

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: CHEMIN DE PRIMEROSE 2 - CH 1007 LAUSANNE - SWITZERLAND
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Event 6 of 9

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Essent ISU World Cup Speed Skating –Calgary (CAN)

The first Essent ISU World Cup of 2013 was held this weekend in Calgary (CAN), where the sprinters tested themselves in preparation for the World Sprint Championships next week in Salt Lake City (USA), the two fastest ovals in the world. Sang-Hwa Lee brought the world record in the 500m down to 36.80. There were 105 personal bests including 17 national records for Australia (Daniel Greig 34.79 and 1:08.71), Czechia (Karolina Erbanová 1:15.10, 37.88, 1:14.25), Finland (Elina Risku 39.37), Germany (Denny Ihle 34.90 and Samuel Schwarz 1:07.85), Kazakhstan (Yekaterina Aydova 1:15.41), Korea (Sang-Hwa Lee 36.99 and 36.80), Netherlands (Jan Smeekens 34.32; Margot Boer equalled Nuyt's 37.54), Poland (Zbigniew Bródka 1:07.87), Russia (Olga Fatkulina 1:14.24), Taiwan (Darren Huang, 1:12.22), USA (Heather Richardson 37.12, 1:13.09).

Saturday

In the Ladies' 500m, Sang-Hwa Lee won, as she had done in all previous 500m races this season. Her time was a Korean National Record and after Jing Yu (CHN) she is the second woman in history to skate a 500m within 37 seconds: 36.99. Yu finished in third place this time, with 37.28. Silver was for Heather Richardson (USA), who set a National Record of 37.12.

In the Men's 500m Jamie Gregg (CAN) equalled his Personal Best with 34.36, and two pairs later, Pekka Koskela (FIN), who has won two 500m World Cup races this season, also skated 34.36 which was a Personal Best to him, but had to settle for silver this day, as Jan Smeekens (NED), the leader in the World Cup ranking, won in a new Dutch record of 34.32.

Smeekens: "It felt good. My opening of 29.5 was good, even faster than pair mate Kato who is usually the fastest, but I lost some speed in the outer turn. I did not qualify for the World Sprints, so this is my weekend. The level is high and all my rivals are here, so I am proud that I could do this. But eventually times must go below 34."

In the Ladies' 1000m reigning World Champion Jing Yu skated 1:14.13, which brought her to fourth place in this distance, as three skaters managed to reach the finish before the clock reached 1:14. The first of them was Brittany Bowe (USA), who took almost a full second off her Personal Best time and finished in 1:13.92. World record holder Christine Nesbitt (CAN) bettered that and took the lead in 1:13.67. Faster than Nesbitt in every lap, after opening the 200m faster than the world record pace of 17.66, Heather Richardson became the second fastest ever on the 1000m with a new US record of 1:13.09. Richardson: "I surprised myself. I had a lot of hard training coming into this race as I want to be set for next weekend. I wanted to skate technically well. My start has improved a lot, that is where the 500 is coming in and I am able to hold the last lap in my 1000 a lot better than I used to."

The Men's 1000m had to start without its injured leader Denny Morrison (CAN). He expects to be back in time for the Single Distance Championships in March.

Setting the first Personal Best was Tyler Derragh (CAN), who broke it by three quarters of a second and was the first to finish within 1:08 with 1:07.97. He did not enjoy the lead long, as Michel Mulder managed a 24.9 and a 26.4 lap after a strong start to shave almost a second off his Personal Best with 1:07.87. It got him bronze. In pair nine, World Record holder Shani

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Davis (USA) lost 0.2 to Kjeld Nuis (NED) at the start, but overtook him with a 24.7 lap, against 25.0 for Nuis. Always strong in the final lap, 25.9 this time, Davis took the victory in 1:07.49, the fastest time of the season. Nuis took silver with a personal best of 1:07.64. In the B-division Mark Tuitert (NED) made his comeback after a longer absence. He won the B-division in the third time of the day, 1:07.85, missing his own Personal Best by only 0.01 and assuring a A-division start for the next day.

Sunday

In the second 500m for Ladies, Sang-Hwa Lee dominated the field. She opened fastest in 10.26 and followed up with the fastest lap ever: 26.54, resulting in a stunning World Record time of 36.80, well under the previous mark of 36.94. She finished far ahead of her pair mate Heather Richardson, who nevertheless took silver with 37.42. Margot Boer finished third, her first podium in this season, setting a Personal Best by equalling the Dutch record time that Andrea Nuyt had skated in 2002: 37.54. With eight out of eight, Lee securely leads the World Cup with 800 points, Wolf follows with 481 and Richardson with 435.

Lee: "I had not expected to have such a great season. I want to keep the momentum and bring it to Sochi. I am really happy with how it's going. I used to be jealous of Beixing Wang when she trained with Kevin Crockett, but now I am really happy to be in that position." And Lee's coach Crockett: "I knew she had it in her. You never know until the last corner with this kind of speed. It was a perfect race: I did not see any technical mistakes. It was a Personal Best first 100m and the fastest lap ever done by a woman. She was flawless in the last corner."

In the Men's 500m, Michel Mulder (NED) took the lead with 34.55, a Personal Best. Pekka Koskela (FIN) and Yuya Oikawa (JPN) just missed that, but Joji Kato (JPN) had a strong race, opening in 9.51 followed by a 24.9 lap and finishing in 34.44. Yet Jan Smeeckens once again took the victory, this time in 34.39. Smeeckens opened in 9.60, but his 24.7 lap made up for the small loss. The win this weekend increased Smeeckens' lead in the World Cup to 630 points, Kato has 526 and then Michel Mulder has 395.

Several skaters decided not to start in the Ladies' 1000m to save energy for the next weekend. Among them were Nesbitt, Jing Yu and Sang-Hwa Lee. The first pair that impressed were young skaters Lotte van Beek (NED) and Karolina Erbanová (CZE). Both skated a Personal Best, Erbanová was faster than her National Record of the previous day, finishing in 1:14.25. Eventually that was good for fourth place, as again three skaters finished within 1:14. Brittany Bowe (USA) took bronze again with 1:13.96, Heather Richardson took the victory again, now with 1:13.30, but silver was for the fresh European Allround Champion Ireen Wüst (NED) with 1:13.89. Richardson leads the ranking with 480 points, Erbanová is second with 393, Fatkulina has 304, then follow Bowe with 290 and Nesbitt with 288 still close enough to be in contention.

The first to get below 1:08 in the men's 1000m was Samuel Schwarz (GER), whose 1:07.85 was 0.02 faster than the German record held by Nico Ihle. Everybody stayed above 1:08 until in pair seven the two Dutch men, Hein Otterspeer and Michel Mulder raced. Mulder had the fastest passing at 600m after 41.26, but Otterspeer could follow well and overtake Mulder in the last lap. In spite of a very wide last inner turn, Otterspeer reached a personal best of 1:07.76, Mulder was a bit slower than the first day with 1:07.91 and behind Schwarz. Finally Shani Davis and Kjeld Nuis raced. Nuis had problems keeping his speed to the final lap. In

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the final straight, Davis overtook him and Davis' 1:07.83 was just enough for silver. Nuis was fourth with 1:07.90. Otterspeer leads with 455 points, Nuis has 450, Davis 420, then Schwarz has 405. Then follows Morrison with 325. Otterspeer: "I needed a few races to get used to the ice. It was not a perfect race, but I'm happy I could win it this way."

Next weekend most sprinters will be in Salt Lake City to fight for World Championships Sprint.

Essent ISU World Cup Speed Skating – Calgary (CAN) - Medal Winners

500m Ladies Saturday

1	Sang-Hwa Lee	KOR	36.99 NR
2	Heather Richardson	USA	37.12 NR
3	Jing Yu	CHN	37.28

500m Ladies Sunday

1	Sang-Hwa Lee	KOR	36.80 WR
2	Heather Richardson	USA	37.42
3	Margot Boer	NED	37.54 =N

500m Men Saturday

1	Jan Smeekeens	NED	34.32 NR
2	Pekka Koskela	FIN	34.36 P
3	Jamie Gregg	CAN	34.36 =P

500m Men Sunday

1	Jan Smeekeens	NED	34.39
2	Joji Kato	JPN	34.44
3	Michel Mulder	NED	34.55 P

1000m Ladies, Saturday

1	Heather Richardson	USA	1:13.09 NR
2	Christine Nesbitt	CAN	1:13.67
3	Brittany Bowe	USA	1:13.92 P

1000m Ladies, Sunday

1	Heather Richardson	USA	1:13.30
2	Ireen Wüst	CAN	1:13.89

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3	Brittany Bowe	USA	1:13.96
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1000m Men, Saturday

1	Shani Davis	USA	1:07.49
2	Kjeld Nuis	NED	1:07.64 P
3	Michel Mulder	NED	1:07.87 P

1000m Men, Sunday

1	Hein Otterspeer	NED	1:07.76 P
2	Shani Davis	USA	1:07.83
3	Samuel Schwarz	GER	1:07.85 NR

For details of the Essent ISU World Cup, including complete results see www.isu.org .

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