

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games **Speed Skating Men's 1500 m Preview**

After a day's break the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games Speed Skating competition will continue on Sunday in the Adler Arena with the Men's 1500m.

Several skaters have proven this season that they have the potential to win this distance. The last pair will feature Koen Verweij (NED) against Joey Mantia (USA). Verweij is a real middle distance skater, he skated the fastest last lap in the 1000m race last Wednesday. Bart Swings (BEL) was almost as fast as Verweij but finished fourth in the 5000m and is considered a potential medal candidate and if he does win he will be the first born Belgian to win since 1948. He will start in pair 14, just after the reigning champion Mark Tuitert (NED). Then more or less every other skater after can take a medal including the 1000m champion Stefan Groothuis in pair 7 or Jan Blokhuijsen (pair 2), both Dutch. Denis Yuskov is the main Russian hope, Sverre Lunde Pedersen the Norwegian, and Zbigniew Bródka the Polish. Also Shani Davis and Brian Hansen (USA) are also considered strong contenders.

Some skaters approach the distance as sprinters with a fast opening and then they slow down significantly at the end; others approach it with a careful opening and try to maintain a constant speed. The best races usually have a last lap that is only a second slower than the first lap, but skaters often lose a second per lap.

For more information, full entry lists and results please see: www.sochi2014.com and www.isu.org

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