

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: AVENUE JUSTE-OLIVIER 17 CH 1006 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 77 E-MAIL: media@isu.ch

November 12, 2015

For immediate release

ISU World Cup Speed Skating Preview

All eyes will be on Pavel Kulizhnikov (RUS) when the international Speed Skating season kicks off with the first leg of the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series in Calgary on November 13-15. The Russian winner of last season's Grand World Cup showed excellent early season form, when he set 34.27 in the 500m during a trial run at the Canadian Olympic Oval last week. Jeremy Wotherspoon's world record (34.03) is at stake on Friday and on Sunday.

Other individual events at the first World Cup weekend are the 1000m, the 1500m, and the Mass Start for Men and Ladies and the Ladies' 3000m as well as the Men's 5000m. The Men and Ladies will also compete in a Team Pursuit and a Team Sprint.

Dutch absentees

If Kulizhnikov is not able to beat Wotherspoon's 500m World Record in Calgary he will get another shot in Salt Lake City (USA), where Wotherspoon set his 34.03 in 2007, one week later. Olympic 500m champion Michel Mulder (NED) and silver medallist Jan Smeeckens (NED) will not be present in the first four legs of the ISU World Cup series. The two Dutch sprinters failed to qualify at their national trials however Smeeckens is entered as a substitute in the first World Cup.

Cyclist Sábliková

Ireen Wüst (NED) is another surprise absentee in the first four World Cup events. Her preparation for the new season was hampered by a head injury and the Olympic 3000m champion quit the Dutch trials after a disappointing 1500m performance. Last season's combined 3000/5000m winner Martina Sábliková (CZE) qualified as a cyclist for the time trial at the Olympic Summer Games 2016 in Rio de Janeiro. She finished 12th in the time trial at the World Cycling Championships in Richmond (USA) this summer, and she will be back on the ice in Calgary.

Norwegian challenger

In the Men's long distances Sverre Lunde Pedersen (NOR) showed excellent early season form when he set a non-official 3000m World Record during a Calgary trial run last week. The Norwegian finished second in both the 1500m and the 5000/10,000m World Cup, and third in the Grand World Cup last season. He will challenge last season's long distance World Cup winner Jorrit Bergsma (NED) and Sven Kramer (NED).

Olympic Mass Start

The Canadian home public will look out for the Mass Start in Calgary on Sunday night. Ivania Blondin (CAN) won last year's Mass Start World Cup and she's now looking for Olympic silverware. The IOC announced that the Mass Start will be on the Olympic program at the 2018 Winter Olympic Games last June. With this decision the Mass Start will probably be more competitive after last season's two headed battle between Blondin and Irene Schouten (NED). This season the other competitors will probably focus team tactics on last season's main contenders.

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

HEADQUARTERS ADDRESS: AVENUE JUSTE-OLIVIER 17 CH 1006 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND
TELEPHONE (+41) 21 612 66 66 TELEFAX (+41) 21 612 66 77 E-MAIL: media@isu.ch

The Team Sprint is another event which has gained importance. The three-lap-team event was a demonstration event at last season's World Cup final, but it will be an official event at four World Cup legs this season.

Grand World Cup

After two World Cup events in North America, Calgary CAN (November 13-15) and Salt Lake City USA (November 20-22) the series will continue with three legs in Europe: Inzell GER (December 4-6), Heerenveen NED (December 11-13) and Stavanger NOR (January 29-31). The World Cup season will culminate in the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final in Heerenveen on March 11-13. Every single distance will have a World Cup winner and the Grand World Cup will be awarded to the best female and male skater based on a grand total of points earned from all World Cup races throughout the season.

Additional information

[ISU Speed Skating Media Guide](#)

Results: <http://www.isureresults.eu/>

Live Stream on [ISU Skating Channel](#) NB: geoblocking may be required in certain territories

Twitter: [@ISU_Speed](#)

Instagram: [isuspeedskating](#)

Facebook: [ISUSpeedSkating](#)

Youtube: [SkatingISU](#)

For further information please contact

ISU Media Coordinator

Selina Vanier

Phone: +41 21 612 66 66

email: vanier@isu.ch