



Press release

21 February 2018

Painful exit for Christie and Knecht

Elise Christie (GBR) gave her everything at the Gangneung Ice Arena Tuesday, but the 27-year-old Briton, who damaged ligaments in her ankle crashing in the Ladies' 1500m on Saturday, went out with a yellow card of the Ladies' 1000m. In the men's 500m heats, reigning World Champion went out on a penalty.

Painful night for Christie

Christie clearly suffered from a painful ankle, when she fell entering the first curve in heat 5. The heat was restarted and Christie had to leave a little gap initially. "I damaged some ligaments in my ankle the other day," she said. "I went to the start and crashed with someone, because I can't start properly, and actually stood on my very swollen ankle. It hurt and I can't describe the amount of pain I was in. I was standing there and I was thinking "there's no way I can skate". But I thought of everyone back home, everyone watching, I just thought "I have to try".

Christie wouldn't give up, closed the gap with the other three and even managed to battle for a top-two spot behind Lara van Ruijven (NED), but the referees handed the 2017 World Champion a yellow card for two penalties. It was the end of a disappointing campaign for the 2017 World Champion. "I guess you could say that," she agreed after the race. "But at the same time I have been improving every year. Now I have four more years to do this. It is a bit weird, that it seems to happen at Olympics and nowhere else. I am not someone who commonly gets penalties or involved in crashes as I generally try to stay out of the way. It is just 6 races of my life that have gone completely wrong."

Korea, Canada and Netherlands with three into quarters

Koreans Sukhee Shim, Minjeong Choi and Alang Kim all qualified for the quarter finals winning their heats confidently. Canada's Kim Boutin also won her heat, while her compatriots Marianne St Gelais and Valerie Maltais qualified second from their heats. The Netherlands also got three competitors in the quarter finals, with Suzanne Schulting, Yara van Kerkhof and Lara van Ruijven.

Arianna Fontana (ITA), who won the ladies' 500m event at PyeongChang 2018, qualified first of her heat, overtaking Kathryn Thomson (GBR) on the outside and Valerie Maltais (CAN) on the inside in one with a skillful maneuver.

Knecht out on a penalty

In the Men's 500m heats reigning world champion Sjinkie Knecht, who already won silver in the 1500m, started his heat in fourth position and had to struggle his way up front. Heading into the final curve he was still third and he did not manage to overtake Ziwei Ren (CHN) and Aleksandr Shulginov (OAR) anymore. Knecht's countrymen Daan Breeuwsma and Dylan Hoogerwerf managed to qualify for the quarter finals.

Knegt was not surprised by the penalty: "I just made a big mistake. I was behind all the time. I tried to trust on my speed but it didn't work. These kinds of penalties are part of the sport. We know at the Games it's always different and this shows exactly why this is different."

Three advance for Korea and China

Korea and China both had three participants heading into the quarter finals. Yira Seo, Hyojun Lim and Daeheon Hwang (KOR) all qualified first from their heats. Dajing Wu, who won 10 men's 500m races at the ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Championships and in the World Cup, won the first heat in a new Olympic record. His countryman Ziwei Ren also won his heat, while Tianyu Han (CHN) took second place.

Shaolin Sandor Liu (HUN), who has won three men's 500m World Cup races, since the start of the 2016/17 World Cup season, confidently won the eighth heat to qualify. Charles Hamelin got penalized in his final individual Olympic race. The 33-year-old Canadian veteran finished third behind Lim and Breeuwsma, but he had impeded Kazak Denis Nikisha (KAZ), who thus advanced to the quarters.

The Ladies' 1000m Final and Men's 500m Final will take place on Thursday February 22 from 20:00 in the Gangneung Ice Arena.

For more information, schedules, full entries and results please refer to the [ISU website](#) and the [official website](#) of the Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang.