

Press release

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Erbanova and Ter Mors gain confidence in Erfurt

Karolina Erbanova (CZE) won the ladies 500m and Jorien ter Mors took the 1000m gold on Day 1 of the fifth leg of the ISU World Cup Speed Skating in Erfurt on Friday. Russia dominated the men's events on the first day, with Pavel Kulizhnikov and Denis Yuskov winning the 500m and the 1500m.

Erbanova stays focused after winning 'funny' 500m

Karolina Erbanova refused to get carried away after winning the ladies 500m at the ISU World Cup in Erfurt on Friday. "This is a funny distance," she said. "There are maybe eight or 10 girls who can medal at every World Cup."

Erbanova beat Vanessa Herzog (AUT) in the 10th and final pair when she stopped the clock at 37.82 seconds at the Gunda-Niemann-Stirnemann-Halle. Herzog was just 0.10 slower to take the silver medal.

"That was quite a good race if you take into account that I have been ill the whole week," said Herzog.

"It's just a bad cough. It's not really bad, otherwise I would not have raced here today. Tomorrow I'll skate another 500m and maybe the 1000m on Sunday, but I don't want to race too much because I want to get well as soon as I can to train for the (Olympic) Games."

Like Herzog, Erbanova gained confidence in the build-up to PyeongChang 2018.

"In the sprint many girls feel they have a shot at the podium. It's nice to know that I'm up there with them," said the Czech, who took advantage of the absence of World Cup leader Nao Kodaira (JPN).

"She has been very good this season, no doubt. She's stable in every race, she doesn't make any mistakes. Let's see what happens. I do not focus on my opponents. It's better to focus on yourself. The best way to improve is to look at your last race and try to beat yourself to do it better the next day."

Erbanova and Herzog were the only racers to beat the 38-second barrier in Erfurt on Friday. Russia's Angelina Golikova took the 500m bronze in 38.10.

Kodaira still leads the World Cup with 700 points. Lee Sang-Hwa (KOR), who was also absent in Erfurt, is second with 510 while Erbanova climbed to third place with 466 points.

Kulizhnikov takes first 500m gold this season

Pavel Kulizhnikov (RUS) took his first 500m World Cup win of the season in Erfurt on Friday. The world record holder skated 35.03 seconds in a super-competitive field. All top-10 finishers were within 0.15 of the winner.

Michel Mulder (NED) grabbed the silver medal in 35.08 and Artyom Kuznetsov (RUS) took bronze in 35.10.

Mulder was happy to be back on an international podium. The Olympic 500m champion has been struggling in recent years and did not manage to qualify for PyeongChang 2018 to defend his title.

“I was just told that it’s three years since my last World Cup podium,” Mulder said.

“This is the first time I skate in the A Division in two years. It’s really cool to be back among these guys. It makes a huge difference to skate in the A Division instead of the B Division in the morning. Only at this level you can really compare yourself with the best in the world.

“I did not expect this [medal] when I crossed the finish line. I started in the second pair and I thought, ‘If I do skate a good little race I might have a chance’. But this did not feel like a good little race. I made a mistake in the last inner corner, but apparently this was enough for silver.”

The men’s 500m World Cup is a very tight contest this season. Kulizhnikov climbed to seventh place with 270 points after his win in Erfurt.

Håvard Holmefjord Lorentzen (NOR), who came three-thousandths of a second short of the bronze medal in 35.10, still leads the standings with 436 points.

Ronald Mulder (NED), who did not skate in Erfurt, is second with 416 points, and Kai Verbij (NED), who hopes to recover from a muscle injury in time for the Olympic Games, is third with 368.

Ter Mors back in shape with 1000m win

Jorien ter Mors (NED) was happy to be back on top when she won the ladies 1000m in Erfurt on Friday. Marrit Leenstra (NED) took silver and Yekaterina Shikova (RUS) grabbed bronze.

In the seventh of 10 pairs Ter Mors was the first to skate under one minute and 16 seconds, when she stopped the clock at 1:15.20.

Ireen Wüst (NED) had set 1:16.22 in the fifth pair. She had hopes of a medal until the final race, when Shikhova finished in 1:15.91. Leenstra had set 1:15.55 in the penultimate pair.

Ter Mors, who was been plagued by injuries this season, failed to qualify for the Olympic 1500m at the Dutch trials in December. She therefore will not be able to defend her Sochi 1500m title, but she will be present at the 1000m in PyeongChang.

“I don’t have to think about the 1500m anymore, because I will not skate that distance at the Olympics anyway. I focus on the 1000m and that distance is going well. I still want to improve bits and pieces to be at the top of my game in Korea,” Ter Mors said.

“This was a good race. The start was all right, the only slight mistake I made was to put my hand on my back at the cross-over. I shouldn’t have done that, it put me off rhythm for a second. But otherwise this was just a good and solid race.

“Physically, I’m all right at the moment. My back still bothers me, but that’s something I’m able to deal with.”

Nao Kodaira (JPN), who was absent in Erfurt, still leads the ladies 1000m World Cup with 305 points. Leenstra climbed to second place with 270 points. Shikhova also has 270 points in third place.

Yuskov extends unbeaten 1500m streak

Denis Yuskov (RUS) maintained his unbeaten 1500m World Cup record this season. Sverre Lunde Pedersen (NOR) took silver and Marcel Bosker (NED) took his first career world cup podium with the bronze medal on his 21st birthday.

Yuskov clocked one minute 45.33 seconds, just 0.01 short of Denny Morrison’s (CAN) 2009 track record. Pedersen set 1:45.76 and Bosker stopped the clock at 1:46.28.

Pedersen was happy not to have skated at the top of his abilities.

“I felt like I was skating in slow motion a little,” he said. “I do not have 100 percent power and the legs were not really fast. That gives me a good feeling towards the Olympics. Being at top level now, would not be good. I have to improve towards the Olympics.”

Bosker will not skate at the Olympic Games. The Dutch prodigy did not qualify, but he has different goals this season.

“I will skate the Dutch Allround championships next week and I could qualify for the World Allround Championships if I win. That would be great,” he said.

Already a multiple junior World Cup medalist Bosker was happy to have captured his first senior medal to come of age in style.

“I would not have thought to be on the podium here. I thought top-10 would be great, but all those faster men failed to beat my time. Maybe they are in a training block at the moment, but then again, being on the podium here feels great.”

Yuskov retains the lead in the 1500m World Cup with 400 points. Koen Verweij, who finished fourth in Erfurt, is second with 312 points and Joey Mantia, who was absent in Erfurt, is third with 250 points.

Full [results and classifications](#). Follow the discussion on social media by using **#WCSpeedSkating** and **#SpeedSkating** and watch the live stream on the [ISU Skating Channel](#).

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About ISU World Cup Speed Skating 2017/18 Series

The ISU World Cup Speed Skating is a series of international Speed Skating competitions which takes place annually. The Series started in 1984 and usually consists of six or seven events including the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final. Skaters can earn points at each competition, and the skater who has the most points on a given distance at the end of the series is the World Cup winner of that distance. Skaters also cumulate Grand World Cup points each time they compete in a distance. During the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final, the Lady and the Man with the most Grand World Cup points is crowned the Grand World Cup winner.

The results on the individual distances in the World Cup ranking are the main qualifying method for the ISU World Single Distances Speed Skating Championships.

A number of World Cup titles are awarded every season, for Men: 500 m, 1000 m, 1500 m, combined 5000 m / 10000 m, Team Pursuit, Mass Start and Team Sprint. For Ladies 500 m, 1000 m, 1500 m, the combined 3000 m / 5000 m, Team Pursuit, Mass Start and Team Sprint.