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Event 3 of 6
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Essent ISU World Cup Speed Skating – Astana (KAZ) – Day 3

On the last day of the Essent ISU World Cup in Astana track records were set in the Men's 500m and the 1000m for Ladies. There were 10 personal best times.

Men's 500m

This was a 500m where the Olympic Medalists of Vancouver played the big roles. Olympic champion Tae-Bum Mo (KOR) and silver medalist Keiichiro Nagashima (JPN) raced together in the seventh pair. Nagashima had the best race today. He opened in a fast 9.50, Mo in 9.70. Their laps were comparable and Nagashima set a new track record of 34.69. Mo finished in 34.87. The bronze medalist from Vancouver, Joji Kato (JPN), raced in the next pair and was the third skater below 35 with 34.97. Yet in the last pair Kato was kept just off the podium, as yesterday's surprise winner Artyom Kuznetsov (RUS) once again beat his countryman Dmitry Lobkov in a direct duel, achieving 34.92 and bronze. Thus Nagashima is the first male skater this year with two 500m victories. Ronald Mulder retains the lead in the World Cup with 376 points, Mo has 347 and Michel Mulder 288, only four points ahead of both Nagashima and Kuznetsov.

Ladies' 1000m

Half of the skaters ranked among the top ten were missing from the 1000m for Ladies, but the best two skaters were present and performed well. Heather Richardson (USA) this time beat her team-mate Brittany Bowe and both were faster than the track record that Nesbitt (CAN) had set last year at 1:14.82. Richardson reached 1:14.22 and Bowe 1:14.78. Nobody else was inside 1:15 and only three other skaters were below 1:16. Julia Skokova (RUS) did well with 1:15.66 on her 31st birthday, Sang-Hwa Lee (KOR) with 1:15.70 was outside that, although she was the fastest in the first 600 meters, and the bronze medal was taken away from Skokova by her team-mate, the world champion at this distance Olga Fatkulina, who finished in 1:15.18. Richardson made Astana the second fastest lowland rink; she was faster once at low altitude, in Milwaukee. In the World Cup Richardson leads with 280 points, Bowe follows with 250, and Fatkulina moved up to third place with 180 points.

Men's 10,000m

Sven Kramer was the only Dutchman in the A-division, but the B-division podium was all Dutch (Douwe de Vries was first in 13:05.58; Bob de Vries and Robert Bovenhuis both came within 7.5 seconds of the winner). For the first time since his debut in 1996 Bob de Jong missed a long distance, choosing instead to have a training camp for the Olympic Games with his team-mate Jorrit Bergsma, whose Astana track record survived this weekend. Kramer had good competition in his pair from Olympic Champion Seung-Hoon Lee (KOR), but Lee could only maintain that pace until 6000m. In the closing laps he struggled and dropped to fifth place with 13:20.94. Kramer outpaced the B-division, winning in 13:02.38. In second place finished Alexis Contin (FRA), skating an even race in 13:14.64, only two and a half seconds outside his French record. The bronze medal came from the pair of Patrick Beckert (GER) and Bart Swings (BEL), who raced smartly together. Swings took the lead after 6000m, but never quite shook off Beckert, who is known for his capacity to finish a long distance with a few fast laps, and the German overtook Swings in the final lap to take bronze in 13:18.71. Swings was fourth with 13:19.27. With his 30th victory, Kramer became the Dutchman with the most World Cup wins in history. He leads the World Cup with 300 points, Lee has 160 and Bergsma 150.

Next week the last Essent ISU World Cup of 2013 will be held in Berlin (GER).

Essent ISU World Cup Speed Skating - Astana (KAZ) - Medal Winners Sunday

500m Men (2)

1	Keiichiro Nagashima	JPN	34.69 TR
2	Tae-Bum Mo	KOR	34.87
3	Artyom Kuznetsov	RUS	34.92

1000m Ladies

1	Heather Richardson	USA	1:14.22 TR
2	Brittany Bowe	USA	1:14.78
3	Olga Fatkulina	RUS	1:15.18

10,000m Men

1	Sven Kramer	NED	13:02.38
2	Alexis Contin	FRA	13:14.64
3	Patrick Beckert	GER	13:18.73

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

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