17 November 2017

The Hague Grand Prix 2017, Netherlands – DAY ONE

**Kosovo lead while German twin sisters both medal after going head-to-head**

The International Judo Federation’s eagerly-awaited return to the Netherlands for IJF World Judo Tour action delivered a day full of surprises, storylines and emotions as The Hague Grand Prix was the talk of the Netherlands on Friday.

Day one of the newest competition on the international circuit featured five weight categories as the men’s -60kg and -66kg judoka were in action in addition to the women’s -48kg, -52kg and -57kg weights.

Kosovo ruled on day one with two gold medals which came in the absence of Olympic champion Majlinda KELMENDI who has recently undergone surgery and is expected back in the middle of 2018.

Mongolia, whose volume of travelling supporters was almost as impressive as their medal haul, finished second with one gold and three bronze ahead of Turkey who finished with one gold medal.

**JOYFUL ENDING FOR TWIN SISTERS TURNED RIVALS**

Twins Theresa STOLL (GER) and Amelie STOLL (GER) were in demand by the media after they were on the -57kg podium having had to face each other in the second round.

Theresa won their quarter-final contest by a waza-ari score and went on to take silver while Amelie bounced back from her defeat at the hands of her sister to win bronze.

The IJF President Mr. Marius VIZER was on hand to congratulate both judoka as two of Germany’s three medals were won by the sisters who are already making a vast impact on proceedings ahead of the opening of the Tokyo 2020 qualification phase in May 2018.

**IJF RELEASES FIFTH JUDO LEGENDS INTERVIEW**

Throughout the weekend, The Hague Grand Prix is engrossing judo fans in the host country and around the world. The three-day Grand Prix also presents the ideal time for the release of the IJF’s latest Judo Legend video on Mr. Jan SNIJDERS (NED). Today, IJF's Head Refereeing Director, Mr. SNIJDERS, has been a distinguished member of judo’s world governing body for many years. Mr. SNIJDERS was first of all a great champion, a European medallist, and he participated in the first Olympic Games where judo was on the programme, in Tokyo 1964, alongside the famous Anton GEESINK. But he is also a passionate judo teacher, who has dedicated most of his life to teaching judo to children. During the interview the much-admired Dutchman, in his hometown of Eindhoven, explained is career, his passions and what he thinks judo can bring to the world.

The second day of **#JudoTheHague2017** will showcase the middleweights with the men’s -73kg and -81kg judoka along with the women’s -63kg and -70kg competitors.

**Women
-48kg: Ukrainian wonderkid wins first IJF World Judo Tour gold medal**
European champion Daria BILODID (UKR) struck IJF World Judo Tour gold for the first time on Friday as the precocious 17-year-old put the entire weight category on notice. The renowned teenager took bronze at the Hohhot Grand Prix in June before going to her first senior World Championships in August where she lost to Otgontsetseg GALBADRAKH (KAZ) in the third round. That defeat meant that BILODID left an international competition without a medal for the first time in her life. Today marked a new chapter for the young Ukrainian and for the -48kg category as BILODID defeated world and Olympic bronze medallist Otgontsetseg GALBADRAKH (KAZ) to win gold after an absorbing first gold medal contest at The Hague Grand Prix. Pocket-sized GALBADRAKH never stopped moving against the long-limbed youngster from Ukraine but neither judoka to create any openings in regular time. When it looked like the Ukrainian was fading, after narrowly escaping a shido for a push out, she caught the Kazakh world number two with a ko-uchi-gari for a waza-ari score after four minutes and 31 seconds of golden score.

In the first semi-final GALBADRAKH beat world number 70 Anastasia PAVLENKO (RUS) to go through to the final. The Kazakh star scored a waza-ari from a sumi-gaeshi and then wrapped up her opponent in osaekomi to wrap up a comfortable victory.

In the second semi-final five-time African Championships winner Taciana CESAR (GBS) was beaten in golden score by BILODID. Veteran CESAR, 33, was penalised in added time with her third shido for passivity to send her teenage opponent into the final.

The first bronze medal contest was won by CESAR who defeated former Apia Open winner Kimberley RENICKS (GBR) with her trademark ouchi-gari. Scottish judoka RENICKS, who is part of a large British contingent in The Hague from Camberley Judo Club, was making her 15th attempt to win a Grand Prix medal but narrowly missed out in golden score. African star CESAR showed her lethal ashi-waza as she launched for a stinging ouchi-gari which earned a waza-ari score after 59 seconds.

The second bronze medal was won by Prague European Open bronze medallist Katharina MENZ (GER) who bested PAVLENKO. MENZ was fighting for Grand Prix honours for the first time in her career and was triumphant after registering two scores without reply. A uchi-mata after 30 seconds gave the German the lead and a second was added in the final minute as PAVLENKO failed to impose herself in the contest.

**Final**GALBADRAKH, Otgontsetseg (KAZ) vs BILODID, Daria (UKR)

**Bronze Medal Fights**RENICKS, Kimberley (GBR) vs CESAR, Taciana (GBS)
PAVLENKO, Anastasia (RUS) vs MENZ, Katharina (GER)

**Final Results**

1. BILODID, Daria (UKR)
2. GALBADRAKH, Otgontsetseg (KAZ)
3. CESAR, Taciana (GBS)
3. MENZ, Katharina (GER)
5. RENICKS, Kimberley (GBR)
5. PAVLENKO, Anastasia (RUS)
7. DIOGO, Joana (POR)
7. JURA, Anne Sophie (BEL)

**-52kg: KRASNIQI sparkles for Kosovo in The Hague to move the into world’s top 10**
European u23 Championships winner Distria KRASNIQI (KOS) celebrated winning her third Grand Prix gold medal as the 21-year-old can now already count herself as one of the world’s elite judoka in the -52kg category. KRASNIQI starred in the absence of her teammate and Olympic champion Majlinda KELMENDI (KOS) who will be a long-term absentee after recently undergoing surgery. It has always been a disservice to consider the youngster as an understudy or back-up for KELMENDI but rather a world-class judoka in her own right and now has the opportunity to step out from the considerable shadow of Kosovo’s Rio 2016 flagbearer and double world champion.

KRASNIQI defeated Casablanca African Open silver medallist Estrella LOPEZ SHERIFF (ESP) in the -52kg final with a hair-raising performance. The scoreboard was in action after just 10 seconds when the much-fancied KRASNIQI scored a waza-ari from an ouchi-gari and then emphatically ended the final by ippon with a thunderous osoto-gari just 24 seconds later.

In the first semi-final LOPEZ SHERIFF (ESP) outscored 2016 Tyumen Grand Slam bronze medallist Aigul KUTSENKO (RUS) by one waza-ari to book a place in the gold medal contest. The Spaniard led with a waza-ari before KUTSENKO produced one from a ouchi-gari to restore parity. LOPEZ SHERIFF regained the lead with a uchi-mata counter and that ko-soto scored a waza-ari which proved to be the desicive moment of the contest.

In the second semi-final KRASNIQI downed Tashkent Grand Prix silver medallist Agata PERENC (POL) by a waza-ari from a osoto-gari which came after just 20 seconds.

The first bronze medal was awarded to Abu Dhabi Grand Slam gold medallist Charline VAN SNICK (BEL) who defeated PERENC to continue her rich vein of form in the -52kg category. Belgium’s top seed opened the scoring with a waza-ari from a sode-tsurikomi-goshi. With just a single second left on the clocl PERENC fought back to bring the scores level as she countered VAN SNICK with a ko-soto-gake. London 2012 Olympic bronze medallist VAN SNICK quickly trapped her Polish opponent on the ground for 20 seconds and ippon.

The second bronze medal was won by former -48kg world champion MUNKHBAT Urantsetseg (MGL) who submitted former Tyumen Grand Slam bronze medallist KUTSENKO. MUNKHBAT scored two waza-ari from textbook sode-tsurikomi-goshi throws before showcasing her ne-waza as she manoeuvred to create the opening for a juji-gatame to end the contest and book a place on the medal podium.

**Final**LOPEZ SHERIFF, Estrella (ESP) vs KRASNIQI, Distria (KOS)

**Bronze Medal Fights**VAN SNICK, Charline (BEL) vs PERENC, Agata (POL)
KUTSENKO, Aigul (RUS) vs MUNKHBAT, Urantsetseg (MGL)

**Final Results**

1. KRASNIQI, Distria (KOS)
2. LOPEZ SHERIFF, Estrella (ESP)
3. VAN SNICK, Charline (BEL)
3. MUNKHBAT, Urantsetseg (MGL)
5. PERENC, Agata (POL) op
5. KUTSENKO, Aigul (RUS)
7. FREITAS, Leandra (POR)
7. GILES, Chelsie (GBR)

**-57kg: GJAKOVA wins second Grand Prix title as Kosovo reign on day one**
European Championships bronze medallist Nora GJAKOVA (KOS) won her second Grand Prix gold medal to send her country to the top of the medal table. The 25-year-old defeated Dusseldorf Grand Prix winner Theresa STOLL (GER) in the -57kg final as Kosovo coach Driton TONI KUKA was again working his magic with their accomplished women’s team who all live and train in the same street in the European nation. A third shido for STOLL ended her bid for glory as GJAKOVA celebrated and took a selfie with her coach and the IJF President Mr. Marius VIZER. The Kosovo star will now improve on her world number 10 ranking with two major events still to come in 2017 as the season moves on to Japan for the Tokyo Grand Slam before concluding with the World Judo Masters in St. Petersburg, Russia.

In the first semi-final GJAKOVA (KOS) recorded a straightforward win over 19-year-old Junior Worlds bronze medallist Mina LIBEER (BEL) with a sankaku-gatame hold down.

In the second semi-final STOLL defeated world number 102 Martina LO GIUDICE (ITA) by ippon having already scored two waza-ari in a one-sided contest.

The first bronze medal was awarded to LO GIUDICE who defeated Tashkent Grand Prix winner Anna BOROWSKA (POL) with a probing ouchi-gari after two minutes and 44 seconds of golden score. The Italian judoka, who was fighting for an IJF World Judo Tour medal for the first time, had more stamina than her opponent in added time and offered a neat conclusion to the contest with her ashi-waza.

The second bronze medal was won by European u23 Championships winner Amelie STOLL (GER) who surpassed LIBEER to finish as one of the medallists on the opening day. A waza-ari score from an ouchi-gari was the only score in the four minute contest as Amelie made sure that Germany’s twin sisters would both be on the podium.

**Final**GJAKOVA, Nora (KOS) vs STOLL, Theresa (GER)

**Bronze Medal Fights**BOROWSKA, Anna (POL) vs LO GIUDICE, Martina (ITA)
LIBEER, Mina (BEL) vs STOLL, Amelie (GER)

**Final Results**

1. GJAKOVA, Nora (KOS)
2. STOLL, Theresa (GER)
3. LO GIUDICE, Martina (ITA)
3. STOLL, Amelie (GER)
5. BOROWSKA, Anna (POL)
5. LIBEER, Mina (BEL)
7. VAN DE MEEBERG, Shannon (NED)
7. EQUISOAIN, Jaione (ESP)

**MEN
-60kg: Turkish talent OZLU is no longer under the radar after dashing day**Zagreb Grand Prix bronze medallist Bekir OZLU (TUR) was the star of the show in the -60kg category as he finished unbeaten after four contests in The Hague. World number 17 OZLU can now wait for his invitation to the World Judo Masters in December after his win will guarantee a shift in position on the World Ranking List inside the top 16 and, on this showing, he will not be going there just to make up the numbers. Cancun Grand Prix bronze medallist Ashley MCKENZIE (GBR) offered a stern challenge in the final after displaying his best judoka in the preliminaries but OZLU caught the Briton against the run of play for ippon with a clever counter seconds prior to the three minute mark.

In the first semi-final Abu Dhabi Grand Slam bronze medallist Francisco GARRIGOS (ESP) was beautifully thrown by MCKENZIE (GBR) with a tai-otoshi for a match-winning waza-ari score after 34 seconds of golden score.

In the second semi-final DASHDAVAA was beaten by Zagreb Grand Prix bronze medallist Bekir OZLU (TUR) after exactly 90 seconds of golden score. The Mongolian was in riveting form in the previous rounds but met his match in OZLU who prevailed thanks to a shido which was given for dropping.

The first bronze medal was won by DASHDAVAA who picked up former Junior European Championships winner Roy KOFFIJBERG (NED) for a sensational win by ippon in just 14 seconds. An osoto-gari from the only Dutch representative in the final block was countered with a gigantic pick up from the Mongolian who had a day to remember.

The second bronze medal went to 20-year-old Antalya Grand Prix bronze medallist BAYARAA Amartuvshin (MGL) who defeated top seed GARRIGOS. BAYARAA matched the result of his teammate DASHDAVAA for a Mongolian double in the -60kg category after throwing with a stalling seoi-otoshi which eventually ended with the Spaniard going over for a waza-ari score after 43 seconds of golden score.

**Final**MCKENZIE, Ashley (GBR) vs OZLU, Bekir (TUR)

**Bronze Medal Fights**KOFFIJBERG, Roy (NED) vs DASHDAVAA, Amartuvshin (MGL)
GARRIGOS, Francisco (ESP) vs BAYARAA, Amartuvshin (MGL)

**Final Results**

1. OZLU, Bekir (TUR)
2. MCKENZIE, Ashley (GBR)
3. DASHDAVAA, Amartuvshin (MGL)
3. BAYARAA, Amartuvshin (MGL)
5. KOFFIJBERG, Roy (NED)
5. GARRIGOS, Francisco (ESP)
7. GADZHIEV, Sakhavat (RUS)
7. VOLLEMAN, Tibo (NED)

**-66kg: Unconventional YONDONPERENLEI is off the mark for Mongolia**Hohhot Grand Prix bronze medallist YONDONPERENLEI Baskhuu (MGL) utilised the full trickery of his unorthodox style to outwit a stellar field in the -66kg category. World number 73 YONDONPERENLEI now has two medals from his two Grand Prix in this weight category after dispatching Hohhot Grand Prix winner Yakub SHAMILOV (RUS) by ippon from an usual hold down where he had control of the belt and shoulder of the Russian and remained there unshaken for 20 seconds to give the Mongolian fans licence to display their flag with their unsurpassed level of devotion and pride.

In the first semi-final Yakub SHAMILOV saw off Cancun Grand Prix silver medallist Alberto GAITERO MARTIN (ESP) by a waza-ari score in golden score as Russian team manager Ezio GAMBA watched on from his matside position.

In the second semi-final YONDONPERENLEI Baskhuu (MGL) held down world number 60 Ghassem NOURIZADEH (IRI) with a yoko-shiho-gatame for 20 seconds. All-action YONDONPERENLEI threw for a waza-ari with a pure te-waza movement before promptly trapping his opponent with osaekomi-waza.

The first bronze medal was won by Ekaterinburg Grand Slam bronze medallist Islam KHAMETOV (RUS) who conquered NOURIZADEH who was in the final block for the first time. NOURIZADEH, who finished seventh at the Abu Dhabi Grand Slam last month, had to submit to a juji-gatame 90 seconds into the contest as Russian KHAMETOV was forceful and fast in his application.

The second bronze medal went to GAITERO MARTIN after world number 29 Kenneth VAN GANSBEKE (BEL) received his third and final shido for dropping two minutes into golden score. Spaniard GAITERO MARTIN will jump up the rankings from 35th place after winning his second Grand Prix medal since becoming a regular on the IJF World Judo Tour in 2017.

**Final**SHAMILOV, Yakub (RUS) vs YONDONPERENLEI, Baskhuu (MGL)

**Bronze Medal Fights**NOURIZADEH, Ghassem (IRI) vs KHAMETOV, Islam (RUS)
GAITERO MARTIN, Alberto (ESP) vs VAN GANSBEKE, Kenneth (BEL)

**Final Results**

1. YONDONPERENLEI, Baskhuu (MGL)
2. SHAMILOV, Yakub (RUS)
3. KHAMETOV, Islam (RUS)
3. GAITERO MARTIN, Alberto (ESP)
5. NOURIZADEH, Ghassem (IRI)
5. VAN GANSBEKE, Kenneth (BEL)
7. ELIDRISSI, Ayoub (QAT)
7. VAN DER WERFF, Twan (NED)

**COMPETITION PROGRAMME**

Saturday 18 November

10:00 Preliminaries on two mats
16:00 Final block on one mat

Women: -63kg, -70kg

Men: -73kg, -81kg

Saturday 19 November

11:00 Preliminaries on two mats
16:00 Final block on one mat

Women: -78kg, +78kg

Men: -90kg, -100kg, +100kg

**Location**: Sportcampus Zuiderpark

**IJF Media & Communications Department**

Mark Pickering, IJF Media Manager
Nicolas Messner, IJF Media Director

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press@ijf.org

IJF - 1007 Lausanne, Switzerland

Avenue Frédéric-César-de La Harpe 49