28 July 2018

Zagreb Grand Prix 2018, Croatia – DAY TWO

**FINAL RESULTS: WOMEN**

**-63kg: Japanese youngster beats Olympic champion to retain Zagreb title**

NABEKURA Nami (JPN) successfully defended her Zagreb Grand Prix crown by defeating Olympic champion Tina TRSTENJAK (SLO) to win her fourth Grand Prix title. NABEKURA, 21, extended her head-to-head series lead over Slovenia’s former world champion to 3-1 by throwing her renowned opponent with a spinning uchi-mata for ippon. TRSTENJAK was denied a seventh Grand Prix title which will be exactly the motivation she needs to fine tune some areas before launching her world title bid in Baku this September.

In the first semi-final TRSTENJAK narrowly defeated European Games winner Martyna TRAJDOS (GER) by a single waza-ari score.

In the second semi-final NABEKURA defeated Düsseldorf Grand Slam winner Andreja LESKI (SLO) at the halfway point by ippon.

The first bronze medal contest was won by Antalya Grand Prix bronze medallist Alexia CASTILHOS (BRA) who impressively defeated LESKI. CASTILHOS won her second IJF medal by throwing her Slovenian rival for a waza-ari with an uchi-mata and followed up with a kesa-gatame hold for a second and match-winning waza-ari

The second bronze medal was won by Hohhot Grand Prix bronze medallist Catherine BEAUCHEMIN-PINARD (CAN) who bested world number seven TRAJDOS. It was the world number 18 from Canada who upset her German opponent by countering with a ura-nage for ippon.

**Final**NABEKURA, Nami (JPN) vs TRSTENJAK, Tina (SLO)

**Bronze Medal Fights**LESKI, Andreja (SLO) vs CASTILHOS, Alexia (BRA)
TRAJDOS, Martyna (GER) vs BEAUCHEMIN-PINARD, Catherine (CAN)

**Final Results**

1. NABEKURA, Nami (JPN)
2. TRSTENJAK, Tina (SLO)
3. CASTILHOS, Alexia (BRA)
3. BEAUCHEMIN-PINARD, Catherine (CAN)
5. LESKI, Andreja (SLO)
5. TRAJDOS, Martyna (GER)
7. LIVESEY, Amy (GBR)
7. WATANABE, Kiyomi (PHI)

**-70kg: GAHIE grinds out Grand Prix victory as the French anthem plays in Croatia**

Tbilisi Grand Prix winner Marie Eve GAHIE (FRA) won her first encounter with Düsseldorf Grand Slam winner ONO Yoko (JPN) to capture -70kg gold in Zagreb. While world champion ARAI Chizuru (JPN) is preparing to defend her title in Azerbaijan, ONO was handed an opportunity to impress but had to settle for silver as GAHIE followed up on her country’s World Cup win by sending the French flag to the rafters at Arena Zagreb in the home of the nation of World Cup runners-up Croatia. ONO tried to create an opening on the ground to employ her highly-regarded ne-waza but was firmly blocked by GAHIE who celebrated her fourth Grand Prix title after scoring a waza-ari in golden score with a cutting ashi-waza attack.

In the first semi-final ONO defeated Agadir Grand Prix winner Assmaa NIANG (MAR) by ippon to progress into the gold medal contest in the evening session.

In the second semi-final European silver medallist Sally CONWAY (GBR) lost out to GAHIE by two waza-ari scores.

The first bronze medal was awarded to CONWAY who rushed past Hohhot Grand Prix winner Sanne VAN DIJKE (NED) in just 42 seconds. Olympic bronze medallist CONWAY submitted her Dutch rival on the ground with an armlock to secure her place on the podium and will now break into the world’s top 10 with the World Championships just 53 days away.

The second bronze medal was won by NIANG who claimed her eighth Grand Prix medal by coming from behind to conquer 2012 Rio Grand Slam silver medallist Amanda OLIVEIRA (BRA) in golden score. OLIVEIRA took the lead in their first meeting with a nidan ko-soto-gari for a waza-ari but the four-time African Championshipships winner fought back and restored parity with a waza-ari of her own from a sutemi-waza movement. NIANG countered a ura-nage for a ko-uchi-gari and ippon after 32 seconds of additional time before posing with the young fans for pictures and signing autographs.

**Final**GAHIE, Marie Eve (FRA) vs ONO, Yoko (JPN)

**Bronze Medal Fights**CONWAY, Sally (GBR) vs VAN DIJKE, Sanne (NED)
NIANG, Assmaa (MAR) vs OLIVEIRA, Amanda (BRA)

**Final Results**

1. GAHIE, Marie Eve (FRA)
2. ONO, Yoko (JPN)
3. CONWAY, Sally (GBR)
3. NIANG, Assmaa (MAR)
5. VAN DIJKE, Sanne (NED)
5. OLIVEIRA, Amanda (BRA)
7. BERNHOLM, Anna (SWE)
7. DIEDRICH, Szaundra (GER)

**FINAL RESULTS: MEN**

**-73kg: Paris Grand Slam winner GJAKOVA wins his first Grand Prix title for Kosovo**

Paris Grand Slam winner Akil GJAKOVA (KOS) became the first male judoka from Kosovo to win Grand Prix gold as he defeated -66kg Olympic champion Fabio BASILE (ITA) in the final. GJAKOVA, who saw sister Nora finish fifth on Friday, won his country’s first medal of the competition with a classy showing at -73kg. A waza-ari for the Kosovo judoka was the only score of the nervy contest as GJAKOVA held on for a win which will long be celebrated in his homeland. Kosovo are now filling out their roster with male success and their growing ranks are a testament to the work of their national federation as they are now established as a leading nation in the Olympic sport.

In the first semi-final Olympic and world silver medallist Rustam ORUJOV (AZE) was beautifully dispatched by GJAKOVA (KOS) who threw for ippon with a sasae-tsurikomi-ashi.

In the second semi-final BASILE downed Düsseldorf Grand Slam bronze medallist Tohar BUTBUL (ISR) in golden score. While BASILE looked to be troubled by muscle cramp in his right leg, he fought on and BUTBUL picked up a third shido for passivity in golden score as the Italian moved into the gold medal contest

The first bronze medal was won by BUTBUL who swept past former Junior World Championships bronze medallist Martin HOJAK (SLO) by ippon. Israel’s presence in Zagreb was felt in the first men’s contest in the final block as the rising -73kg talent switched threw with a tai-otoshi for ippon.

The second bronze medal went to ORUJOV who caught Antalya Grand Prix winner Tommy MACIAS (SWE) with an ouchi-gari for ippon as he Azeri ace eyes World Championships gold at home in September. ORUJOV has now won 11 Grand Prix medals and has a huge amount of pressure on him to star for the host nation at the first World Judo Championships in Azerbaijan.

**Final**BASILE, Fabio (ITA) vs GJAKOVA, Akil (KOS)

**Bronze Medal Fights**HOJAK, Martin (SLO) vs BUTBUL, Tohar (ISR)
ORUJOV, Rustam (AZE) vs MACIAS, Tommy (SWE)

**Final Results**

1. GJAKOVA, Akil (KOS)
2. BASILE, Fabio (ITA)
3. BUTBUL, Tohar (ISR)
3. ORUJOV, Rustam (AZE)
5. HOJAK, Martin (SLO)
5. MACIAS, Tommy (SWE)
7. KHOMULA, Artem (UKR)
7. MARGELIDON, Arthur (CAN)

**-81kg: Germany’s RESSEL wins first IJF gold medal to increase the pressure on teammate**

Düsseldorf Grand Slam bronze medallist Dominic RESSEL (GER) achieved his first IJF World Judo Tour gold medal to mount pressure on his teammate and world champion Alexander WIECZERZAK (GER). RESSEL, 24, faced Agadir Grand Prix silver medallist Matthias CASSE (BEL) in the -81kg final and both men were bidding for a first IJF gold medal on the senior stage. CASSE, 21, was slow to react on the ground to RESSEL who applied the shime-waza with force and speed to make the Belgian submit. WIECZERZAK has not fought on the IJF World Judo Tour since his shock win at the World Championships last year but is expected to compete at the Budapest Grand Prix in two weeks time. RESSEL has now surely done enough to receive a call-up for his first World Championships while CASSE is still learning and is regarded as one of the best prospects in the sport.

In the first semi-final world number 64 Alexios NTANATSIDIS (GRE) pulled out injured after picking up second shido against RESSEL.

In the second semi-final European bronze medallist Antonio ESPOSITO (ITA) fell to CASSE (BEL) after four and half minutes of added time. The young Belgian rolled his opponent over onto his back for a waza-ari score to seal a place in the -81kg final.

The first bronze medal was won by Tbilisi Grand Prix silver medallist Anri EGUTIDZE (POR) who stopped 2017 Zagreb Grandd Prix bronze medallist ESPOSITO from matching his result from a year ago. The world number 13 from Portugal prevailed by a waza-ari score which was the only score of the four minute contest. EGUTIDZE has now won three Grand Prix medals this year and is growing into being a familiar sight amongst the medal winners.

The second bronze medal went to Paris Grand Slam winner FUJIWARA Sotaro (JPN) as NTANATSIDIS could not take part due to injury.

**Final**CASSE, Matthias (BEL) vs RESSEL, Dominic (GER)

**Bronze Medal Fights**EGUTIDZE, Anri (POR) vs ESPOSITO, Antonio (ITA)
NTANATSIDIS, Alexios (GRE) vs FUJIWARA, Sotaro (JPN)

**Final Results**

1. RESSEL, Dominic (GER)
2. CASSE, Matthias (BEL)
3. EGUTIDZE, Anri (POR)
3. FUJIWARA, Sotaro (JPN)
5. ESPOSITO, Antonio (ITA)
5. NTANATSIDIS, Alexios (GRE)
7. MOHAMED, Abdelrahman (EGY)
7. MCWATT, Stuart (GBR)