

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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January 30, 2016

For immediate release

ISU World Cup Speed Skating 2015/16 – Stavanger (NOR) Day 2

After forty victories in long distances and Mass Start events, Martina Sáblíková (CZE) took her 41st World Cup victory in the 1500m. This second day of the World Cup Speed Skating in Stavanger was the day that the men earned the quota for the ISU World Allround Speed Skating Championships. It included an upset for the Dutch favorites, although Sven Kramer (NED) proved to be in good shape by winning the 5000m. Jing Yu (CHN) won the ladies' 500m in a fast time while Pavel Kulizhnikov (RUS) won by just 0.02 in the 1000m. A total of 10 personal bests was set in the B-division.

Jing Yu beats Hong Zhang in ladies' 500m

The Chinese ladies ruled the 500m just like in the first day, but this time it was Jing Yu who won. She improved the track record of Hong Zhang to 37.63. Zhang, skating in the last pair, missed too much in her opening to make up for her 26.9 full lap, and equaled the time of her first 500m, 37.82. Heather McLean (CAN) took the bronze in 38.02. Jorien ter Mors (NED), who won the 1000m did not compete today.

With her silver, Zhang took over the lead in the ranking from the absent Sang-Hwa Lee (KOR). Zhang has 690, Lee 680 points. Heather Richardson-Bergsma, who finished in eleventh like yesterday is still third with 608, but Yu has now 511 points and is climbing in the ranking.

Kulizhnikov wins battle with Nuis in the 1000m

After winning the 500m on the first day, today, Pavel Kulizhnikov managed to keep Kjeld Nuis behind him in the final pair of the 1000m. The Russian sprinter opened fast and managed a 24.9 first lap, taking half a second lead over Nuis, who had lost some time in the opening steps, with the point of his blade getting into the ice. In the final lap Nuis showed his quality in the fastest last lap, 26.2. He reached the finish after 1:08.12, coming only 0.02 short to beat his pairmate. The 1:08.10 was a track record, bettering the time that his countryman Denis Yuskov had set in the seventh pair: 1:08.72. It brought Yuskov the bronze. Joey Mantia (USA) just missed the podium, finishing in fourth with 1:08.74.

Nuis still leads the World Cup ranking with 400 points, Kulizhnikov has 380 and Gerben Jorritsma (NED), who finished eighth in Stavanger, is third with 270 points, only 5 points more than Mantia while Yuskov climbed up to rank fifth.

Martina Sáblíková wins the 1500m for the first time

In the first pair of the 1500m Dutch skaters Ireen Wüst and Linda de Vries started with a wildcard. For both ladies this was their first participation in the 1500m World Cup this year. They set strong times, Wüst 1:56.09, a track record, and De Vries 1:57.30. They kept the lead until Miho Takagi (JPN) managed to sneak in between the two, with 1:57.11. However, in the pre-last pair Marrit Leenstra (NED) and Martina Sáblíková skated. Leenstra opened fast and after 1100m, she was 1.1 second ahead of the time of Wüst, leaving Sáblíková 1.6 second behind her. And yet the Czech lady crossed the finish line first and took the gold medal. Sáblíková skated her fastest time on lowland, bringing the track record to 1:55.44. Leenstra finished in 1:55.93 earning bronze.

The silver medal was to come in the final pair with the American ladies, who were the leaders in the World Cup ranking. Brittany Bowe was faster than the world record holder Heather Richardson-Bergsma. She managed to beat the time of Leenstra, but lost in the final lap her advantage on Sáblíková, by a minor margin in 1:55.47.

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Sáblíková said in an interview that she had definitely not expected to beat Bowe, but she enjoys it immensely. It had been scary to see Leenstra so far in front of her, but in the last lap, she saw that Leenstra lost speed and heard her coach shout. She thinks that part of the good shape is thanks to cycling in summer and also because the Czech team has a male skater again, which has helped her training.

Bowe leads the World Cup ranking with 440 points. Richardson follows 381 and Sáblíková, who had been equal in points with Leenstra, now is third with 350 points, Leenstra has 320.

Kramer takes 29th 5000m victory, but the Dutch lose a place for the World Allrounds

Sven Kramer won the World Cup 5000m for the twelfth time in a row, and his 35th World Cup victory including two 1500s and four 10,000m races. He therewith equals Hiroyasu Shimizu's amount from the 500 and 1000m. There are still four skaters with more victories, with Jeremy Wotherspoon leading the list.

Kramer had to face Jorrit Bergsma (NED) in the final pair, and was a little stronger from the start. He brought the track record to 6:15.71, Bergsma was second with 6:17.59. Both had the time of Ted-Jan Bloemen (CAN) to aim for. The Canadian was back from a leg injury sustained in Inzell and it was the first international race since his world record in the 10,000m. He took the bronze with 6:18.05.

Bergsma is ahead of the World Cup rankings with 410, thanks to one absence of Kramer who has 380. Sverre Lunde Pedersen follows with 265.

The 5000m in combination with the 1500m was a qualification for the World Allround Championships. Kramer and Bergsma did not race the 1500m, so only three Dutch skaters were entered in that battle, which meant that any mishap would cost them a place for the ISU World Allround Speed Skating Championships. And such happened when Arjan Stroetinga fell after 3500m, and then finished the race too slowly. Qualified are: 1 skater from BEL, CHN, CZE, FRA, LAT. 2 skaters from CAN, GER, JPN, NED and RUS; three skaters from ITA, NOR, POL, RUS. If any of the qualified countries doesn't fill their quota, the first reserve is a third Russian skater, then a Belarussian and then a third Dutchman, followed by Koreans. Tomorrow the qualification for the ladies will be decided.

Additional information

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ISU World Cup Speed Skating 2015/16 – Stavanger (NOR) Day 2, medal winners

500m Ladies

1	Jing Yu	CHN	37.63 TR
2	Hong Zhang	CHN	37.82
3	Heather McLean	CAN	38.02

1000m Men

1	Pavel Kulizhnikov	RUS	1:08.10 TR
2	Kjeld Nuis	NED	1:08.12
3	Denis Yuskov	RUS	1:08.72 TR

1500m Ladies

1	Martina Sáblíková	CZE	1:55.44 TR
2	Brittany Bowe	USA	1:55.47
3	Marrit Leenstra	NED	1:55.93

5000m Men

1	Sven Kramer	NED	6:15.71 TR
2	Jorrit Bergsma	NED	6:17.59
3	Ted-Jan Bloemen	CAN	6:18.05 TR