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IFSC CLIMBING YOUTH WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS ARCO 2019 BOULDER: JAPAN WINS 8 BOULDERING MEDALS, WINS FOR FRANCE, ITALY AND THAILAND

The bouldering competitions of the IFSC Climbing Youth World Championships took up the majority of the 10-day event with four separate finals held from August 27 to 31. Nearly 100 total boulder routes were created to challenge the young athletes and several rising stars began making names for themselves.

BERTONE Wins Again, A First for TOMAS

A difficult set of boulders for the Youth B women kicked off the first of the many bouldering finals with few tops. After facing down a frustrating first route, the second route seemed easier with every climber managing to reach the top after several attempts. Unfortunately, the number of successes continued to be few. Recent winner of the Lead competition, Oriane BERTONE (FRA) was the only competitor to find a top on F3, while Ryu NAKAGAWA (JPN) was the only one to top F4. With an equal number of tops, BERTONE came out as the clear winner due to the number of zones reached. NAKAGAWA followed with second and her teammate, Hana KOIKE (JPN) finished in third.

The winners of the Youth B men's boulder finals each claimed three tops, with the winner coming down to the number of attempts. Junta SEKIGUCHI (JPN) started off the competition strong as the only climber to complete the first wall. The second wall saw an increasing number of tops with all but one climber managing to complete the third boulder. With three tops going into the final route SEKIGUCHI appeared to be the runaway winner, however, he was unable to find the zone on M4, while Nichol TOMAS (THA) easily completed the wall in two attempts to clinch the gold medal. SEKIGUCHI had to settle with silver and Edvards GRUZITIS (LAT) took home the bronze.

DOUADY and YURIKASA Take the Gold

An interesting set of boulders awaited the Youth A women competitors: the problems were either too easy for some climbers or too hard for others. Japan's Saki KIKUCHI was favored to win as the only climber to top all four boulders in the semi-final round. In the end, she found three tops with two-attempts on each to place third. Both the recent IFSC Lead Youth World Championships silver and bronze medalists Natsumi HIRANO (JPN) and Luce DOUADY (FRA) flashed all three boulders that they topped. However, it was DOUADY who took the youth world championship crown due to her number of zone attempts on the second wall.

As the only climber to top all four semi-final boulders, Rei KAWAMATA (JPN) was the clear favorite to win a medal in the Youth A men's competition, however, the problems appeared to be too difficult for him to complete and he quickly fell behind, unable to find a top until the final wall. By the third wall, Ao YURIKUSA (JPN) had established himself as the leader and had earned himself a tentative first place provided none of the other climbers after him could complete the final two walls. Hamish MCARTHUR (GBR) had an incredible flash on the last route to seize second place, while Hajime TAKEDA (JPN) topped his first boulder of the event and managed to finish in third due to his total number of attempts to top. Already having claimed the gold medal, YURIKUSA solidified his new

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youth world championship title by flashing the fourth wall and topping all four boulders.

Another Home Team Win, Four Tops for AMAGASA

The first climber out in the Junior women’s final was Lucia DÖRFFEL (GER) who promptly flashed the problem. Two other climbers also topped F1, while the rest were unable to find the zone. Recent IFSC Lead Youth World Champion Laura ROGORA (ITA) was the only athlete to complete the second wall with a flash, which she followed with a top on F3 for a total of three tops and a secured first place. The last two spots on the podium were left wide open for the taking and as the only climber to stick the final hold on F4, American Natalia GROSSMAN claimed silver. DÖRFFEL’s last-minute zone on F3 proved to be crucial, netting her the bronze medal due to attempts to top.

After easy qualification and semi-final rounds that yielded multiple tops, the finals provided the Junior men with more of a challenge. The first route had three successful tops, but not without effort, it took Japan’s Sohta AMAGASA twelve tries before he touched the final hold. The third boulder was the most straightforward with all of the competitors completing the wall, many with flashes. With four climbers at two tops each and one climber at three, the battle for the gold medal and youth world championship title came down to the very end. However, only AMAGASA was able to reach the final hold, concluding his finals run with a total of four tops. Compatriots Leo FAVOT and Nathan MARTIN of France landed in second and third place respectively, due to the number of zones.

The complete results for the IFSC Boulder Youth World Championships can be found [on the Arco event page](#).

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