

# INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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## **ISU European Short Track Speed Skating Championships 2012 Preview Malmö, SWE**

The ISU Short Track Speed Skating Championships season starts on Friday January 18, 2013 with the ISU European Short Track Speed Skating Championships where the allround winners will be crowned on Sunday January 20. Unlike the World Cup where skaters race one or two distances and win distance titles, during the European Championships the skaters have to compete over four distances. The allround classification is based on the results of each skater in the three individual distances 500m, 1000m and 1500m. After the completion of the three distances only the top eight point scorers and ties on the eighth position will skate the 3000m Super Final. For the individual distances the final points 34, 21, 13, 8, 5, 3, 2 and 1 are awarded in descending order commencing with the first place. Final points are only awarded to skaters who participate in the Super Final. No points are awarded to skaters who receive a yellow or red card or failed to finish the race.

The competition starts on Friday with the Ladies and Men 1500m and with the Relay Heats. On Saturday the Ladies and Men 500m and Relay Semi Finals will take place and finally on Sunday the Ladies and Men 1000m, the 3000m Super Final and Final Relay will be skated.

In the Ladies' field, four time reigning European Champion Arianna Fontana (ITA) will defend her title, that she won in 2008, 2009, 2011 and 2012. Team mate Martina Valcepina, 2012 and 2011 bronze medalist will also be looking to move up the podium while 2012 silver medalist Jorien ter Mors (NED) will provide fierce competition to Fontana. Elise Christie (GBR), 2010 European bronze medalist is proving to be in good form this seasons with several podium finishes on the World Cup Circuit and ranks first in the 1000m World Cup. Other skaters to look out for are 2011 silver medalist Bernadett Heidum (HUN), 2010 winner and 2009 silver medalist Katerina Novotná (CZE), Olga Belyakova (RUS) and Tatiana Borodulina (RUS) who both had a good season so far.

Reigning European Champion and 2011 silver medalist Sjinkie Knegt (NED) will defend his title against team mate Niels Kerstholt, two time silver medalist (2012 and 2008). 2012 bronze medalist Semen Elistratov (RUS), who currently ranks third in the World Cup 1500m, and compatriot Victor An, who ranks second in the World Cup 1500m and 1000m, have had a good season so far and will be battling it out to obtain a podium finish. Frenchmen Maxime Chataignier (2010 bronze medalist) and Thibaut Fauconnet (2010 silver medalist) will also be aiming to get a medal. Other skaters to look out for are Robert Seifert (GER), Yuri Confortola (ITA), Ruslan Zakharov (RUS) and Vladimir Grigorv (RUS).

Full results are available at [www.isu.org](http://www.isu.org)

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