

# INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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For immediate release

## **ISU World Single Distances Speed Skating Championships – Kolomna (RUS) Day 4**

Pavel Kulizhnikov (RUS) managed to shrug off his initial nerves when he retained his 500m title after a superb second run in 34.42. Jorien ter Mors (NED) took the Ladies' 1500m title on the final day of the World Single Distances Speed Skating Championships 2016 in Kolomna. In the conclusive Mass Start races Seung-Hoon Lee (KOR) took the Men's and Ivanie Blondin (CAN) the Ladies' title.

### **Ter Mors takes second title in Kolomna**

When Jorien ter Mors (NED) drops by on long track events, she is a force to reckon with. Raised as a short-track speed skater, the Dutch lady took her second long track world title after Friday's 1000m in Kolomna. Ter Mors crushed Marrit Leenstra's (NED) 2012 track record of 1:55.03 by over a second, when she skated 1:53.92. Americans Heather Richardson-Bergsma and Brittany Bowe took silver and bronze respectively.

Because she had not skated long track World Cup races in the first half of the season, Ter Mors had to start early. The 1500m Olympic Champion made her mark in the first pair leaving pair-mate Josie Spence (CAN) almost ten seconds behind (2:03.33). Ter Mors skated an incredibly even race with a 25.6 opener followed by 28.7, 29.4 and 30.0 laps. She didn't plan it that way however: "The first full lap was quite slow and I told myself to shift gear. I managed to step up and that was my biggest gain."

Ireen Wüst, who missed the first half of the World Cup season, had to start early too. Her 1:55.93 in the second pair showed how fast Ter Mors had been, but Ter Mors was far from sure yet. "You never know what will happen when Richardson and Bowe are yet to come," she said.

Bowe and Richardson-Bergsma had both won two World Cup 1500m races this season. They faced each other in the penultimate pair. They both opened below 25 seconds and they still held an advantage over Ter Mors heading into their final lap, but they both paid the prize towards the end. World record holder Richardson edged out Bowe with 1:54.67 versus 1:55.09, which got them silver and bronze respectively.

Martina Sáblíková (CZE) and Marrit Leenstra (NED) had the final shot at Ter Mors' track record, but they couldn't even match the Americans and had to settle for fifth and sixth place behind Ireen Wüst, who ended up fourth. Sáblíková skated 1:56.06 and Leenstra 1:56.25.

### **Kulizhnikov leads Russian one-two**

Pavel Kulizhnikov had won seven of the ten 500m World Cup races this season heading into the Kolomna tournament and on his home track he finished the chronicle of a world title foretold. His compatriot Ruslan Murashov took silver and Alex Boisvert-Lacroix (CAN) won the bronze medal.

In the first run Tae-Yun Kim (KOR) skated the first time under 35 seconds with 34.92 in the fifth pair, but the Russian sprinters showed their dominance in the first run already. Aleksey Yesin set

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34.91 in the 7<sup>th</sup> pair and Ruslan Murashov (RUS) romped home with a time of 34.60 in the third last pair.

Pavel Kulizhnikov (RUS) took the ice in the final pair, but he didn't seem comfortable. After a false start he opened in 9.63, one tenth of a second slower than William Dutton (CAN), who had the fastest opener but couldn't pull through in the full lap to finish in 35.02 (seventh). Like the Canadian, Kulizhnikov was far from perfect in his full lap, but even an imperfect Kulizhnikov is fast. He was able to stop the clock in 34.60. Murashov led him by five thousandths of a second.

Mika Poutala (FIN) was the only one who could get his name in between the Russian powerhouses in the first run. With 34.89 he left Yesin 0.02 seconds adrift, but the gap towards Murashov and Kulizhnikov was a whopping 0.29 seconds. The first six men skated under 35 seconds with Gilmore Junio (CAN) in sixth place with 34.95.

The second run seemed to become a four-horse race for the bronze medal, climaxing into the concluding gold medal race between Kulizhnikov and Murashov. Boisvert-Lacroix, who had clocked 35.08 in the first run (ranked ten), did not settle for a place outside the spotlights. The Canadian exploded for 34.70 to set the second-fastest time in the second run. He thus fended off Poutala (34.90) and Yesin (34.89). The Fin and the Russian ranked fourth and fifth respectively.

In the final pair Kulizhnikov got his act together. He left Murashov far behind and stopped the clock at 34.42 to collect a winning total of 69.026. Murashov struggled with mistakes in both turns and only finished after 35.08 seconds, barely enough to keep Boisvert-Lacroix at bay.

Kulizhnikov became the fourth male speed skater to win back-to-back 500m world titles, after Shimizu (four in a row from 1998 until 2001), Jeremy Wotherspoon (CAN) (2003-2004) and Tae-Bum Mo (KOR) (2012-2013). He also was the second speed skater to win this title on home ice after Hiroyasu Shimizu (JPN), who won gold in Nagano in 2000.

## **Korean scoop in Men's Mass Start**

Seung-Hoon Lee (KOR) took the Men's Mass Start world title to become the first Korean skater, male or female, to win a world title in any event other than a 500m. Arjan Stroetinga (NED) finished second and Alexis Contin (FRA) third.

The Netherlands have dominated the Mass Start over the years having won a record nine World Cup races, followed by Korea (4) and Belgium (3). Having won last year's inaugural Mass Start gold, Stroetinga took initiative making pace in the first two laps of Sunday's race in Kolomna.

After Stroetinga Contin, who won this year's World Cup Mass Start race in Inzell, tried to set up an attack, but he did not get away from the pack. Japan's Shota Nakamura and Shane Williamson set up another attack and they catapulted a Jorrit Bergsma (NED) escape. The Dutchman skated fifty meters ahead of the pack for a couple of laps in an effort to destroy Stroetinga's challengers in a possible final sprint.

Bart Swings (BEL) led the chase and after Bergsma was caught with six laps to go Peter Michael (NZL) took his chance to attack. Stroetinga countered while the leading group grew smaller and smaller. Sverre Lunde Pedersen (NOR) tried a final jump in the penultimate lap, but the race ended

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in a chaotic final sprint. Contin lead it out with Stroetinga in his back. Lee who had managed to escape a Bart Swings crash in the penultimate turn jumped out of Stroetinga's draft on the final straight to cross the line first.

## Blondin celebrates Canadian milestone

To conclude the World Single Distances Championships Ivania Blondin (CAN) won the Ladies' Mass Start. Thanks to her title Canada became the only country to have won all seven Ladies' events in World Single Distances Championships history at least once. Bo-Reum Kim (KOR) took silver and Miho Takagi (JPN) grabbed bronze.

After a slow start, in which Takagi crashed but recovered, the Ladies' race turned into a spectacular battle when Janneke Ensing (NED) and Francesca Lollobrigida (ITA) countered a Luiza Zlotkowska (POL) attack. Protecting her teammate Irene Schouten's chances in a possible final sprint, Ensing tried to counter whatever attack the other attempted. Claudia Pechstein (GER) tried to escape twice, but she did not get away.

Meanwhile Blondin fought for the spot behind Schouten's back to have the best position heading into the final lap. Like in the Men's race the Japanese ladies Takagi and Misaki Oshigiri tried to get away with a joint jump, but Blondin followed easily thus being led out perfectly into the final straight. Schouten struggled in the final turn and was not able to get back into Blondin's draft. The defending champion crossed the finish line just behind Takagi but had no sprint points like Lollobrigida, who got fourth. Schouten had to settle for tenth place.

## ISU World Single Distances Speed Skating Championships – Kolomna (RUS)

### Sunday, medal winners

#### 1500m Ladies

1	Jorien ter Mors	NED	1:53.92 TR
2	Heather Richardson-Bergsma	USA	1:54.67
3	Brittany Bowe	USA	1:55.09

#### 500m Men

1	Pavel Kulizhnikov	RUS	34.605 (2) + 34.421 (1) = 69.026
2	Ruslan Murashov	RUS	34.600 (1) + 35.080(12) = 69.680
3	Alex Boisvert-Lacroix	CAN	35.081(10) + 34.707 (2) = 69.788

#### Mass Start Men

1	Seung-Hoon Lee	KOR	7:18.26
2	Arjan Stroetinga	NED	7:18.32
3	Alexis Contin	FRA	7:18.41

#### Mass Start Ladies

1	Ivanie Blondin	CAN	8:17.53
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2	Bo-Reum Kim	KOR	8:17.66
3	Miho Takagi	JPN	8:17.68

## Additional information

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Results: <http://www.isureults.eu/>

Live Stream on [ISU Skating Channel](#) NB: geoblocking may be required in certain territories

Twitter: [@ISU\\_Speed](#)

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