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Helsinki, Finland

New kids on the block in Helsinki

After Helsinki hosted the ISU World Junior Championships 2017 the world's fastest youngsters will return to the Oulunkylän liikuntapuisto outdoor rink for the second ISU Junior World Cup of the 2018/19 season. Canada and the Netherlands dominated the first World Cup in Tomaszów Mazowiecki, Poland, in November.

In 2017 Dutch Chris Huizinga and Jutta Leerdam won the World Junior titles in Helsinki, but they moved up to the senior ranks since. Leerdam finished fourth in the European Sprint Championships in Collalbo two weeks ago, while Huizinga is selected to skate the Mass Start at the World Single Distance Championships in Inzell in February. Their performances could be an inspiration for the current youngsters in Helsinki.

Young sister De Jong

Powerhouse Canada will not attend the Junior World Cup in Finland and Dutch spearhead Femke Kok, who won two individual gold medals and the Team Sprint title in Tomaszów Mazowiecki is not on the start list either. New names are ready to take over, such as Michelle de Jong (NED). She must be inspired by her older sister [Antoinette de Jong](#) (NED) winning the European Allround title in Collalbo two weeks ago. Michelle already won the 500m and joined Kok in golden the Team Sprint squad at the World Cup in Poland in November. She will face competition from compatriot Robin Groot and Italy's Laura Peveri (ITA) in the ladies' junior ranks.

Favorite Engebråten

In the Men's junior competition Hallgeir Engebråten (NOR) leads the 1500m and 3000m World Cup rankings. Japan will be absent and without Taiyo Nonomura, Engebråten's main rivals will probably be Francesco Betti (ITA), who is third in the 3000m and fourth in the 1500m, and Sergei Loginov (RUS), who is third in the 1500m. Koki Kubo (JPN), who leads the 500m and the 1000m junior World Cup rankings, leaves an open playing field with Loginov and China's Chen Wang as main contenders in the short distances.

Open playing field in neo-senior competition

Without Canada's Béatrice Lamarche and Tyson Langelaar, who both won two gold and two silver medals individually in Poland, the neo-senior medals are up for grabs too. Egor Shkolin (RUS), who tops the Mass Start ranking and comes second in the 1500m ranking, will be one of the main contenders in the men's field. Gloria Malfatti (ITA) and Veronika Suslova (RUS) are the best ranked ladies in the ladies' neo-senior field in Helsinki.

For full entry lists and further information regarding the ISU Junior World Cup Speed Skating Series please visit: isu.org/speed-skating. Results are [here](#) and you can follow the discussion on social media by using #WCSpeedSkating and #SpeedSkating.

The ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series will be available on in some countries on the ISU Skating Channel.

About ISU Junior World Cup Speed Skating Series

Since the inaugural Junior World Cup in in 2008/09 many youngsters have had their first taste of international competition in Junior World Cup events. The format is comparable to the Senior World Cup

Speed Skating Series, but the juniors only have three events in the whole season. After Tomaszów Mazowiecki the competition will resume in Helsinki on January 26-27, and the final will be held at Baselga di Piné on February 9-10. In 2016 a neo-senior World Cup was added to the Junior World Cup Series.

Participation in the Junior World Cup is open to Junior A and Junior B Skaters, born between July 1, 1999 and June 30, 2003, and to Junior C Skaters born between July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2004. Participation in the Neo-seniors division is open to Skaters born between July 1, 1995 and June 30, 1999.

For further information please visit <https://www.isu.org/speed-skating/events/junior-world-cup-speed-skating>