

November 17, 2021

Debrecen, Hungary

## **Everything on the line as world's top Short Track Speed Skaters arrive in Debrecen**

The stakes could not be higher as the world's best Short Track Speed Skaters descend on Debrecen, Hungary November 18-21 for the third of this season's four ISU World Cup Short Track weekends.

There are just two sets of World Cup races left in which to not only secure Olympic Winter Games qualification but also to lay down a marker ahead of Beijing 2022 itself.

The overall picture is excitingly blurred with reigning Champions and rising stars of both genders excelling and challenging for their ticket to Beijing.

Starting with the Women, serial winners [Suzanne Schulting](#) (NED) and [Arianna Fontana](#) (ITA) have been typically impressive, yet neither skater has had it entirely their own way.

The Overall World and European 2021 Champion Schulting has grown accustomed to the top step of the podium in recent seasons and the Dutchwoman duly claimed two individual golds in the opening two World Cups. But a crash in the quarterfinals of the 1500m in Beijing (CHN) and the second place she had to settle for in her favored 1000m in Nagoya (JPN) have given the rest of the field hope – something Schulting will no doubt want to snuff out in Debrecen.

Her fellow PyeongChang 2018 champion, Fontana, has placed herself at the top of the 500m rankings in the race for Olympic qualification. But Poland's [Natalia Maliszewska](#) has already given indication that Italy's eight-time Olympic medalist will not have it all her own way in the sprint. The battle between the two is set to be a highlight in Hungary.

While the USA's [Kristen Santos](#), who held off Schulting in that 1000m final in Nagoya, will be one of several relatively unheralded names ready to show they belong in the very top bracket, there are a few established stars in need of a strong showing this weekend.

The Republic of Korea's double PyeongChang 2018 Olympic champion [Choi Min Jeong](#) did start the season well, with a bronze medal in the 500m in Beijing, but a knee injury ruled her out of the action in Nagoya and she will be keen to show there is no lasting effect.

Fellow PyeongChang 2018 gold medalist [Kim Boutin](#) (CAN) is also yet to hit top gear, although she has shown flashes of her usual excellence and no one will be too surprised should it all come together for her in the Fonix Arena.

Former triple World Champion [Elise Christie](#) (GBR) is another looking to rekindle the past. A one-time World No.1, Christie has been beset by difficulties in recent years but has declared this week that she is back and ready to race in Hungary. She has it all to do to secure a fourth successive Olympic appearance.

France, Poland and hosts Hungary are among those who need points in the Women's 3000m Relay. All three currently sit outside the all-important top eight positions in the rankings.

With each skater's top three performances across the four World Cups counting towards the [Special Olympic Qualification Classifications](#) one great race can make a real difference. That is something a number of the Men's top skaters will be telling themselves.

Two of last season's best performers, [Charles Hamelin](#) (CAN) and [Pietro Sighel](#) (ITA), have yet to really fire. Neither has made an A final in the opening two World Cups.

In contrast, [Ren Ziwei](#) (CHN) and Kazakhstan's [Denis Nikisha](#) are among those who would no doubt be happy if the Beijing Games were next week. Ziwei took gold in the 1000m in Nagoya and lies fourth in the 500m rankings, which are topped by Nikisha after he placed third in the sprint at both opening weekends.

However, even those two have to give way to [Hwang Daeheon](#). The Korean is arguably the world's form Short Tracker, with two golds, a silver and a bronze already this season. He did have to withdraw from the 1000m quarterfinals on the final day in Nagoya, so it will be interesting to see if there are any lasting effects when he takes to the ice in Debrecen.

Most eyes in the arena however are likely to be on Hungary's favorite brothers, [Shaolin Sandor Liu](#) and [Shaoang Liu](#). The driving force behind the nation's first-ever Olympic Winter Games gold medal – secured in the Men's 5000m Relay in 2018 – the brothers have yet to hit full power this season.

But the duo are born showmen and have shown their love of Debrecen before, when they dominated the 2020 European Championships by winning two golds each. So, do not bet against more home heroics when the action gets under way between November 18 to 21.

### **Where to watch and follow the ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating 2019/20?**

Viewers will be able to watch the Saturday and Sunday afternoon (local time) World Cup sessions via their national broadcaster/channel. For countries where there are no broadcasters and for the qualification and repechage races, the ISU will offer a live stream on the [Skating ISU YouTube Channel](#). You will find the full list in the Where to watch news [here](#).

Subscribe to the [ISU Newsletter](#) to receive the latest information and the "[Where to Watch](#)" news. You can also subscribe to the [Skating ISU YouTube Channel](#) to receive notifications when live streams start or new videos are published.

Highlights, clips, interviews, behind the scenes:

YouTube: [ISU Skating](#)

IG: [@isuspeedskating](#)

Facebook: [@ISUShortTrackSpeedSkating](#)

Twitter: [@ISU\\_Speed](#)

Follow the conversation with #ShortTrackSkating.

For further information on ISU Short Track Speed Skating visit: <https://www.isu.org/short-track>.

**ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating Series events 2021:**

[Beijing, CHN October 21 – 24, 2021](#)

[Nagoya, JPN - October 28 – 31, 2021](#)

[Debrecen, HUN - November 18 – 21, 2021](#)

[Dordrecht, NED - November 25 – 28, 2021](#)

**About ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating Series**

The World Cup series consists of nine distances 500, 1000 and 1500 meters for Ladies and Men, Ladies 3000 meters Team Relay, Men 5000 meters Team Relay and a Mixed Gender Relay over 2000 meters.

The competitions have a single distance character and are held in separate sessions over four days. Day 1 and 2 are dedicated to all Qualifying Rounds. Days 3 and 4 the last Qualifying Rounds (if necessary) take place, followed by the World Cup sessions.

For the Mixed Gender Relay Teams (2 Ladies & 2 Men), the Ladies 3000 meters Relay races and Men 5000 meters Relay races a maximum of four Skaters shall compete and must belong to the same ISU Member.

During the Olympic season there are four ISU World Cup Short Track events that also serve at the Olympic qualifying events.