9 March 2019

Marrakech Grand Prix 2019, Morocco – DAY TWO

Bulgaria, France, Slovenia and Russia strike on a momentous day for judo in Morocco.

Four new Marrakech Grand Prix gold medallists were crowned on day two in Morocco as four different anthems were played at the Marrakech Exhibition Centre as the universality of judo at the elite level was on show for the world to see.

The opening ceremony took place ahead of the final block on day two and immediately following a landmark contract signing between the International Judo Federation and hosts Morocco.

Mr. Marius L. VIZER, IJF President, presented Mr. Karim KASSI-LAHLOU, Governor of Marrakech, with a figure of judo founder Jigoro KANO before putting pen to paper on a new deal which will a new training centre in Marrakech and the introduction of the IJF’s Judo for Children programme in 40 schools.

Mr. Rachid TALBI ALAMI, Minister of Sports in Morocco, said: “I’m delighted that we have agreed with the IJF to have five competitions in Morocco including this Grand Prix. We have a very good collaboration with the IJF and we have recently opened a third training centre here which will be here in Marrakech. Today we signed a deal with the IJF for the Judo for Children programme to start at 40 schools and we’re all very proud.”

Mr. Marius L. VIZER, IJF President, said: “Dear Sports Minister, dear Governor, dear Royal Moroccan Judo Federation, thank you for the good organisation here in Morocco. Congratulations to the Ministry of Sport, the national federation and all parties involved in making this event a success. Morocco is leading the way for African Judo. Thank you for support, well done on your success.”

**FINAL RESULTS: WOMEN**

**-63kg: Slovenian LESKI denies Australia a first IJF World Judo Tour title**

Düsseldorf Grand Slam bronze medallist Andreja LESKI (SLO) defeated Abu Dhabi Grand Slam bronze medallist Katharina HAECKER (AUS) to win -63kg gold in Marrakech. Once again LESKI showed that she is far more than a back-up to Olympic champion and world number two TRSTENJAK Tina (SLO) as she claimed her second Grand Prix title. The Slovenian went around the back of her opponent for a tani-otoshi for ippon as world number eight HAECKER still managed to achieve her country’s best result on the IJF World Judo Tour.

In the first semi-final LESKA defeated world number 26 Lubjana PIOVESANA (GBR) in golden score when the Briton received her third shido for passivity.

In the second semi-final HAECKER was declared the winner after Ekaterinbiurg Grand Slam bronze medallist Maelle DI CINTIO (FRA) twisted her right knee and could no longer continue.

The first bronze medal contest was won by world number 58 Geke VAN DEN BERG (NED) after DI CINTIO bravely started the contest despite picking up a semi-final injury but it was too much for the Frenchwoman who conceded the contest after one minute.

The second bronze medal was won by PIOVESANA who comfortably beat world number 65 Vivian HERRMANN (GER) by two waza-ari scores to win her fourth Grand Prix bronze medal.

**Final**LESKI, Andreja (SLO) vs HAECKER, Katharina (AUS)

**Bronze Medal Fights**VAN DEN BERG, Geke (NED) vs DI CINTIO, Maelle (FRA)
PIOVESANA, Lubjana (GBR) vs HERRMANN, Vivian (GER)

**Final Results**

1. LESKI, Andreja (SLO)
2. HAECKER, Katharina (AUS)
3. VAN DEN BERG, Geke (NED)
3. PIOVESANA, Lubjana (GBR)
5. DI CINTIO, Maelle (FRA)
5. HERRMANN, Vivian (GER)
7. DEKETER, Manon (FRA)
7. SHEMESH, Inbal (ISR)

**-70kg: PINOT pips FLETCHER for French gold**

Paris Grand Slam silver medallist Margaux PINOT (FRA) competed her Grand Prix hat-trick as the Frenchwoman swiftly dispatched Tel Aviv Grand Prix bronze medallist Megan FLETCHER (IRL) in the -70kg final. PINOT threw for a waza-ari score and reacted first on the ground to submit her opponent with a juji-gatame. FLETCHER earned a career-best result which will push her towards an Olympic qualification position and the Irish talent can now relax and turn her attention to supporting her younger brother Ben on Sunday as he aims to repeat his victory from the 2018 Agadir Grand Prix.

In the first semi-final FLETCHER downed Prague European Open bronze medallist Aoife COUGHLAN (AUS) by a waza-ari score.

In the second semi-final PINOT held down Olympic bronze medallist Laura VARGAS KOCH (GER)

for a place in the final.

The first bronze medal was awarded to VARGAS KOCH who submitted 2018 Minsk European Open bronze medallist Alessandra PROSDOCIMO (ITA). VARGAS KOCH returned to form with a commanding display and celebrated in style as she has reinvigorated her Tokyo 2020 ambitions.

The second bronze medal was won by former Tbilisi Grand Prix bronze medallist Elisavet TELTSIDOU (GRE) who brushed aside COUGHLAN with ease. TELTSIDOU launched her Australian opponent with a huge hip throw after 24 seconds for ippon.

**Final**FLETCHER, Megan (IRL) vs PINOT, Margaux (FRA)

**Bronze Medal Fights**PROSDOCIMO, Alessandra (ITA) vs VARGAS KOCH, Laura (GER)
COUGHLAN, Aoife (AUS) vs ELTSIDOU, Elisavet (GRE)

**Final Results**

1. PINOT, Margaux (FRA)
2. FLETCHER, Megan (IRL)
3. VARGAS KOCH, Laura (GER)
3. ELTSIDOU, Elisavet (GRE)
5. PROSDOCIMO, Alessandra (ITA)
5. COUGHLAN, Aoife (AUS)
7. MAEKELBURG, Sarah (GER)
7. PROKOPENKO, Alena (RUS)

**FINAL RESULTS: MEN**

**-73kg: Russia’s IARTCEV sweeps away Georgia’s SHAVDATUASHVILI for gold**

Cancun Grand Prix silver medallist Denis IARTCEV (RUS) topped a Grand Prix medal podium for the second time in his career by defeating London 2012 Olympic champion and Rio 2016 Olympic bronze medallist Lasha SHAVDATUASHVILI (GEO) in the -73kg final. Four-time Grand Prix winner SHAVDATUASHVILI struggled to deal with the tricky Russian who threw his Georgian rival with a beautiful sasae-tsurikomi-ashi for a waza-ari score. IARTCEV then anticipated a soft ko-soto-gari attempt from SHAVDATUASHVILI who ended up on his back from a te-waza movement.

In the first semi-final SHAVDATUASHVILI defeated former Tyumen Grand Slam silver medallist Guillaume CHAINE (FRA) by a waza-ari score from an o-uchi-gari.

In the second semi-final IARTCEV (RUS) defeated Junior world champion Bilal ILOGLU (TUR) with a counter to a sumi-gaeshi after three minutes of golden score with te-waza for a waza-ari score.

The first bronze medal was won by Tashkent Grand Prix winner Khikmatillokh TURAEV (UZB) after CILOGLU received his third shido and was disqualified in golden score.

The second bronze medal went to Pan American Championships gold medallist Antoine BOUCHARD (CAN) who defeated CHAINE after a video refereeing commission decision. The Canadian, who lost his bronze medal contest at the Rio 2016 Olympics, went ahead with his trademark sumi-gaeshi and added a second from a ko-uchi-gake which after a review was deemded a match-winning score.

**Final**SHAVDATUASHVILI, Lasha (GEO) vs IARTCEV, Denis (RUS)

**Bronze Medal Fights**TURAEV, Khikmatillokh (UZB) vs CILOGLU, Bilal (TUR)
CHAINE, Guillaume (FRA) vs BOUCHARD, Antoine (CAN)

**Final Results**

1. IARTCEV, Denis (RUS)
2. SHAVDATUASHVILI, Lasha (GEO)
3. TURAEV, Khikmatillokh (UZB)
3. BOUCHARD, Antoine (CAN)
5. CILOGLU, Bilal (TUR)
5. CHAINE, Guillaume (FRA)
7. NJIE, Faye (GAM)
7. GIGANI, Phridon (GEO)

**-81kg: Bulgaria’s IVANOV back among the world’s elite**

Tel Aviv Grand Prix silver medallist Ivaylo IVANOV (BUL) won Marrakech Grand Prix gold to signal his return to the upper echelons of the -81kg weight category. IVANOV countered world bronze medallist Vedat ALBAYRAK (TUR) in the final to capture his third Grand Prix gold medal. The Bulgarian has now graced the final at both Grand Prix events this year and will be on the verge of breaking into the world’s top 10 after this showing.

In the first semi-final ALBAYRAK proved too strong for former Tashkent Grand Prix bronze medallist Sharofiddin BOLTABOEV (UZB) who was dismissed after picking up three penalties.

In the second semi-final London 2012 Olympic bronze medallist Antoine VALOIS-FORTIER (CAN) fell to IVANOV who threw his Canadian opponent with a sumi-gaeshi for a waza-ari score in golden score. Victorious IVANOV went to the equally exhausted VALOIS-FORTIER and lifted him up his feet in a customary act of respect and sportsmanship.

The first bronze medal was won by former Samsun Grand Prix winner Damian SZWARNOWIECKI (POL) who stunned VALOIS-FORTIER in 53 seconds. SZWARNOWIECKI opened the scoring with a waza-ari from a ko-uchi-gake and went back to the same technique to wrap up a fine win inside the opening minute.

The second bronze medal went to Tashkent Grand Prix bronze medallist Alexios NTANATSIDIS (GRE) who dominated BOLTABOEV with two waza-ari scores without reply to claim Greece’s second medal on day two in Marrakech.

**Final**IVANOV, Ivaylo (BUL) vs ALBAYRAK, Vedat (TUR)

**Bronze Medal Fights**VALOIS-FORTIER, Antoine (CAN) vs SZWARNOWIECKI, Damian (POL)
BOLTABOEV, Sharofiddin (UZB) vs NTANATSIDIS, Alexios (GRE)

**Final Results**

1. IVANOV, Ivaylo (BUL)
2. ALBAYRAK, Vedat (TUR)
3. SZWARNOWIECKI, Damian (POL)
3. NTANATSIDIS, Alexios (GRE)
5. VALOIS-FORTIER, Antoine (CAN)
5. BOLTABOEV, Sharofiddin (UZB)
7. COUGHLAN, Eoin (AUS)
7. CHOUCHI, Sami (BEL)