

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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For immediate release

ISU World Cup Speed Skating 2015/16 – Inzell (GER) Day 2

Kjeld Nuis (NED) and Brittany Bowe (USA) rewrote the record boards in the Men's and Ladies' 1000m in Inzell on Saturday. The Dutchman won in 1:08.31 and the American lady took gold in 1:14.01.

Jorrit Bergsma secured the 22nd Dutch Men's 5000m World Cup win in 6:17.35 and Japan won the Ladies' Team Pursuit to take the 1000th World Cup gold medal in female events.

Nuis beats Davis' track record

In absence of Pavel Kulizhnikov (RUS) his compatriot Denis Yuskov gave his rivals a tough task in the 1000m, when he set the second time ever in Inzell with 1:08.55 in the third pair. Shani Davis' (USA) track record of 1:08.45 was at stake.

Kai Verbij (NED) came close to Yuskov in the seventh pair. The Dutchman was well below Yuskov's time after 600m, but his 26.8 in the final lap could not match Yuskov's 26.0. Verbij finished in 1:08.60, the second time with only three races to go. In the next pair Yuskov's time still held when Joey Mantia (USA) set 1:08.81 (4).

It was up to Kjeld Nuis to challenge Yuskov in the penultimate pair. The Dutchman, who was second behind Kulizhnikov in the 1000m in Salt Lake City two weeks ago, took on record holder Davis himself. The Dutchman and the American did not start as fast as Verbij, but they were faster than Yuskov. In the first full lap Nuis made the difference with a 25.1 lap time, leaving Davis behind and paving the way for gold in a new track record (1:08.31). At the final cross-over Nuis was lucky to come from the outer-lane. He took advantage of his priority and Davis had to let him pass and he ended up 11th in 1:09.49.

Gerben Jorritsma (NED) had to skate alone because of Kulizhnikov's withdrawal. The Dutchman finished 10th in 1:09.26 and thus retained his second place with 198 points in the World Cup standings. Kulizhnikov dropped to third place with 180 points and Nuis grabbed the lead with 250.

US Ladies far ahead of the rest

The American ladies were superior again in the ladies' 1000m. Before Heather Richardson-Bergsma and Brittany Bowe took the ice in the final pair, no one even dared to look at the track record. Bowe and Richardson shattered Christine Nesbitt's (CAN) 1:14.84 from 2011. It was a close race, but Bowe had a slight advantage after 200 and 600 metres. She finished with the strongest final lap in 1:14.01 and Richardson was also well below Nesbitt's time with 1:14.52.

None of the other ladies had managed to skate below 1:15. Korean 500m specialist Sang-Hwa Lee was best of the rest with 1:15.27 to take the bronze ahead of Qishi Li (1:15.47, CHN) and Marrit Leenstra (1:15.53, NED).

Bowe strengthened her lead in the World Cup standings with 280 points. Richardson is second with 250 points and Leenstra is third with 155.

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Bergsma takes expected gold

The last non-Dutchman to win a 5000m World Cup race was Lee Seung-Hoon (KOR) in Berlin on 19 November 2010 and Jorrit Bergsma had won the last four 5000m World Cup races on German ice. With Sven Kramer (NED) absent and Ted-Jan Bloemen (CAN) injured no one seemed to be able keep Bergsma from securing the 22nd Dutch 5000m World Cup win in a row.

Although the track had been fast enough for track records in the Men's and Ladies' 1000m, the ice did seem to be equally fit for fast long distance times. Most skaters were much slower than their personal bests and Sven Kramer's track record (6:11.76) remained well beyond reach. Arjan Stroetinga (NED) was the only one in the A-division to skate a personal best when he beat his own previous Inzell time (6:24.26) to set 6:21.66 in the third pair.

Stroetinga's time stood until Sverre Lunde Pedersen (NOR) took on Andrea Giovannini (ITA) in the sixth pair. The Norwegian was the first to beat the 6:20 mark when he clocked 6:19.52. In the penultimate pair Peter Michael (NZL) challenged Lunde Pedersen's time with a quick start. He left Erik Jan Kooiman (NED) behind but could not keep up his pace and the public was treated to a ferocious battle between the New-Zealander and the Dutchman. Michael (6:23.51) eventually beat Kooiman (6:23.56) by 0.05 seconds. They finished 5th and 6th.

Bergsma took on Patrick Beckert (GER) in the final pair. He left his German opponent well behind and skated to gold in 6:17.35. He now has won the last five 5000m World Cup races on German ice. Beckert had to settle for 7th place in 6:23.76.

Bergsma took the lead in the 5000/10,000m World Cup with 250 points. Kramer is second with 180 points and Bloemen third with 170 points.

Team Pursuit Ladies

The Netherlands had won the previous ten Team Pursuit World Cup races before they took on World Champions Japan, but Dutch ladies struggled this Saturday. Marrit Leenstra started fast and Marije Joling had difficulties keeping up. Once the team got their act together they managed to close the gap with Japan, but they ran out of energy too quick. The sisters Miho and Nana Takagi and with Misaki Oshigiri just kept on going and took the lead back. They finished in a new track record time of 2:59.08. The Netherlands had to settle for silver in 2:59.69. Russia's Natalya Voronina, Olga Graf and Yelizaveta Kazelina took bronze in 3:00.36.

Japan and the Netherlands top the World Cup ranking with 180 points each and Russia is third with 105 points.

Additional information

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ISU World Cup Speed Skating 2015/16 – Inzell (GER) Day 2, medal winners

1000m Men

1	Kjeld Nuis	NED	1:08.31 TR
2	Denis Yuskov	RUS	1:08.55
3	Kai Verbij	NED	1:08.60

1000m Ladies

1	Brittany Bowe	USA	1:14.01 TR
2	Heather Richardson-Bergsma	USA	1:14.52
3	Sang-Hwa Lee	KOR	1:15.27

5000m Men

1	Jorrit Bergsma	NED	6:17.35
2	Sverre Lunde Pedersen	NOR	6:19.52
3	Arjan Stroetinga	NED	6:21.66

Team Pursuit Ladies

1	Miho Takagi, Nana Takagi, Misaki Oshigiri	JAP	2:59.08 TR
2	Marrit Leenstra, Antoinette de Jong, Marije Joling	NED	2:59.69
3	Natalya Voronina, Olga Graf, Yelizaveta Kazelina	RUS	3:00.36