

Press release

11 November 2017

South Korean skaters flex muscles with six medals on day one in Shanghai

If the Dordrecht stop allowed the other contending countries to see some light, powerhouse South Korea seems to be looking to close that door now that the Audi ISU World Cup Short Track has moved to Asia.

The country and its excellent skaters took six medals across three events on day one in Shanghai and only suffered a shutout in the Ladies 500m sprint.

Leading the way were champions Hwang Dae Heon and Shim Suk Hee, while Kim Do Kyoum saw his stock rise with two bronze medals.

Shim said after winning the Ladies 1500m, her second gold this world cup season: "It's good. The reason I'm happy is that through this race I can be sure of my ability. Now I feel very confident."

Canada put up a valiant fight but could not prevent another South Korean one-two.

Marianne St-Gelais (CAN) took bronze after she and teammate Valerie Maltais had split the South Koreans for much of the race.

They looked to be blocking Choi Min Jeong from reaching race leader Shim but St-Gelais was evasive about the strategy.

"Sometimes having a strategy can do the opposite, so instead of playing for us, it's playing against us. We know if a teammate is in front of me, I'm not trying to do something bad on her and vice versa," she said.

"We stayed focused on the race. With four laps to go, so many things can happen in short track but I was confident I or both of us could get on the podium."

This is the third South Korean one-two this world cup series after the men did it twice in Budapest.

Kim, meanwhile, is further proof of South Korea's deep talent pool, taking bronze in the men's 1500m and 500m, having led for much of the former race before compatriot Hwang pulled off a stunning overtaking move in the final corner to jump from third to gold.

"I want to thank Team Korea for their support. Everyone, thank you," Kim said.

Dutch legend Sjinkie Knegt was also blindsided by Hwang in that race and had to settle for silver.

“He surprised me. I wasn’t expecting him. I was trying to look forward to pass the number one and then he jumped in,” he said.

“It is what it is. I think tactically I did well. Too bad I finished second.”

China’s Wu Dajing gave the partisan crowd something to cheer about by winning a breakneck men’s 500m final at the expense of the South Koreans.

He said of the chasing duo Kim and Seo Yi Ra, “Actually I knew where they were the whole race. I just had to use my speed.”

But the two-time Olympic medallist was not ready to be drawn into talk of a rivalry.

“At that moment, I just saw them as any two opponents. My opponents are all the same. They just happen to be from the same country.

“Anyone behind me is an enemy,” he added.

Wu’s gold is only China’s second individual medal this world cup season. Their relay teams have fared better, medalling in three of the four races so far.

“I feel we’re getting into shape now that the Olympics is nearing,” he said. “[But] my condition is still not great and I need more races.”

In a repeat of the Dordrecht leg, there was no South Korean representation in the Ladies 500m final. The 1500m world cup leader Choi and Kim Ye Jin were eliminated at the quarterfinal stage.

A fall with half a lap to go left race leader Martina Valcepina (ITA) distraught and dramatically changed the outcome.

Canada’s Kim Boutin took advantage to win her first gold medal – and fourth individual medal – of the world cup season.

Silver went to Arianna Fontana (ITA), while Sofia Prosvirnova (RUS) benefitted from Valcepina’s misfortune to collect bronze.

Regarding the finish, Boutin said: “I don’t know what to say but I was fortunate. A lot of things happened.

“It’s not the race I expected but it’s a good thing. I’m pretty confident about the (Olympic) Games coming up. I’m pretty comfortable.”

Fontana, the veteran of the Italian team, felt for her compatriot, who was inconsolable after the race.

“At the start, I saw her going and I was like, OK, at least someone is doing good,” she said.

“I’m really sorry about her falling because she was going to bring home the gold medal. I’m sure she’s really upset and I hope she’ll use this anger in the relay.”

For the five-time Olympic medallist, however, the prospects are looking up.

“I feel better than the first two world cups. I feel I’m more in the race,” she said.

The Audi ISU World Cup Short Track continues on Sunday November 12 at the Oriental Sports Center.

Full [results and classifications](#). Follow the discussion on social media by using **#WCShortTrack** and **#ShortTrackSkating** and watch the live stream on the [ISU Skating Channel](#).

About Audi ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating 2017/18 Series and qualification system for PyeongChang 2018

The Audi ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating consists of four events during the Olympic season; Budapest (September 28-October 1), Dordrecht (October 5-8), Shanghai (November 9-12) and Seoul (November 16-19). The 2017/18 Series is also the Olympic Qualifying events for the 2018 PyeongChang Olympic Winter Games.

The competitions have a single distance character and are held in separate sessions. The first two days of the event are dedicated to all Qualifying Rounds. On the third and fourth days, the last Qualifying Rounds take place before the World Cup session. A and B Finals are held for each distance 500m, 1000m and 1500m. Skaters qualify for A and B Finals only through the Semi-Finals. Men and Ladies also compete in the Team Relay races, 3000m for Ladies and 5000m for Men. Each team consists of four competing Skaters. Skaters gain World Cup points from each distance they compete in during the Audi ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating series. The Skater with the most World Cup points at the end of the season wins the distance World Cup.

A total of 110 Olympic spaces are up for grabs during the four Audi ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating events. As the host country, the Republic of Korea automatically qualifies five Ladies and five Men. However, all other ISU Members must compete in the Audi ISU World Cup series to qualify up to five Ladies and five Men (quota including a qualified Relay Team), or up to three Ladies and three Men (quota excluding a qualified Relay Team).

Quota places per gender are earned based on the results achieved by the ISU Members competing at the four Audi ISU World Cup Events. Skaters ranked within the top 32 (top eight for the Team Relay) in the World Cup classification of the individual distances will qualify for PyeongChang 2018. If an ISU Member has more than 3 Skaters ranked in the top 32 or decides not to use a spot, skaters on the waiting list will qualify (e.g. athlete ranked 33 in a distance World Cup Classification will take the next available spot).