

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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2014 Sochi Olympic Winter Games **Short Track Speed Skating Men's 1000 m**

The Short Track Speed Skating competition at the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games continued on Saturday with the Men's 1000 m quarter, semi and finals.

Men's 1000 m

To the delight of the home crowd Victor An and Vladimir Grigorev clenched the gold and silver medal respectively and Sjinkie Knegt finished third, winning the first medal in Short Track Speed Skating for the Netherlands.

The Men's competition started with the quarter finals where the two fastest skaters qualify for the semi finals. In the third heat, Charles Hamelin (CAN) lost his balance at the starting line getting a false start. Then during the race Hamelin lost his footing and fell taking Eduardo Alvarez (USA) with him removing them from any chance of getting a medal. In the final heat, JR Celski (USA) stumbled over a block and fell into the padding and Olivier Jean (CAN) leader of the pack for three laps, suddenly lost his second position with only two laps left to go and did not qualify for the semifinals.

With no Canadian or American skaters in the semifinals, the battle would be Asia against Europe. In the first race Vladimir Grigorev (RUS) crossed the line first, quickly followed by Da Woon Sin (KOR). Han-Bin Lee (KOR) and Sjinkie Knegt bumped into each other and after a review by the referees, Knegt was advanced to the A Final while Lee got a penalty. In the second race Victor An (RUS) and Dajing Wu (CHIN) qualified for the A Final.

Five skaters went to the start line of the A Final, An, Wu, Grigorev, Sin and Knegt. The crowd was on the edge of their seats as soon as the gun went off. Knegt took the lead for the first lap, but the Russians quickly took over firstly by Grigorev then An. The Chinese and Korean skater collided and a block went flying. Knegt took advantage of the confusion to place himself in third position to grab the bronze medal.

Victor An, gold medalist said: "Of course I'm happy. I'm very happy, but I'm even more happy because Russia managed to win both the gold and silver."

Vladimir Grigorev silver medalist said: "I was speaking to Victor earlier and it was our strategy for us to go fast so it would be impossible for the other athletes to chase us."

Sjinkie Knegt who got the bronze commented: "I can't find any words. I'm so happy. This is the first short track medal for the Netherlands, and I still can't believe it."

The Sochi 2014 Short Track Speed Skating competition continues on February 18 with the Ladies' 1000m and Men's 500m heats and the Ladies' 3000 m Relay Final.

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

For further information please contact:

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