

Press release

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Liu (HUN) and Boutin (CAN) clinch season titles in 1000m in Seoul

Audi ISU World Cup Short Track: Day 1

Hungary's Liu Shaolin Sandor and Canada's Kim Boutin clinched season titles in the 1000m, while the men's and women's relays supplied plenty of thrills and spill as usual, with the Netherlands prevailing in the ladies 3000m and Korea in the men's 5000m.

Koreans chase down Netherlands to win 5000m relay

The Netherlands were disappointed an aggressive approach could not yield a second relay gold at the Audi ISU World Cup Short Track in Seoul on Sunday.

Korea crossed the 5000m line first without the services of wunderkind [Hwang Dae Heon](#), while the USA followed up their world-record feat last week in Shanghai with bronze.

The ladies of the Netherlands won their relay minutes prior to the men's final and the men came out looking like they wanted a repeat. They grabbed the lead with 12 laps to go but it seemingly woke the Koreans up.

"We were just skating our own race," said Dutch star [Sjinkie Knegt](#). "Our goal was to keep the speed high. The Koreans tried to slow down a little but we kept the speed high.

"This feels pretty good after the shitty week in China with the relay team skating like this."

But the 2015 world champion did not mince his words.

"I think with this team we have to do well.

"To do it in Korea is super nice but we have to do better and we know that.

"We should be better than second position but next time we'll do better."

The USA's [Thomas Insuk Hong](#) said winning back-to-back relay medals "means a lot".

"It just shows we're on the right path going into the Games and hopefully we can keep this wave going and medal at the Games," he added.

The 20-year-old also happens to be born in Korea.

He said, "It was a really good feeling. The crowd was deafening honestly. It definitely helped us do better. We fed off the crowd's energy."

World cup leaders Canada did not make it past the heats but did enough at the first three stops to remain at the top. Japan won the B final.

The confirmed list of quota places for the PyeongChang Olympics will be announced by the ISU.

Dutch swoop for gold as rivals collide in 3000m relay

The Netherlands took advantage of a collision between the race leaders to win their first ladies 3000m relay gold this Audi ISU World Cup Short Track season.

The Korean and Chinese skaters made contact with four laps to go, which allowed the Dutch and Russia to swoop past.

Korea ended up with the bronze and finished the world cup series as the overall winner in the relay.

China received a penalty.

“A lot of things happened,” [Yara van Kerkhof](#) (NED) said. “We wanted to start in front but we were second and we tried to keep our spot. We suddenly became third and it was a little bit more stressful.”

Apart from the collision, Korea also botched a handover two laps prior while leading, which set up the fateful moment.

Van Kerkhof was proud of the victory, also their first relay medal of any colour over the four stops of the world cup season.

“We were excited to race here in this stadium and this crowd. Before the race started we said, let’s make the crowd quiet by winning, and we won.”

She preferred not to look at it as a fluke.

“It gives a lot of confidence and what can happen here can also happen at the Olympics. I get a good feeling for the Olympics.”

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Liu (HUN) times move to perfection to win 1000m gold

The race for the men’s 1000m overall crown was wide open entering the final and [Liu Shaolin Sandor](#)’s (HUN) gold settled it.

[Hwang Dae Heon](#)’s (KOR) silver meant he finished second in the Audi ISU World Cup Short Track classification while Canada’s [Samuel Girard](#) took bronze.

[Wu Dajing](#)’s (CHN) hopes were dashed after skating to last.

The race itself mirrored the world cup race, with the lead shuffling among all four skaters in the last four laps. Eventually, Liu made the move at the right time to cross the line first.

“It was a really good race, there was so much action. It’s been really exciting from the quarterfinals,” he said after winning his second individual gold this season.

“I hope I can get more experience like this (winning gold).”

Girard agreed. “I knew it would be a fast race, everyone wants to be in front, nobody wants to be at the back because there’s a lot of fighting. I think I did pretty well, I attacked, I wasn’t holding it back.”

The previous event at Shanghai only gave the Canadian, who was second at the world championships, a relay bronze so he was pleased with his effort in Seoul.

“I had a good start [to the world cup]. In Shanghai, it was a bit tougher I would say, but I came back stronger here. I will train hard for the Olympics and I would be ready for that.”

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Dutchman [Sjinkie Knegt](#), the world cup leader coming into Seoul, was penalised in the semifinals.

[Ren Ziwei](#) of China won the B final.

Boutin (CAN) takes silver to claim 1000m season title

[Kim Boutin](#) became the second Canadian to finish the Audi ISU World Cup Short Track series as an overall winner after a contentious last corner of the ladies 1000m final saw rival [Shim Suk Hee](#) (KOR) crash out.

There was contact involving Boutin, Shim and Great Britain’s [Elise Christie](#). Boutin earned the silver while Christie earned a penalty that left her in tears.

Ahead of the drama, [Choi Min Jeong](#) (KOR) won her sixth individual gold this season. [Yara van Kerkhof](#) (NED) was third.

Boutin explained, “I blocked Christie inside and sometimes contact happens. Everyone in there is really strong. We were jostling.”

Teammate [Marianne St-Gelais](#) took the 500m crown on Saturday.

Boutin came to Seoul as the world cup leader and a silver here proved enough.

Having gone toe to toe with the Koreans in several finals this series, Boutin called it “fun” skating with them. She added, “I feel I was in the race until the end so I’m pretty happy with that.”

For bronze medallist Van Kerkhof, it seemed to mean more.

“In Dordrecht, I was fourth twice. It was really good but it was not a medal, so I’m really happy I have a medal now,” she said. “My last chance for an individual medal and I took it.”

The 27-year-old continued, “It gives a lot of confidence and what can happen here can also happen at the Olympics. I get a good feeling for the Olympics.”

Canada’s [Jamie Macdonald](#) won the B final.

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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 in order 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).