2 July 2017

Hohhot Grand Prix 2017, China – DAY THREE

Olympic and world champions win on the road to **#JudoWorlds2017**

The final day of the Hohhot Grand Prix saw Olympic and world champions rule as the focus now turns to the 2017 Suzuki World Judo Championships in Budapest, Hungary from 28 August – 3 September.

IJF World Judo Tour heroes took a giant step towards making a successful Worlds campaign next month in the final senior event before the seven-day spectacle in Hungary.

The men’s -90kg, -100kg and +100kg categories and the women’s -78kg and +78kg categories brought the competition to a barnstorming conclusion in front of a mass of spectators which included hundreds of children.

Japan finished out of sight at the top of the medal table with five gold medals and three bronze ahead of Russia who claimed two gold, three silver and six bronze medals.

**WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS COUNTDOWN – 57 DAYS TO GO**

Two-time world champion CHO Min-Sun (KOR) is one of her country’s most decorated judoka of all time. CHO, 45, a long-time teammate of IJF Hall of Famer KI-YOUNG Jeon, is now an IJF A referee who was officiating in Hohhot.

Before embarking on a second career in the middle of the tatami, CHO was the one creating ippons instead of awarding them.

“I started judo when I was 13 because it looked like a fun activity,” said CHO who started refereeing on the IJF World Judo Tour in 2014.

“I was the first person in my family to do judo and immediately I took to it. I won the national championships at 16 years old in the -48kg category and then I had the belief that one day I would be world champion.”

The South Korean legend recalled watching the 1985 World Championships in Seoul, on her own, and was inspired to take her judo career to this stage.

“I wanted to show my best to the world, to accomplish everything I could and to make my team and family proud. The Olympics was also my aim and I did not go in 1992 but I did go in 1996 to the Atlanta Olympics and I won. These results gave me amazing feelings and memories I will always treasure.

“The World Championships are a special event and are a fantastic presentation of our sport. I am sure that the world will enjoy what is in store in Budapest next month.”

**THE STARS OF TOMORROW ARE UP NEXT IN CHILE**

The Cadet World Championships comes up the next as a new generation of judoka will be unleashed in Santiago de Chile from 9 – 13 August.

The first Worlds of 2017 will be broadcast in their entirety live and free on [www.ippon.tv](http://www.ippon.tv)

Stay tuned to IJF website for all the build-up to Chile’s first IJF competition which will identify the brightest prospects in the world as the event has proven to be a stepping stone to senior glory on the IJF World Judo Tour.

**Women
-78kg: Austria’s GRAF is now a two-weight contender after Hohhot gold**

Bucharest European Open winner Bernadette GRAF (AUT) looked at home in -78kg category in Inner Mongolia as she beat Budapest Grand Prix bronze medallist Karen STEVENSON (NED) to win her first Grand Prix title at this weight. GRAF, who finished fifth at the Rio 2016 Olympics in the -70kg category, debuted in the heavier category in June and has remained unbeaten at -78kg having chalked up eight consecutive wins including today with Hohhot Grand Prix gold providing a windfall of 700 World Ranking List points. GRAF weighed in at 72kg but had the power to throw STEVENSON with a utsuri-goshi for ippon after two minutes to collect the top prize in China.

In the first semi-final Tokyo Grand Slam winner SATO Ruika (JPN) was countered by GRAF after two minutes of golden score for a waza-ari as the Austrian made an immediate impact in her new weight.

In the second semi-final STEVENSON (NED) saw off 20-year-old Asian Championships bronze medallist LEE Jeongyun (KOR) via hansoku-make.

The first bronze medal was won by LEE in a contest between the two Asian Championships bronze medallists as teammates collided for the right to represent their country on the -78kg medal podium. A predictable stalemate between two international colleagues ensured as LEE and PARK train together every day and know exactly how to negate their respective strengths. PARK picked up her third shido in the closing minute to receive hansoku-make and send her teammate onto the medal podium.

The second bronze medal contest was won by SATO who won her fifth Grand Prix medal by beating former Tyumen Grand Slam bronze medallist Aleksandra BABINTCEVA (RUS). SATO, who was coached by two-time -48kg world champion ASAMI Haruna (JPN), had watched her younger brother SATO Seidai (JPN) fall in the opening -81kg round on Saturday. BABINTCEVA failed to impose herself and was given her third shido to receive hansoku-make and SATO boosted her country’s medal tally on the final day.

**Final**GRAF, Bernadette (AUT) vs STEVENSON, Karen (NED)

**Bronze Medal Fights**PARK, Yujin (KOR) vs LEE, Jeongyun (KOR)
SATO, Ruika (JPN) vs BABINTCEVA, Aleksandra (RUS)

**Final Results**

1. GRAF, Bernadette (AUT)
2. STEVENSON, Karen (NED)
3. LEE, Jeongyun (KOR)
3. SATO, Ruika (JPN)
5. PARK, Yujin (KOR)
5. BABINTCEVA, Aleksandra (RUS)
7. ZHANG, Kaili (CHN)
7. TURCHYN, Anastasiya (UKR)

**+78kg: Debutant HAN hands heavyweight gold to South Korea in added time**

Junior World Championships bronze medallist HAN Mi Jin (KOR) won her IJF World Judo Tour debut after a fascinating final against Baku Grand Slam bronze medallist Yelyzaveta KALANINA (UKR). The Ukrainian judoka was an accomplished youth talent herself with a silver medal at the Cadet Worlds in 2011 and bronze at the Junior World Championships in 2015. HAN, 21, who stood next to her opponent as the second bronze medallist at the Worlds in 2015, was composed despite being new to the circuit and threw with a uchi-mata after 45 seconds of golden score for a match-winning waza-ari.

In the first semi-final KALANINA threw IJF Grand Prix rookie YAMAMOTO Sara (JPN) for a waza-ari and held down the Japanese with a ushiro-kesa-gatame for 20 seconds.

In the second semi-final HAN profited from the inaction of Asian Championships bronze medallist BATTULGA Munkhtuya (MGL) who was penalised a third time for passivity and moved down into the bronze medal equation.

The first bronze medal was won by BATTULGA after former Tbilisi Grand Prix bronze medallist Mariia SHEKEROVA (RUS) tamely accumulated three shidos.

The second bronze medal contest was all over after 41 seconds as YAMAMOTO threw 20-year-old ERDENEBILEG Gandiimaa (MGL) - who was competing at a Grand Prix outside of her homeland for the first time – with uchi-mata for a waza-ari and trapped the Mongolian in a kesa-gatame hold for 20 seconds for ippon.

**Final**KALANINA, Yelyzaveta (UKR) vs HAN, Mi Jin (KOR)

**Bronze Medal Fights**BATTULGA, Munkhtuya (MGL) vs SHEKEROVA, Mariia (RUS)
YAMAMOTO, Sara (JPN) vs ERDENEBILEG, Gandiimaa (MGL)

**Final Results**

1. HAN, Mi Jin (KOR)
2. KALANINA, Yelyzaveta (UKR)
3. BATTULGA, Munkhtuya (MGL)
3. YAMAMOTO, Sara (JPN)
5. SHEKEROVA, Mariia (RUS)
5. ERDENEBILEG, Gandiimaa (MGL)
7. LI, Nan (CHN)
7. SUTALO, Ivana (CRO)

**-90kg: Russia’s Khusen KHALMURZAEV pips world number one KUKOLJ**

European Championships bronze medallist Khusen KHALMURZAEV (RUS) put his name forward as a World Championships medal contender by beating world number one and European Championships winner Aleksandar KUKOLJ (SRB) in the -90kg final on Sunday. An uchi-mata from the Russian was a complete overthrow as the Serbian landed partially on his side and gave away a waza-ari. KUKOLJ gingerly returned to his feet, feeling the full effects of that landing and could not find a way onto the scoreboard. The Serbian judoka, who had won their only previous meeting back in 2013 at the European u23 Championships, missed out on the chance to win his first Grand Prix gold but will look at the bigger picture and be focused on the idea of becoming his country’s world judo champion in August.

In the first semi-final KUKOLJ held down Antalya Grand Prix winner GANTULGA Altanbagana (MGL) and the Mongolian elected to tap out.

In the second semi-final KHALMURZAEV defeated Magomed MAGOMEDOV (RUS) who was nowhere near his best as he received three shidos by the halfway point to receive hansoku-make.

The first bronze medal was awarded to MAGOMEDOV who dispatched WANG Xuewen (CHN). The Russian broke the deadlock with a waza-ari from a tai-otoshi and countered his opponent to double his advantage. MAGOMEDOV sealed victory in the opening contest of the final block by pinning WANG with a kuzure-kesa-gatame for 20 seconds.

The second bronze medal went to GANTULGA who bested 21-year-old former Junior Asian Championships silver medallist ERDENEKHUU Munkhjargal (MGL). ERDENEKHUU was reprimanded for the third time with a shido for going out of the area with 43 seconds left on the clock to gift the Grand Prix medal to his countryman.

**Final**KUKOLJ, Aleksandar (SRB) vs KHALMURZAEV, Khusen (RUS)

**Bronze Medal Fights**WANG, Xuewen (CHN) vs MAGOMEDOV, Magomed (RUS)
GANTULGA, Altanbagana (MGL) vs ERDENEKHUU, Munkhjargal (MGL)

**Final Results**

1. KHALMURZAEV, Khusen (RUS)
2. KUKOLJ, Aleksandar (SRB)
3. MAGOMEDOV, Magomed (RUS)
3. GANTULGA, Altanbagana (MGL)
5. WANG, Xuewen (CHN)
5. ERDENEKHUU, Munkhjargal (MGL)
7. BU, Hebilige (CHN)
7. KLAMMERT, David (CZE)

**-100kg: World champion HAGA triumphs in battle of attrition against DENISOV**World champion HAGA Ryunosuke (JPN) showed his resolve to defeat Tokyo Grand Slam winner Kirill DENISOV (RUS) in the -100kg final and establish some form before defending his world crown in Budapest. Rio 2016 Olympic bronze medallist HAGA, 26, and four-time world medallist DENISOV, 29, were locked in an intense gripping duel as they squared off for the first time. The Russian was on the back foot in golden score while HAGA was upright even after three minutes of added time with good posture. The Japanese has hopes of retaining his red backpatch next month and experienced that winning feeling seven weeks out from Hungary after his opponent infringed for the final time with a blatant false attack.

In the first semi-final world number seven Martin PACEK (SWE) tapped out to HAGA who employed a neat piece of kansetsu-waza to force his way into the final by ippon.

In the second semi-final Tbilisi Grand Prix winner Kazbek ZANKISHIEV (RUS) fell to teammate DENISOV who won by ippon from a textbook foot sweep.

The first bronze medal was won by ZANKISHIEV who steered Russia back onto the medal trail. Former Tashkent Grand Prix silver medallist Zlatko KUMRIC (CRO) was second best throughout and lost out by hansoku-make after being penalised three times.

The second bronze medal was won by Abu Dhabi Grand Slam bronze medallist Joakim DVARBY (SWE) with 29 seconds left as he captured his country’s first medal in Hohhot. DVARBY defeated top seed PACEK by the maximum score as both men put forward a credible display for Sweden’s four-strong team.

**Final**DENISOV, Kirill (RUS) vs HAGA, Ryunosuke (JPN)

**Bronze Medal Fights**KUMRIC, Zlatko (CRO) vs ZANKISHIEV, Kazbek (RUS)
PACEK, Martin (SWE) vs DVARBY, Joakim (SWE)

**Final Results**

1. HAGA, Ryunosuke (JPN)
2. DENISOV, Kirill (RUS)
3. ZANKISHIEV, Kazbek (RUS)
3. DVARBY, Joakim (SWE)
5. KUMRIC, Zlatko (CRO)
5. PACEK, Martin (SWE)
7. LOPORCHIO, Giuliano (ITA)
7. WON, Jonghoon (KOR)

**+100kg: KRPALEK perfectly sets up all-gold backpatch clash with Teddy RINER**
Former world champion and reigning -100kg Olympic champion Lukas KRPALEK (CZE) made a sensational fourth appearance in the heavyweight division on the IJF World Judo Tour as he topped the podium in the last contest of the Hohhot Grand Prix 2017. KRPALEK came through his latest learning exercise with a lot of lessons learned and invaluable experience as he grafted his way to gold. The manner of the victory will pleasure the Czech Republic ace after he came back from losing positions against seasoned heavyweights due to his conditioning and will to win. Former Junior World Championships winner ULZIIBAYAR Duurenbayar (MGL) went ahead with a waza-ari with 42 seconds left on the clock to set up a thrilling finale. KRPALEK fought back with a sumi-gaeshi on the 20 second mark and moved into the osaekomi which prompted the Mongolian to submit due to the pressure.

In the first semi-final Ekaterinburg Grand Slam bronze medallist Andrey VOLKOV (RUS) gave away his waza-ari advantage in the last 30 seconds to miss out on the final as KRPALEK held down the Russian with a mune-gatame for 20 seconds to the immense satisfaction of his many teammates in the stands.

In the second semi-final Tbilisi Grand Prix silver medallist Stanislav BONDARENKO (UKR) was penalised three times to lose out to ULZIIBAYAR for a place in the men’s heavyweight final.

The first bronze medal was won by Asian Championships winner KIM Sungmin (KOR). KIM won his country’s fifth medal at the Hohhot Grand Prix when BONDARENKO received a direct hansoku-make for endangering his opponent with a waki-gatame.

The second heavyweight bronze medal went to VOLKOV who pinned down 21-year-old LI Bo (CHN) with a kata-gatame for ippon. LI was making his second appearance on the IJF World Judo Tour after a short-lived outing at the Antalya Grand Prix in April and had to settle for fifth-place after Russia’s VOLKOV clinched a crucial podium in his bid for Worlds selection.

**Final**KRPALEK, Lukas (CZE) vs ULZIIBAYAR, Duurenbayar (MGL)

**Bronze Medal Fight**
KIM, Sungmin (KOR) vs BONDARENKO, Stanislav (UKR)
VOLKOV, Andrey (RUS) vs LI, Bo (CHN)

**Final Results**

1. KRPALEK, Lukas (CZE)
2. ULZIIBAYAR, Duurenbayar (MGL)
3. KIM, Sungmin (KOR)
3. VOLKOV, Andrey (RUS)
5. BONDARENKO, Stanislav (UKR)
5. LI, Bo (CHN)
7. KRIVOBOKOV, Anton (RUS)
7. KHAMMO, Iakiv (UKR)

**IJF Media & Communications Department**
Mark Pickering, IJF Media Manager
Nicolas Messner, IJF Media Director

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press@ijf.org