

# INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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## **ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Championships 2013** **Preview**

The ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Championships 2013 will open in Debrecen, Hungary on March 8. Hungary hosts the World Championships for the first time. 143 skaters from 35 ISU members have been entered for the Championships.

At the World Championships both allround and single distance titles are up for grabs. The allround classification is based on the results of each skater in the three individual distances 500m, 1000m, 1500m and if qualified the 3000m Super Final. Only the top eight point scorers and ties on the eighth position after the completion of the three first distances will skate the 3000m Super Final. For the individual distances the final points 34, 21, 13, 8, 5, 3, 2 and 1 are awarded in descending order commencing with the first place. No points are awarded to skaters who receive a yellow or red card or failed to finish the race. The winner of the Final race of each individual distance is declared World Champion over that particular distance. There will be a World Champion declared in each of the following: 500m, 1000m, 1500m Ladies and Men, overall Ladies and Men, Relay Men, Relay Ladies, no award is given for the 3000m Final.

The competition starts on Friday with the Ladies and Men 1500m and with the Ladies 3000m Relay Heats. On Saturday the Ladies and Men 500m and Men 5000m Relay Heats will take place and finally on Sunday the Ladies and Men 1000m, the 3000m Super Final and Final Relay will be skated.

In the Ladies' field, reigning Overall Champion Jianrou Li (CHN) will defend her title against her team mate Wang Meng (CHN) allround winner in 2009 and 2008 and the 2010 allround Champion Park Seung-Hi (KOR). 2012 allround silver medalist Valérie Maltais (CAN) and five time European Champion Arianna Fontana (ITA) will also provide a fierce competition. Other skaters to look out for are Fan Kexin (CHN) 2012 and 2011 500m Champion, 2013 European silver medalist Elise Christie (GBR) and 2012 European silver medalist Jorien ter Mors (NED). 2012 overall winner Ha-Ri Cho (KOR) will not participate in this year's World Short Track Championships.

2012 reigning overall Champion Yoon-Gy Kwak (KOR) got injured at the World Cup Final therefore he will not participate in the championships which means the title is up for grabs. 2011 World Champion and 2012 silver medalist Jin Kyu Noh (KOR) and 2011 silver medalist Charles Hamelin (CAN) will battle it out to obtain that top spot. Olivier Jean (CAN) who finished third overall in 2012 and is the 500m reigning World Champion and Wenhao Liang (CHN) 2012 bronze medalist will not make it easy. Competition could also come from 2012 European Champion Sjinkie Knegt (NED) or his team mate Freek Van der Wart 2013 European Champion. The Russian men are also strong this year with five time consecutive World Champion Victor An (2003 to 2007), Semen Elistratov and Vladimir Grigorev.

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