

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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January 21, 2016

For immediate release

ISU European Short Track Speed Skating Championships 2016 Sochi, RUS - Preview

The ISU European Short Track Speed Skating Championships start on Friday January 22, 2016 in Sochi (RUS). The European Short Track allround winners will be crowned on Sunday January 24. Unlike the World Cup where skaters race one or two distances and win distance titles, during the European Championships the skaters have to compete over four distances. The allround classification is based on the results of each skater in the three individual distances 500m, 1000m and 1500m. After the completion of the three distances only the top eight point scorers and ties on the eighth position will skate the 3000m Super Final. For the individual distances the final points 34, 21, 13, 8, 5, 3, 2 and 1 are awarded to Final A and Final B Skaters in descending order commencing with the first place in Final A and after all places in Final A have been awarded, the remaining points will be awarded to Final B in descending order starting with first place. In the case of a penalty or did not finish in the Final A, the skater(s) concerned will be awarded a number of points equal to the winner of the Final B. In the case of a penalty in the Final B, the skater(s) concerned will not be awarded any points. No points are awarded to skaters who receive a yellow or red card or did not start the race.

The competition starts on Friday with Ladies and Men 1500, 500, 1000 meters qualification heats and with the Relay Heats. On Saturday will take place the Ladies and Men Semi Finals and Finals over 1500 meters, Quarter Finals, Semi Finals and Finals over 500 meters and Semi Finals Relay and finally on Sunday the Ladies and Men Quarter Finals, Semi Finals and Finals over 1000 meters, Super Finals 3000 meters and Finals Relay Races will be skated.

In the Ladies' field the reigning European Champion Elise Christie (GBR) will defend her title in Sochi. The 2014 Champion Jorien Ter Mors (NED), who took a year out to concentrate on Speed Skating, is back to regain the title. Other athletes to look out for are Veronique Pierron (FRA) currently ranks in the 1000 m World Cup Ranking top ten (and second European). Anna Seidel (GER) is the fifth (and first European) in the 1500 m World Cup Ranking, Lara van Ruijven (NED) in the top ten World Cup rankings in 1000 and 500 m.

In the Ladies Relay the main competition is expected to be between Team Russia, Netherlands and Hungary. Noticeable absences include five time European Champion Arianna Fontana (ITA), 2015 European silver medalist Sofia Prosvirnova (RUS).

Reigning European and World Champion Sjinkie Knegt (NED) will be keen to keep his title while Semen Elistratov (RUS) (2015 World Bronze and 2014 World silver medalist) will want to shine in front of his home crowd. 2013 European Champion Freek van der Wart (NED) will try to get back on the podium in Sochi. Other names to keep an eye on include Sandor Liu Shaolin (HUN) who has had a good season so far and Sebastien Lepape (FRA) who claimed his first medal this season and the strong Russia squad composed of Artem Kozlov and Vladimir Grigorev. 2014 World, European and two times Olympic Champion Viktor An (RUS) will not compete this year.

In the Men's Relay old rivals Russia, Hungary and Netherlands will compete for the title.

The schedule for the ISU European Short Track Speed Skating Championships is as follows:

Friday Jan 22: Qualifying Rounds 1500, 500, 1000 meters Ladies & Men

Saturday Jan 23: Semi-Finals & Finals 1500 meters Ladies & Men, Quarter-Finals, Semi-Finals & Finals 500 meters Ladies & Men, Semi-Finals 3000 meters Relay Ladies, Semi-Finals 5000 meters Relay Men

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Sunday Jan 24: Quarter-Finals, Semi-Finals & Finals 1000 meters Ladies & Men, Super-Finals
3000 meters Ladies & Men Finals 3000 meters Relay Ladies Finals 5000 meters Relay Men

Full results are available at www.isu.org

The ISU European Short Track Speed Skating Championships are available as a live stream on the ISU Skating Channel. Please note that geoblocking may be required in certain territories

<http://livemanager.eurovision.edgesuite.net/isu/index.html>

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