

March 9, 2022

Heerenveen, Netherlands

## Skaters look forward to a full stadium for the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final

After groundbreaking records, momentous victories and true sportsmanship at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games in Beijing, and thrilling ISU World Speed Skating Championships in Hamar (NOR) last week, the 2022 Speed Skating season comes to a close with one more highlight: the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final in Heerenveen (NED). Skaters look forward to a full house at the Thialf Stadium after the pandemic forced to keep the stands empty last year. The ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final provides athletes a final chance to show who were the most consistent skaters in the various distances over the course of a whole season.

### “The best is supposed to be consistent”

“Obviously this year, it’s a secondary goal,” [Laurent Dubreuil](#) (CAN) said at the start of the season in November. “But to me, the best skater in the world is not necessarily the guy who wins the one race at the Olympics or the World Championships. To me, the best skater in the world is supposed to be consistent throughout the whole season.”

The 29-year-old Canadian disappointingly ended up fourth in the Olympic 500m but made amends with a silver medal in the 1000m. As the current ISU World Cup leader in the 500m, he hopes to be able to show that he indeed was the most consistent skater in the shortest distance this season, but nothing’s guaranteed. Last week Dubreuil was en route to becoming World Sprint Champion after the first day of the tournament in Hamar (NOR) when he then tested positive for COVID-19 and had to withdraw. His name is on the entry list for the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final, but he has to present a negative test to be able to compete.

Behind Dubreuil, and in the absence of the Russian skaters who are not allowed to participate in ISU Competitions because of the war in Ukraine, there are three Japanese sprinters eyeing the overall 500m World Cup victory. With two races in the final weekend [Wataru Morishige](#), [Tatsuya Shinhama](#) and [Yuma Murakami](#) are all within range. Olympic Champion [Gao Tingyu](#) (CHN) is absent in Heerenveen.

To view full [World Cup 500m Men Standings](#)

### Men’s middle distances

In the Men’s 1000m, the overall victory could go to a Dutchman, but there are multiple candidates. Olympic Champion [Thomas Krol](#) leads the ranking over [Kjeld Nuis](#), who did not manage to qualify for the 1000m in Beijing but won gold in the Olympic 1500m. [Håvard Lorentzen](#) (NOR), who won Olympic 1000m bronze, is also in the mix for the World Cup podium, currently sitting third in the ranking.

To view full [World Cup 1000m Men Standings](#)

The 1500m World Cup was a completely different ballgame this season. [Joey Mantia](#) (USA) dominated the event so far. He leads the ranking with two gold, a silver and a bronze medal so far. [Kim Min-Seok](#) (KOR) and [Ning Zhongyan](#) (CHN) won the other two 1500m races, but the Korean and the Chinese skaters will not participate in the World Cup Final, which leaves [Connor Howe](#) (CAN) and [Allan Dahl Johansson](#) (NOR) as Mantia’s main rivals for the World Cup Trophy.

To view full [World Cup 1500m Men Standings](#)

### Swedish goodbye in long distance World Cup

In the 5000m all eyes will be on [Nils van der Poel](#) (SWE) who reigned supreme in the long distances this season, winning the 5000m and 10,000m Olympic titles and skating a 10,000m world record along the way.

The Swedish marathon man announced his retirement from elite sports after this season, but he looks forward to a beautiful farewell in front of the enthusiastic Thialf crowd.

To view full [World Cup Long Distances Men Standings](#)

### **Jackson's first as Olympic Champion**

In the Women's 500m, [Erin Jackson](#) (USA) will start her first race as Olympic Champion. The 29-year-old skater from Florida had a breakthrough season in the run-up to the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games, winning four 500m World Cup races. But she almost missed out on going to Beijing because she had a mishap at the US trials and finished third, and the USA only had two available spots. Her friend and teammate [Brittany Bowe](#) (USA), who had won the race, decided to forfeit her spot in favor of Jackson. "Just for her to do something like this for me, it's amazing," she said. "I'm just incredibly grateful. I'm really humbled, and she's just an amazing person." Jackson paid back Bowe's selflessness by winning the Olympic gold and made her teammate proud.

To win the World Cup Trophy too, Jackson has to hold off her predecessor, the 2018 Olympic Champion [Nao Kodaira](#) (JPN), who was on the podium in six of eight 500m World Cup races this season (1 gold, 3 silver, 2 bronze). The Japanese speedster is just 24 points behind with two more races to come in the final weekend.

To view full [World Cup 500m Women Standings](#)

### **Bowe most consistent in 1000m**

In the 1000m, Brittany Bowe was at least as dominant as Jackson in the 500m this season, winning twice and taking a silver and a bronze over four races. At the Olympic Games the 34-year-old American had to settle for bronze behind [Miho Takagi](#) (JPN) and [Jutta Leerdam](#) (NED). Bowe could become this season's best 1000m skater, at least according to Laurent Dubreuil's theory, if she takes the World Cup Trophy home. Takagi and again Nao Kodaira still have the Trophy in sight too, but Leerdam is too far behind because she skipped the fourth World Cup event last December.

To view full [World Cup 1000m Women Standings](#)

### **Farewell 1500m for Wüst**

Bowe is also in the mix for the 1500m World Cup Trophy, in which she is ranked second behind [Ayano Sato](#) (JPN) however Miho Takagi (JPN) is the most likely favorite. The Olympic 1000m Champion won the first three 1500m races in the World Cup, but skipped the fourth race. At the Olympic Winter Games, Takagi had to bow out to [Ireen Wüst](#) (NED). The Dutch legend only comes eight in the ranking before the World Cup Final, but whoever wins the Trophy on Saturday, Wüst will be the star of the show. After having won the Olympic 1500m in Beijing, she will skate her final race with a total of 13 Olympic medals (6 gold, 5 silver, 2 bronze) in her Trophy cabinet.

To view full [World Cup 1500m Women Standings](#)

### **Last challenge for Schouten in 'dream season'**

[Irene Schouten](#) (NED) dominated the Women's endurance events in similar fashion as Van der Poel did in the Men's. She even added the Olympic Mass Start gold to her mantle piece, after having won the two longest distances in the Women's race (3000m and 5000m) in Beijing. Last week Schouten added her career first World Allround title to her trophy cabinet and in Heerenveen she hopes to complete what she labelled 'a dream season' winning the long distance World Cup Trophy but will have to deal with many rivals. After having won the first three long distance World Cup races, Schouten decided to skip the fourth. Both [Isabelle Weidemann](#) (CAN) and [Ragne Wiklund](#) (NOR) overtook her in the ranking, while [Francesca Lollobrigida](#) (ITA) won the 3000m in Calgary (CAN). Furthermore [Martina Sáblíková](#) (CZE), currently sitting in fifth place, also looks up in the ranking. Having won the 5000m in the World Speed Skating Allround race in Hamar last week, the Czech veteran is the only skater who managed to beat Schouten in a long distance race this season.

To view full [World Cup Long Distances Women Standings](#)

## Mass Start climax

On Sunday night, the World Cup Final will come to a climax with the Mass Start races, in which Schouten will again team up with [Marijke Groenewoud](#) (NED) to try and give the home crowd something to cheer for. Having skipped the fourth World Cup, the Dutchwomen are only positioned sixth and seventh on the ranking. Schouten's main Mass Start rivals are [Ivanie Blondin](#) (CAN) and [Francesca Lollobrigida](#) (ITA), who took Olympic silver and bronze, and currently sit first and second in the World Cup ranking.

To view full [World Cup Mass Start Women Standings](#)

In the Men's Mass Start, all eyes will be on [Bart Swings](#) (BEL). The Belgian World Cup leader felt as if he skated with a target on his back as the main favorite in Beijing, but still managed to come away with gold. During the World Cup Final he will be the one to beat and as he proved in Beijing, that will be a tough one to pull off.

To view full [World Cup Mass Start Men Standings](#)

## Where to Watch

Viewers will be able to watch the competitions via their national broadcaster channel. You will find the full list in the [Where to Watch news here](#). For countries where there are no broadcasters, the ISU will offer a live stream on the [Skating ISU YouTube Channel](#). You can subscribe to the Skating ISU YouTube Channel to receive notifications when live streams start or new videos are published.

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The International Skating Union (ISU), founded in 1892, is the oldest governing international winter sport federation and the exclusive international sport federation recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) administering the sports of Figure Skating (Single & Pair Skating and Ice Dance), Synchronized Skating, Speed Skating and Short Track Speed Skating worldwide. The objectives of the ISU are to regulate, govern, promote and develop its sports on the basis of friendship and mutual understanding between athletes. Currently three ISU disciplines are included in the Olympic Winter Games program (Figure Skating, Speed Skating and Short Track Speed Skating). For further information please visit [isu.org](#).