie Valley SC  
 Mirella Strieleman — Skokie Valley SC  
 Anastasia Tam — Winterhawks FSC  
 Lauren Theyerl — Eau Claire FSC  
 Gabrielle Yakovlev — Detroit SC

### Adult gold free skate

Lori Ann Bricks — Denver FSC  
 Tracy Rineberg — Coyotes SC of Arizona

### Adult gold pair

Zdenek Krajc — Kent Valley FSC

### Gold dance

Christine Brennan — Maplewood FSC  
 Amber Clift — St. Paul FSC, Inc  
 Hannah Foss — Magic City FSC  
 Carla Gupilan — St. Paul FSC  
 Lisa Hoshijima — Cottonwood Heights FSC  
 Taylor Olender — Yonkers FSC  
 Gracie Ossorio — Rye FSC  
 Anna Pettersson — Colonial FSC  
 Emilie Rennie — Hayden Rec. Centre FSC  
 Emily Schneider — Skating Club of Boston  
 Julien Song — Hayden Rec. Centre FSC

### Adult 21+ gold dance

Bethany Costa — Commonwealth FSC

### Solo gold dance

Sarah Siedenburtg — Kingsgate SC

### Senior free dance

Julie Condit — Richmond FSC

### Senior solo free dance

Valya Flannery — Greater Green Bay FSC  
 Sabrina Ghaly — All Year FSC  
 Jenna Hauer — SC of Wilmington  
 Tess Jensen — Starlight Ice Dance Club  
 Brayleigh Keefe — Laurel Ridge SC  
 Makayla Krajewski — Rochester FSC  
 Jessica Li — Richmond FSC  
 Bridget McNeff — Northern Blades NSC FSC  
 Savannah McVoy — Louisville SA  
 Marie Moeller — Richmond FSC  
 Julia Olson — Starlight Ice Dance Club  
 Molly Rendel — All Year FSC  
 Tyra Schmalzbauer — Northern Blades NSC FSC  
 Maureen Tolloti — Strongsville SC  
 Morgan Vicha — Gardens FSC of Maryland  
 Lily Zieg — St. Paul FSC

### Eighth figure

Jennifer Tieche — Columbus FSC

## OBITUARIES

### NELSON

Former U.S. Figure Skating President Dr. Franklin Nelson passed away on Feb. 6, 2019, after a long illness. He was 85.



Nelson started his skating career in his hometown of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and continued at The Skating Club of Boston while a student at Harvard University, where he earned his bachelor's and medical degrees.

Nelson served as U.S. Figure Skating

president from 1989 to 1992. He was the last president who also was a U.S. champion, winning the 1955 junior ice dance title with Sidney Foster. Foster and Nelson took seventh place at the 1956 World Championships, held in the former West Germany. Soon after the event, Nelson joined the U.S. Navy.

Nelson served on U.S. Figure Skating's board of directors for 10 years, was a vice president (1980-83) and Dance Committee chair (1975-78). As a physician, Nelson was the first chair of the U.S. Figure Skating Sports Medicine Committee and was an

original and longtime member of the ISU Sports Medicine Committee.

An ISU judge, Nelson served on the pairs panel at the 1984 Olympic Winter Games in Sarajevo and judged several World Championships.

Nelson also served U.S. Figure Skating as a team leader for the 1973 and '74 World Championships. He was also a team leader for the 1976 U.S. Olympic Team, which featured future Hall of Famers Tai Babilonia and Randy Gardner, Linda Fratianne, Dorothy Hamill, Terry Kubicka, Colleen O'Connor and Jim Millns, and David Santee.



## OBITUARIES

### GLEESON

Harry H. Gleeson, a popular announcer at U.S. Figure Skating events for more than a dozen years, died on Dec. 17, 2018, from injuries sustained in an unexpected fall the prior evening.

Harry announced at six U.S. Championships from 2002 to 2011, the 2003 World Championships, 2001 and 2004 Skate America, 2004 U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships and other domestic championships.

Born and educated in Washington, D.C., Harry joined the U.S. Air Force Singing Sergeants in 1959. During his 20-year career with the United States Air Force



Band, he served in overlapping positions including nine years in the chorus, 18 years as the chief announcer and as the band's director of information for 16 years. His superb and sound leadership in all these positions earned him the enlisted grade of Chief Master Sergeant, a rank held by only the top 1 percent of the total enlisted force in the USAF at any given time.

During Harry's 45-plus years as a professional announcer, his unique voice has been acclaimed throughout America and around the globe. For 20 years he was known as "The Voice of the Air Force," and following his retirement, he was recognized for more than a dozen years as "The Voice of U.S. Figure Skating."

In 2016, Colonel Larry H. Lang recognized Harry's monumental efforts and contributions to the USAF Band by naming

him the first Historian Emeritus, the U.S. Air Force Band, during the USAF Band's 75th anniversary concert at George Mason University, in Fairfax, Virginia.

At the time of his passing, Harry was the foremost authority on the USAF Band's history. His monumental efforts resulted in one of the largest private collections of Air Force Band history in the world.

Surviving are his wife of 24 years, Elaine "Lainie" DeMore; son, Lloyd M. Gleeson of Round Hill, Virginia; daughter, Vanessa Oetjens of Christiansburg, Virginia; and three grandchildren Kaylie Arnston, Joseph and Mae Oetjens.

Memorial contributions are suggested to the Cleveland Orchestra, 11001 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44106 or U.S. Figure Skating Memorial Fund, 20 First St. Colorado Springs, CO 80906.

## MEMORIAL FUND

### General & Museum Donations

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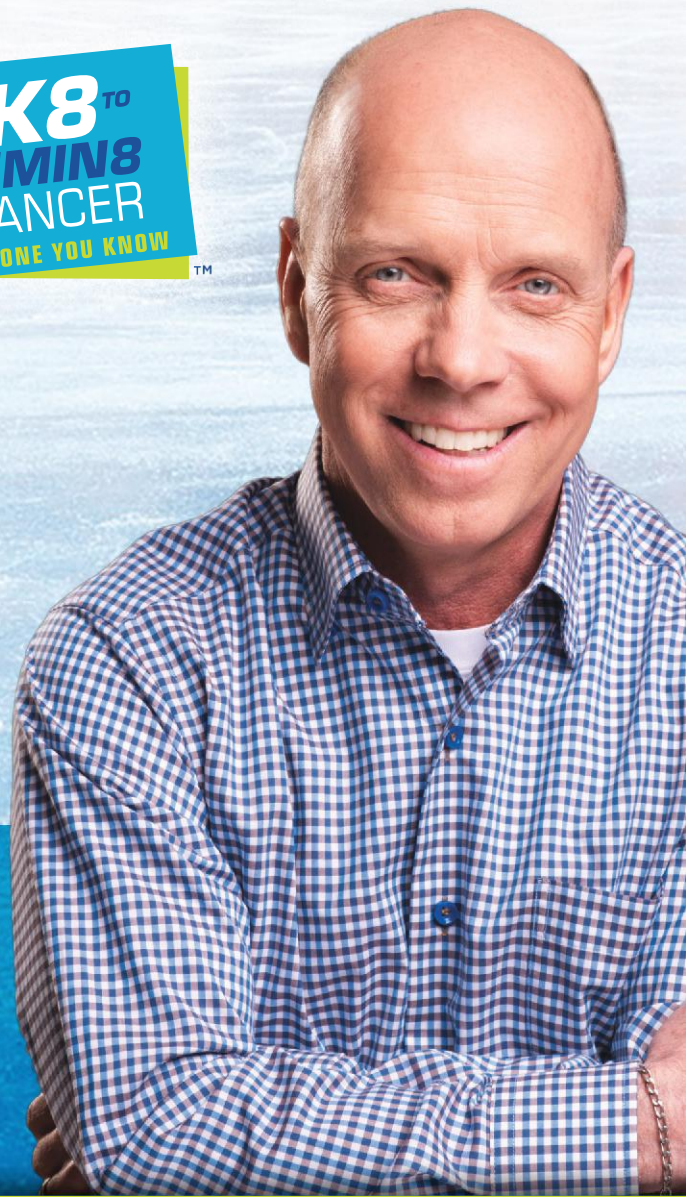
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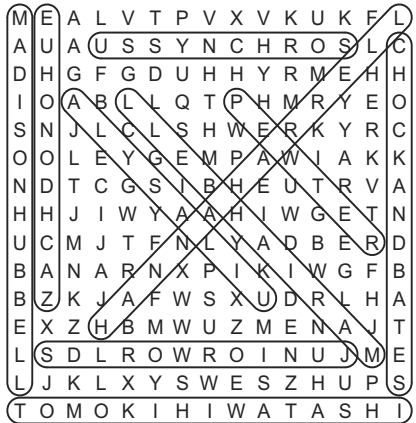
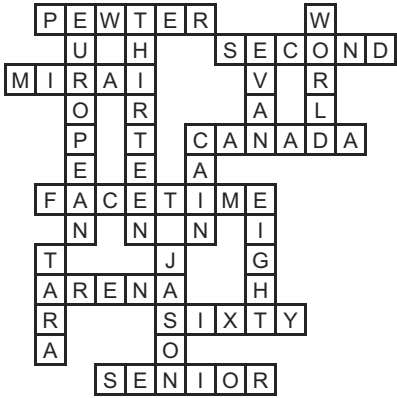
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**THE 2019 U.S. WORLD TEAM** (l-r, back row) Timothy LeDuc, Vincent Zhou, Jason Brown, Nathan Chen, Zachary Donohue, Evan Bates, Jean-Luc Baker; (l-r, front row) Ashley Cain, Bradie Tennell, Mariah Bell, Madison Hubbell, Madison Chock, Kaitlin Hawayek