

## Press release

08 March 2018

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### **Allround Championships back to the cradle after 125 years**

The ISU World Allround Speed Skating Championships returns to its place of birth. Dutchman Jaap Eden won the first official ISU World Speed Skating Championships in Amsterdam 125 years ago. In 1893 the event was held on the Museum Square, this year the Amsterdam 1928 Olympic Stadium will host the event. It will be the first outdoor Championships since 2001 where it took place in Budapest. Sven Kramer (NED) will chase a record extending tenth title, and Ireen Wüst (NED) aims at her seventh Championships.

#### **‘Coolste Baan’**

The Amsterdam Olympic Stadion has a temporary artificial ice rink, called The Coolste Baan van Nederland. The stadium experimented with the track four years ago, when the Dutch Allround and Sprint Championships were held in the stadium. Beert Boomsma, Ice Meister of the famous Thialf-rink in Heerenveen, has prepared the track in Amsterdam. Outdoor Championships are more challenging for both the Ice Meister and the skaters, because of the uncertain and ever changing weather conditions. At the last outdoor Championships 17 years ago, Rintje Ritsma (NED) and Anni Friesinger (GER) were crowned champions. This time around, four-time champion Ritsma is tournament director.

#### **Norwegian challenge**

Despite Kramer’s dominance in allround speed skating over the past decade, the Dutch record champion will face tough competition in defense of his title. Sverre Lunde Pedersen (NOR), who showed outstanding form when he anchored Norway to the Team Pursuit gold medal in PyeongChang three weeks ago, could give speed skating in his country another boost when he becomes the first Norwegian Allround Champion since Johan Olav Koss in 1994. Håvard Bøkko(NOR), who already took four silver medals behind Kramer, is another contender.

Apart from the Norwegians, Canada’s Ted-Jan Bloemen will also aim at a podium spot. He knows how to beat Kramer, after winning the Olympic 10,000m gold at PyeongChang 2018. Belgian Bart Swings and Kramer’s compatriots Patrick Roest and Marcel Bosker are other skaters to watch.

The Allround Championships come down to a combination of speed and endurance skills. The men will skate the so-called ‘big combination’ (500m, 1500m, 5000m and 10,000m). Points will be calculated on the basis of the 500m (eg time from the 1500m and 5000m will be divided by 3 and 10 respectively). The skater with the least points after four distances will take the title.

#### **Takagi eyes maiden title for Japan**

On the Ladies’ side, Wüst will face Miho Takagi (JPN), Martina Sáblíková (CZE), compatriot and team mate Antoinette de Jong and German veteran Claudia Pechstein. While Wüst will chase her seventh title, and Sáblíková is a four-time champion, youngsters Takagi and De Jong both only have

one bronze medal to their name. De Jong came third behind champion Sáblíková and runner-up Wüst in 2016 and Takagi took bronze behind champion Wüst and runner-up Sáblíková in 2017. Takagi could become the first Japanese allround champion in the history of Speed Skating. Pechstein won the title in 2000 and she took eight silver medals, but her last podium dates back to 2006, when she came second behind Cindy Klassen (CAN). The ladies will skate the small combination (500m, 1500m, 3000m, 5000m).

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

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**About ISU World Allround Speed Skating Championships**

The ISU World Allround Speed Skating Championships is a four-race event, in which skaters compete in the big combination. The Ladies' big combination consists of 500m, 3000m, 1500m, and 5000m and the Men have to skate 500m, 5000m, 1500m and 10,000m.

Points will be calculated on the basis of the 500m (eg time from the 1500m and 5000m will be divided by 3 and 10 respectively). The skater with the least points after four distances will take the title.