

December 13, 2014

For immediate release

ISU World Cup Speed Skating 2014/15 - Heerenveen (NED)

Day 2

Sven Kramer (NED) took the first home gold in the fourth leg of ISU World Cup Speed Skating in Heerenveen, when the Dutch men clinched the top four spots in the 5000m. In the Ladies' 1000m Heather Richardson and Brittany Bowe topped the podium for the USA. The Dutch ladies continued their winning streak in the Team Pursuit and thus won the final World Cup ranking. Russian rocket Pavel Kulizhnikov skated his first sub-1:09 to take gold in the 1000m.

A total of 5 skaters improved their personal best times on Saturday. Among these there was a NR for Denmark (Viktor Hald Thorup 6:31.43) and a National Junior record for Sweden (Nils van der Poel, 6:23.40)

American double in 1000m ladies

Similar to last week USA skaters Brittany Bowe and Heather Richardson topped the 1000m podium, but they swapped places. This time Richardson took gold and Bowe silver. Richardson equalled the track record of Ireen Wüst (NED) with 1:14.63. Opening in 17.76 she continued with laps of 27.4 and 29.4.

Judith Hesse (GER), who took bronze in the 500m on Friday, set 1:16.12 and she was the fastest before Richardson took the ice in pair six. Bowe entered the rink right after Richardson. She opened in 17.85 and stayed well above Richardson's time with a first lap in 27.6, but after a strong final lap of 29.2 she was only five hundredths behind Richardson. "It couldn't be closer", said Bowe. "Even though we don't train together anymore, we have been competitive for years on the highest level in inline and we are much alike."

Wüst could not come near her own track record after a tough 3000m on Friday. "I didn't train much on speed", she said. Wüst finished in 1:15.75. Her pair mate Karolina Erbanová (CZE), who almost lost her balance in the final straight, was still faster than Hesse in 1:16.03. In the final pair, Qishi Li (CHN) skated 1:15.71, while Marrit Leenstra (NED) finished in a disappointing 1:16.38, rank 8.

Li leads the World Cup with 310 points, Leenstra is second, with 276 points, and Karolina Erbanová (CZE) is third with 201. Wüst (NED) is fourth with 185.

All Dutch podium in 5000m

Sven Kramer (NED) set the seventh fastest time ever skated in Thialf (6:12.74) to win the 5000m. He needed to be fast because his main rival, Jorrit Bergsma (NED), who won in Berlin last week, was due up in a later pair. Indeed Kramer's time was fast enough for gold. Bergsma was second and Wouter Olde Heuvel (NED) third.

Olde Heuvel was the first to set a time, he started with 29 laps, but from 3000m his laps went into the 30s to finish in 6:19.58. Kramer started on the same pace, but then managed to bring his laps down to even faster 29s in the second half of the race. When Kramer was asked whether he could have gone faster if he had so much left in the tank, he simply said: "I didn't need to."

Kramer was right. Bergsma did not lose much, but he lost. With 6:14.08 he was more than three seconds faster than his winning time last week. Sverre Lunde Pedersen (NOR), on the podium last week, was now fifth with 6:22.55 and Bob de Jong (NED) reached fourth place with 6:20.49.

The fastest skater in the B-division was 18-year-old Nils van der Poel, who beat Håvard Bøkko (NOR). Bøkko did not use his wild card for the A-division because the chance to skate in Hamar's A-division was better with a B-division start in Heerenveen.

De Jong retained his lead in the World Cup ranking with 280 points. Rumyantsev is second with 240, while Lunde Pedersen is third with 225 points.

Kulizhnikov takes 1000m below 1:09

Pavel Kulizhnikov skated his second personal best time of this World Cup weekend. After his staggering 34.63 in the 500m on Friday, the 20-year-old Russian was the only one to set a sub-1:09 time in the 1000m on Saturday. Kjeld Nuis and Hein Otterspeer (both NED) were second and third.

Three skaters finished in 1:09.52, Denis Kuzin (KAZ), Shani Davis (USA) and Nico Ihle (GER) were all 0.2 behind Olympic medallist Denny Morrison (CAN), who said that he was happy with that time after a summer with little training. Alexej Yesin (RUS) was the first to be faster than Morrison, with 1:09.32 he was eventually fourth.

Otterspeer managed a first lap of 25.2 after a 16.55 opener and finished in 1:09.06 with a 27.2 final lap. Nuis started with 16.6 and lost a bit in the first lap, but with a 27.1 finish he managed beat Otterspeer's time. However, Kulizhnikov disturbed the Dutch party in the final pair, when he pulled out a 16.25 start, a lap of 25.1 to finish with a 27.4 lap.

Kulizhnikov said that he knew he could improve Nuis' time, but he had expected even a faster time than his 1:08.77. The former king of the 1000m, Davis, commented: "His technique is almost flawless. The only thing the kid doesn't have is decent endurance, but he gets away with it."

Kulizhnikov leads the World Cup with 350 points, Nuis is back in second place with 251 and Schwarz has 245.

Dutch ladies win the Team Pursuit World Cup

The Dutch ladies had no trouble to win the Team Pursuit. Carlijn Achtereekte, Linda de Vries and Marrit Leenstra just missed the track record, finishing in 2:59.69. The German ladies, Bente Kraus, Isabell Ost and Claudia Pechstein finished second in 3:01.96 and Poland (Aleksandra Goss, Katarzyna Wozniak and Luiza Zlotkowska) completed the podium with 3:02.31. The German

Olympic Champions of 2010 who failed to qualify for the Olympic Games last year, were really excited about their come-back.

The Dutch, unbeaten for two years, won the World Cup with 350 points. Germany came second with 240 and Poland third with 236.

The Japanese ladies dropped outside the top-3, but still qualified for the World Single Distance Championships based on their ranking. So did Russia and Canada, while Korea and China are added based on their time ranking.

For full results of the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series 2014/15 please refer to <http://www.isuresults.eu/> and <http://www.isu.org/en/speed-skating/series/isu-world-cup-speed-skating>

The ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series is available as a live stream on the ISU Skating Channel. Please note that geoblocking may be required in certain territories <http://livemanager.eurovision.edgesuite.net/isu/index.html> and you can also follow how

The ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series continues tomorrow in Heerenveen with the Ladies' and Men's second 500m and the 1500m as well as the Mass Start.

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ISU World Cup Speed Skating Berlin (GER) - Medal Winners day 2

1000 m Ladies

1	Heather Richardson	USA	1:14.63=TR
2	Brittany Bowe	USA	1:14.68
3	Qishi Li	CHN	1:15.71

1000 m Men

1	Pavel Kulizhnikov	RUS	1:08.77 P
2	Kjeld Nuis	NED	1:09.04
3	Hein Otterspeer	NED	1:09.06

5000 m Men

1	Sven Kramer	NED	6:12.74
2	Jorrit Bergsma	NED	6:14.08
3	Wouter Olde Heuvel	NED	6:19.58

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Team Pursuit Ladies

1	C. Achtereekte, M. Leenstra, L. de Vries	NED	2:59.69
2	B. Kraus, I. Ost, C. Pechstein	GER	3:01.96
3	L. Zlotkowska, K. Wozniak, A. Goss	POL	3:02.31

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