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For immediate release

**ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final 2014/15 - Erfurt (GER)  
Saturday - Day 2**

Heather Richardson (USA) and Pavel Kulizhnikov (RUS) won the Grand World Cup and the 20,000 dollars that came with it, in the Final in Erfurt, Germany. Kulizhnikov did not have to race, as his victory had become clear on Saturday.

Nao Kodaira was the first Japanese woman since Kyoko Shimazaki in 1991 to win the 500m World Cup. Martina Sáblíková (CZE) won the long distance (3000/5000m) World Cup for a unique 9th time in a row, while Brittany Bowe (USA) won the 1000m Cup and Ivanie Blondin (CAN) the first Mass Start Cup. Seung-Hoon Lee (KOR) had already secured the Cup in the last Mass Start and did not travel to Erfurt. In the men's 1500m, Denny Morrison (CAN) sneaked from fifth to first place with his win on the final day.

It was the first year that the World Cup Final was the conclusion of the speed skating season.

**Ladies**

**Sáblíková wins the 3000m World Cup for the 9th consecutive year**

The day started with the ladies' 3000m. Sáblíková did not even have to race to add to her longest winning streak in the World Cup, as she was the leader with 430 points and Ireen Wüst (NED), the only one who was in her vicinity with 350 points, was not on the start list.

However, Sáblíková's thirst for winning seemed undiminished. She finished in 4:04.06 to take the gold medal and add another 150 point to end the season with a total of 580 points. Although her winning streak of nine is unprecedented, Sáblíková is not on top of the all-time winner's list. Gunda Niemann-Stirnemann won the long-distance World Cup ten times, and she was second three times.

Claudia Pechstein (GER) needed to finish top-4 to overtake Wüst and she managed to do just that. The German lady won this Cup three times in the past twenty years. This was the 11th time she was second and she also finished third twice. With a total of 16 podium finishes she holds the record in the ladies' field (equal to Bob de Jong in the men's field).

Marije Joling (NED), who had been number five in the ranking, set the second time (4:05.64) to finish third overall. Diane Valkenburg (NED) finished her season with bronze medal in 4:07.85 on the final day. She ended up sixth in the final ranking.

With her win, Sáblíková took a (temporary) lead in the battle for the Grand World Cup, with 946 points, while Richardson had 910 and Bowe 835.

### **Kodaira first Japanese since 1991 to win ladies' 500m World Cup**

On the final day only two contenders were left for the 500m World Cup. Sang-Hwa Lee (KOR) was in the lead with 880 points, but absent in Erfurt. Number two, Nao Kodaira (JPN), was only 60 points behind and needed to finish top-5 to reach the top.

Richardson was ranked third and she easily held on to her podium spot, when she beat Brittany Bowe (US) head-to-head and took the victory in 37.77. Bowe got the silver with 37.97.

Kodaira completed the podium in 38.49 and thus secured the 500m World Cup with 926 points. The absent Sang-Hwa Lee finished runner-up with 880 points. Bowe passed Judith Hesse (GER) to end up fourth behind Richardson.

In the Grand World Cup, Richardson passed Sábliková, who still had 946. Bowe got nearer with 895 points.

### **Bowe ends up on top after a close 1000m season**

Four skaters were eying the 1000m World Cup. Qishi Li (CHN) was in the lead, with MArrit Leenstra (NED), World Champion Bowe and Karolina Erbanová (CZE) close behind. Richardson was fifth and for her second place overall was the highest rank possible.

Richardson skated before the others and took the track record (which was 1:15.34 by Bowe) in 1:15.13. Bowe recaptured the record with 1:14.61 in the next pair. She kept Erbanová more than two seconds behind.

Leenstra needed to be faster than Richardson to beat Bowe in the general classification, while Li needed to be top-five. Neither one of them succeeded. Leenstra finished third with 1:15.78, and Li needed 1:16.76 to finish sixth. She came 0.03 seconds short of the fifth place and the overall victory in the World Cup.

Bowe eventually grabbed the 1000m World Cup with 510 points. Leenstra was second with 507 and Li third with 485. Erbanová and Richardson were fourth and fifth with 407 and 400 points respectively.

### **Ivanie Blondin (CAN) wins first ever Mass Start World Cup**

At the start of the final event, the mass start, Richardson and Bowe were the only contenders left for the Grand World Cup and the 20,000 dollars of prize money. Even a win would not be enough for Sábliková. Bowe needed to win the mass start to overtake Richardson in the Grand World Cup standings.

Meanwhile Mass Start World Cup leader Ivanie Blondin (CAN) and the World Champion Irene Schouten (NED) fought for the Mass Start World Cup win. With so many tactics involved, the start of the race had more glances than speed.

With ten laps to go, Pechstein decided to try and escape, but Mariska Huisman (NED) countered, while Bowe and Richardson followed. Huisman had hardly taken over the lead trying to control Pechstein, when Šabliková came around the pack and escaped. Richardson quickly followed and took the sprint at 8 laps from the finish, before Šabliková and Schouten.

Richardson dropped back after the sprint, while Šabliková kept a fierce speed. Bowe tried to follow but couldn't keep up with the pace. Richardson took the 3 points far behind Šabliková at the last sprint and was certain of the Grand World Cup.

Šabliková won the race and everybody looked for the battle between Blondin and Schouten. That battle never came because the Dutch lady crashed in the final lap. Blondin lost the sprint for the remaining podium places against Nana Takagi (JPN, silver) and Francesca Lollobrigida (ITA, bronze), but she got the Cup with 466 points.

Schouten ended up second with 432 points and Šabliková was third with 405 points. She eventually finished second in the Grand World Cup. Richardson won it with 1195 points, Šabliková had 1096 and Bowe finished third with 1045 points.

## **Men**

### **Double Russian success in 500m World Cup**

Pavel Kulizhnikov (RUS) did not start, as he had secured both the World Cup in this distance (930 points) and the Grand World Cup. Runner-up in the ranking, Laurent Dubreuil (CAN) was certain of the second place with 651 points, but there was a fierce battle for the bronze.

Absent Tae-Bum Mo (KOR) was ranked third with 495 points, but Artur Was (POL, 490), Nico Ihle (GER, 468), Michel Mulder (NED, 440), Jan Smeekens (NED, 435) and Ruslan Murashov (RUS, 415) were chasing him.

In absence of Kulizhnikov, his teammate Murashov won in 34.97. Mulder finished second in 35.10 sharing the silver with Dubreuil. Ihle finished in fourth with 35.15.

Murashov thus took the third podium spot in the 500m World Cup, behind Kulizhnikov and Dubreuil. Mulder climbed from rank nine to rank four with Ihle and Was in fifth and sixth spot. The absent Mo had to settle for seventh place.

### **Morrison surprises in the 1500m World Cup**

Kjeld Nuis (NED) led the 1500m World Cup with 336 points and his main competitor was Sverre Lunde Pedersen (NOR), who had 285. Jan Szymanski (POL) and Wouter Olde Heuvel (NED) followed with 261 and Denny Morrison was fifth with 259.

Bart Swings (BEL) had just set a very decent 1:46.81, with a fast 28.5 final lap, when Morrison got out and approached the distance as a sprinter who won the 1000m the day before. He was paired

with sprinter Thomas Krol (NED), who had the fastest opener, but after laps of 25.7, 27.2 and 29.4, track record holder Morrison reached the fifth time ever skated in Erfurt: 1:46.15.

Szymanski and Olde Heuvel did not even keep their times below 1:48, at which point Morrison was certain of the podium. But then Nuis and Lunde Pedersen started out slower. Nuis lost in the laps but was leading over the Norwegian, who had laps of 27.0 and 27.5. The cautiously started Lunde Pedersen left the Dutchman behind in the final lap. With 27.8, he reached 1:46.51, while Nuis' last lap was 29.4 to finish in 1:47.55.

Happy faces for the Norwegians, but then it dawned that not Lunde Pedersen, but Morrison had won the World Cup, with 409 points in total. Lunde Pedersen came 4 points short and Nuis dropped to third overall with 381 points. Lunde Pedersen was also second behind Morrison on the distance podium, with Swings taking bronze.

### **Strong finish for Swings in Mass Start**

There was no battle for the Mass Start World Cup, as the absent Seung-Hoon Lee had secured that one with 450 points. The Grand World Cup was out of reach as well, but the honour of winning the last race of the season was at stake.

Behind Lee in the ranking were Andrea Giovannini (ITA, 286 points) and Bart Swings (237); Jorrit Bergsma (NED) was 77 points behind Swings. In his home country, Marco Weber took the first intermediate sprint, but Giovannini wanted to conserve his second place on the World Cup podium and won the second sprint.

After that, Bergsma accelerated with Nicola Tumolero (ITA) and Swings on his tail. It didn't take long before Lunde Pedersen joined the small leading group as well. Swings, Lunde Pedersen and Bergsma dropped Tumolero and took the sprint points with four laps to go.

The trio continued to decide the winner among them. With one lap to go, Bergsma tried to escape full speed, but Swings managed to get more speed coming out of the final turn, while Lunde Pedersen settled for the bronze. In a head to head sprint it took a photo finish to establish that Swings had been at the line 0.02 second earlier than Bergsma.

As a result, Swings collected a total of 387 points to pass Giovannini, who finished fifth and ended with 362 points. Bergsma was fourth. In the Grand World Cup Swings had 806 points and moved up to rank two behind Kulizhnikov, with Lunde Pedersen, 786 points, overtaking Nuis as well.

For full results of the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series 2014/15 please refer to <http://www.isureports.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>

The ISU World Cup Speed Skating and the entire 2014/15 Speed Skating Season has come to a close.

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## ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final Erfurt (GER) - Medal Winners day 2

### 3000m Ladies

1	Martina Sáblíková	CZE	4:04.06
2	Marije Joling	NED	4:05.64
3	Diane Valkenburg	NED	4:07.85

### 500m Ladies

1	Heather Richardson	USA	37.77
2	Brittany Bowe	USA	37.97
3	Nao Kodaira	JPN	38.49

### 500m Men

1	Ruslan Murashov	RUS	34.97
2	Michel Mulder	NED	35.10(9)
2	Laurent Dubreuil	CAN	35.10(9)

### 1000m Ladies

1	Brittany Bowe	USA	1:14.61 TR
2	Heather Richardson	USA	1:15.13 TR
3	Marrit Leenstra	NED	1:15.78

### 1500m Men

1	Denny Morrison	CAN	1:46.15
2	Sverre Lunde Pedersen	NOR	1:46.51
3	Bart Swings	BEL	1:46.81

### Mass Start Ladies

1	Martina Sáblíková	CZE	9:01.76
2	Nana Takagi	JPN	9:16.52
3	Francesca Lollobrigida	ITA	9:16.61

### Mass Start Men

1	Bart Swings	BEL	8:10.29
2	Jorrit Bergsma	NED	8:10.31
3	Sverre Lunde Pedersen	NOR	8:11.43

## World Cup Final Ranking

### 500m Ladies

1	Nao Kodaira	JPN	926
2	Sang-Hwa Lee	KOR	880
3	Heather Richardson	USA	710

### 500m Men

1	Pavel Kulizhnikov	RUS	1130
2	Laurent Dubreuil	CAN	896
3	Ruslan Murashov	RUS	665

### 1000m Ladies

1	Brittany Bowe	USA	510
2	Marrit Leenstra	NED	507
3	Qishi Li	CHN	485

### 1500m Men

1	Denny Morrison	CAN	409
2	Sverre Lunde Pedersen	NOR	405
3	Kjeld Nuis	NED	381

### 3000/5000m Ladies

1	Martina Sáblíková	CZE	580
2	Claudia Pechstein	GER	360
3	Ireen Wüst	NED	350

### Mass Start Ladies

1	Ivanie Blondin	CAN	466
2	Irene Schouten	NED	432
3	Martina Sáblíková	CZE	405

### Mass Start Men

1	Seung-Hoon Lee	KOR	450
2	Bart Swings	BEL	387
3	Andrea Giovannini	ITA	362

## Grand World Cup Ladies

1	Heather Richardson	USA	1195
2	Martina Sáblíková	CZE	1096
3	Brittany Bowe	USA	1045

## Grand World Cup Men

1	Pavel Kulizhnikov	RUS	985
2	Bart Swings	BEL	806
3	Sverre Lunde Pedersen	NOR	786

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