

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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For immediate release

ISU World Junior Speed Skating Championships 2013 **Review**

The ISU World Junior Speed Skating Championships took place in Collalbo (ITA) this weekend. Miho Takagi (JPN) successfully defended her junior world title, and in the men's field Jeong-Su Seo (KOR) was crowned junior allround world champion. He is the second Korean Junior World Allround Champion, the first was Lee Young-Ha who defeated Eric Heiden in 1976 in Madonna di Campiglio, Italy. Both champions are 18 years of age.

With beautiful sunshine on the first day and continuous snowfall on the last. 26 women and 32 men participated in the allround competition, and as titles on single distances could be won, those distances saw more skaters than usual. There were 31 new Personal Best times. The six allround medals went to six different countries. Switzerland took the first medal ever.

Ladies

Defending champion Miho Takagi started by winning the first 500m in 39.88, 0.01 faster than Hyun-Yung Kim (KOR), last year's silver medalist in the 500, who would not skate the Samalog. Of the allround skaters, Vanessa Bittner (AUT) finished second in 40.15 and Kaitlyn McGregor (SUI) finished fifth with 40.57, sharing that place with Kako Yamane (JPN), and then followed another strong contender, 17-year-old Antoinette de Jong (NED), who was not entirely fit.

16-year-old Xiaoxuan Shi (CHN) skated with 40.40 a personal best, and after the allround tournament, Kim, Bittner, Shi and McGregor had a good starting position for the world title in the 500m. Takagi, who took bronze last year, did not race the second 500m this time, as it was too soon before the team pursuit. The winner of that second race was Kim with 39.75, Bittner was second with 39.95 and Yamane third with 40.25. Thus Kim was the 500m Champion with 79.64, Bittner second with 80.10 and Yamane took bronze with 80.82. Shi with 81.21 ended just off the podium on forth.

On the 1500m, Takagi was strongest again. Her 2:01.56 was a track record for Juniors, the fastest time ever skated by a Junior on outdoor ice and made her the champion on this distance. McGregor brought Switzerland the first medal in championships, finishing in 2:02.06. De Jong took the bronze in 2:02.80. At the end of the first day, Takagi was leading with 80.400 points, and three other skaters battled for the medals: McGregor with 81.256, De Jong with 81.683 and Bittner with 81.936 points.

The next day, Hyun-Yung Kim was leading the 1000m with 1:19.52, when De Jong and Bittner raced together. Bittner was a bit faster than Kim in every lap and finished in a personal best time of 1:18.72. De Jong was faster than Kim with 1:19.23. In the final pair, Takagi could not beat the time of Bittner, but earned another silver medal with 1:19.03, while McGregor finished with 1:20.13 in fifth. Thus in the Samalog, Takagi kept the lead with 119.915, but Bittner jumped to second with 121.296, slightly ahead of De Jong, who had 121.298. McGregor had 121.321. Then there was a large gap to 16-year-old Ayano Sato (JPN), who had 124.245 points.

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In the final 3000m, De Jong started courageously, hoping that she could close the gap with Takagi. Her 4:19.56 was the fastest time and brought her the distance title as well as 164.558 points. Bittner is more of a sprinter and she started fast, but lost her speed in the second half and finished in 4:30.42. This gave her 166.366 points while in the last pair of the quartet Takagi and McGregor fought for their medals. Takagi reached 4:20.30, which was enough to take the title with 163.298, a world points record for an outdoor rink. McGregor stayed close and finished in 4:20.81, another podium finish, not just on the 3000m but also with 164.789 points in the Samalog. Cho-Won Park (KOR) was fifth overall with 168.964 points.

In the team pursuit, the Japanese team, including Miho Takagi, Ayano Sato and Saori Toi, beat the Korean team in the final with 3:12.97. The Dutch won bronze, with a better time (3:14.22) than the Koreans (3:16.12), but the Koreans had been faster in the qualification for the final.

Men

On the 500m Men, the best of the allround skaters was Shota Nakamura (JPN), who skated 36.78, which wasn't far ahead of Gerben Jorritsma (NED) with 36.80 and Fan Yang (CHN), 36.88. But Nakamura was tenth, as the best of the 500m sprinters did not compete in the allround. Tsubasa Hasegawa (JPN) was the fastest with 35.76, followed by Joong Hong Im (KOR) 35.89, and Jun-Ho Kim (KOR) 36.35. The next day, there was a second 500m race for the sprinters. Again, Hasegawa was the fastest, now 36.05 and he won the 500m title. Im was second again with 36.32 and third this time was Kai Verbij (NED) with 36.54, just before Kim whose 36.57 still gave him the bronze after two 500m races.

On the 3000m, Italian skater Andrea Giovannini was paired with Jeong-Su Seo. They started fast and could keep a good speed almost to the end. Giovannini won in 3:52.84, with a final sprint, Seo came close and reached 3:52.87, third place finisher was 16-year-old Emery Lehman (USA), in 3:53.94. Jorritsma set a Personal Best of 3:57.61, and overtook Nakamura in points and also kept Fan Yang behind him. Jorritsma was second after day one with 76.401, Giovanni had moved up to third with 76.446 and Seo had 76.451, followed by Yang and Nakamura. But the leader after the first day was Simen Spieler Nilsen (NOR), who finished fourth in the 3000 with 3:55.11 and was also the fourth allrounder in the 500m with 37.16, which gave him in total 76.345 points. This distance does not bring an individual title, as it is no Olympic distance for Men.

In the 1500m, the next day, Spieler Nilsen reached the podium again with 1:51.04. It brought bronze, as Junya Miwa (JPN), who did not race the entire allround tournament, was faster in 1:50.65. The great winner of the 1500, however, was Seo. The Korean won the World Title on this distance with 1:50.27 and it moved him up to the lead in the ranking with 113.207 points, Spieler Nilsen had 113.358, then followed Yang with 113.934, Giovannini with 113.959, with Jorritsma and Nakamura falling behind.

With skaters that close together, the 5000m had to bring the decision. The victory on that distance went to an American skater who was not that high up in the ranking as his strength are the endurance distances. Emery Lehman, took the 5000m title in 6:38.76. But the battle for the prestigious allround junior title would be resolved later. In the final quartet, Spieler Nilsen and Yang were paired as were Giovannini and Seo, again. Nilsen stayed ahead of Yang with 6:45.26, which was bronze, but Yang did well, improving his personal best to 6:48.33. Nilsen had a total of

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153.874 points, which wasn't not enough to overtake Seo. Like in the 3000m, Seo followed well, and did not lose too much on the Italian. Giovannini's 6:43.50 brought him silver for this distance and 154.309 points, bronze on the Samalog. But Seo finished in 6:46.25, and that was enough for the world junior title, with 153.832 points, an outdoor world record. 19-year-old Spieler Nilsen, who won bronze last year, had to settle for silver in his final junior year.

On Sunday, the men skated the 1000m as a single distance. Kai Verbij skated a very strong race with the fastest last lap in the field and reached 1:11.67. That time stayed best for several pairs to follow, with Lennart Velema (NED) coming close in the pre-last pair with 1:11.81, where the last lap cost him the lead. In the final pair Junya Miwa and Joon-Hong Im skated. Im started very fast, and had by far the fastest first full lap. Even though he lost some of the advantage, he won the 1000m title with 1:11.37. Miwa with 1:11.86 finished in fourth. The fifth time was much slower than these four skaters, Hasegawa was fifth in 1:12.60.

The Italian Men (Andrea Giovannini, Andrea Stefani and Nicola Tumolero) won gold in the Team Pursuit with 3:56.73. They won the final, beating the Koreans, who finished with silver in 3:59.94. In the B-Final the Japanese took bronze in 4:01.95 at the expense of the Norwegian team who had a faster time in the qualification.

ISU Junior World Speed Skating Championships –Collalbo (ITA) - Medal Winners

500m Ladies

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----|------------------------------|
| 1 | Hyun-Yung Kim | KOR | 39.89(1) + 39.75(1) = 79.640 |
| 2 | Vanessa Bittner | AUT | 40.15(2) + 39.95(2) = 80.100 |
| 3 | Kako Yamane | JPN | 40.57(4) + 40.25(3) = 80.820 |

500m Men

| | | | |
|---|------------------|-----|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Tsubasa Hasegawa | JPN | 35.76(1) + 36.05(1) = 71.810 TR |
| 2 | Joon-Hong Im | KOR | 35.89P(2) + 36.32(2) = 72.210 |
| 3 | Jun-Ho Kim | KOR | 36.35P(3) + 36.57(4) = 72.920 |

1000m Ladies

| | | | |
|---|--------------------|-----|-----------|
| 1 | Vanessa Bittner | AUT | 1:18.72 P |
| 2 | Miho Takagi | JPN | 1:19.03 |
| 3 | Antoinette de Jong | NED | 1:19.23 |

1000m Men

| | | | |
|---|----------------|-----|---------|
| 1 | Joon-Hong Im | KOR | 1:11.37 |
| 2 | Kai Verbij | NED | 1:11.67 |
| 3 | Lennart Velema | NED | 1:11.81 |

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1500m Ladies

| | | | |
|---|--------------------|-----|------------|
| 1 | Miho Takagi | JPN | 2:01.56 TR |
| 2 | Kaitlyn McGregor | SUI | 2:02.06 |
| 3 | Antoinette de Jong | NED | 2:02.80 |

1500m Men

| | | | |
|---|----------------------|-----|---------|
| 1 | Jeong-Su Seo | KOR | 1:50.27 |
| 2 | Junya Miwa | JPN | 1:50.65 |
| 3 | Simen Spieler Nilsen | NOR | 1:51.04 |

3000m Ladies

| | | | |
|---|--------------------|-----|---------|
| 1 | Antoinette de Jong | NED | 4:19.56 |
| 2 | Miho Takagi | JPN | 4:20.30 |
| 3 | Kaitlyn McGregor | SUI | 4:20.81 |

3000m Men (no official title)

| | | | |
|---|-------------------|-----|---------|
| 1 | Andrea Giovannini | ITA | 3:52.84 |
| 2 | Jeong-Su Seo | KOR | 3:52.87 |
| 2 | Emery Lehman | USA | 3:53.94 |

5000m Men

| | | | |
|---|----------------------|-----|---------|
| 1 | Emery Lehman | USA | 6:38.76 |
| 2 | Andrea Giovannini | ITA | 6:43.50 |
| 2 | Simen Spieler Nilsen | NOR | 6:45.16 |

Allround Ladies

| | | | |
|---|--------------------|-----|---|
| 1 | Miho Takagi | JPN | 39.88(1)-2:01.56(1)-1:19.03(2)-4:20.30(2) 163.298 TR, WR outdoor |
| 2 | Antoinette de Jong | NED | 40.75(4)-2:02.80(3)-1:19.23(3)-4:19.56(1) 164.558 |
| 3 | Kaitlyn McGregor | SUI | 40.57(3)-2:02.06(2)-1:20.13(4)-4:20.81(3) 164.789 |

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Allround Men

| | | | |
|---|----------------------|-----|---|
| 1 | Jeong-Su Seo | KOR | 37.64(11)-3:52.87(2)-1:50.27(1)-6:46.25(4) 153.832 TR WR outdoor |
| 2 | Simen Spieler Nilsen | NOR | 37.16(6)-3:55.11(4)-1:51.04(2)-6:45.16(3) 153.874 |
| 3 | Andrea Giovannini | ITA | 37.64(11)-3:52.84(1)-1:52.54(7)-6:43.50(2) 154.309 |

Team Pursuit Ladies

| | | | |
|---|---|-----|---------|
| 1 | Ayano Sato, Miho Takagi, Saori Toi | JPN | 3:12.97 |
| 2 | Yoon-Hee Heo, Ji-Eun Nam, Cho-Won Park | KOR | 3:16.12 |
| 3 | Reina Anema, Antoinette de Jong, Jade van der Molen | NED | 3:14.22 |

Team Pursuit Men

| | | | |
|---|--|-----|---------|
| 1 | Andrea Giovannini, Andrea Stefani, Nicola Tumolero | ITA | 3:56.73 |
| 2 | Yeong-Jin Kim, Jeong-Su Seo, Han-Jae So | KOR | 3:59.94 |
| 3 | Junya Miwa, Shota Nakamura, Masahito Obayashi | JPN | 4:01.95 |

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