

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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Press release

Harbin, November 11, 2016

ISU Speed Skating World Cup Harbin Day 1 #WCSpeed

Nao Kodaira, Sven Kramer and Martina Sáblíková took gold on the first day of the ISU World Cup Series 2016/17, which took off with in Harbin (CHN) on Friday. Japan's Kodaira won the ladies' 500m, Dutch Kramer the men's 5000m and Czech Sáblíková the ladies' 3000m. The three gold medalists all beat the track record in their event.

Second ISU World Cup Speed Skating win for Kodaira

Kodaira won the first event of the 2016/17 World Cup Series, with 38.00 in the Ladies 500m. The 30-year-old led a Japanese 1-2 with compatriot Maki Tsuji taking silver in 38.17. China's Jing Yu took bronze in 38.18 on home soil. It was Kodaira's second career World Cup win after gold in Seoul in 2014.

Kodaira beat Olga Fatkulina in the sixth pair. The Russian clocked 38.50 to finish seventh. Eleven skaters finished under 39 seconds. Dutch Marrit Leenstra was the last one with 38.99 in her pair versus Hong Zhang. Last season's number two in the 500m World Cup standings, Zhang set a disappointing 38.82, to finish tenth in her hometown.

Korean world record holder Sang-Hwa Lee could not impress either. The Olympic Champion and threefold 500m world champion finished sixth in 38.47.

With Brittany Bowe absent due to injury in Harbin, Heather Bergsma defended the US honor, but she only ended up fifth in 38.39. Bowe's substitute Kelly Gunther set 40.45 to finish second last, just ahead of the third American lady, Paige Schwartzburg, who clocked 40.72.

Kramer still king of 5000m

Sven Kramer continued where he left off last season. The Dutch long distance king leads the Dutch podium sweep and won all 5000m World Cup races he participated in last year, and took gold in the first 5000m race of the new season in Harbin on Friday. With 6:21.60, Kramer beat the track record in the final pair versus Sverre Lunde Pedersen (NOR), who finished 13th in 6:33.84.

Before Kramer took the ice, the track record had been broken three times on Friday. Swedish prodigy Nils van der Poel was the first to beat Arjen van der Kieft's previous 2009 Harbin track record of 6:29.94, when he set 6:28.32 in the B Division. Erik Jan Kooiman was the first to beat Van der Poel's time in the A Division with 6:26.43. The Dutchman beat Peter Michael in the third pair. The New Zealander finished fifth in 6:27.89.

Bart Swings attacked Kooiman's time in the fifth pair. The Belgian was more than three seconds faster at the 3400m split, but lost his race in the final four laps to finish in 6:27.64 in fourth place.

Jorrit Bergsma was more than four seconds faster than Kooiman in the penultimate pair (6:22.38), but he did hold on to the track record for long with Kramer beating him by a 0.78

Official Series Hashtag: #WCSpeed

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margin in the final race. Bergsma had to settle for silver and Kooiman took bronze.

Sáblíková takes 28th 3000m gold

Martina Sáblíková grabbed her 28th World Cup gold in the Ladies's 3000m and her career 43rd World Cup win in total, when she defeated Ireen Wüst in the final pair of Friday's races. The Czech long distance specialist started cautious behind Wüst, who was the only lady to open under 20 seconds. Wüst was still in front at 2200 meters, but Sáblíková managed to maintain her pace in the last two laps, whereas Wüst's lap times went up from 33.6, to 34.7 and 35.5 in the final lap. Wüst eventually ended up seventh.

Marije Joling took her career third 3000m silver medal. The Dutch lady set a high bar in the third pair, when she clocked 4:09.40. Until the final pair Ivanie Blondin, who set 4:09.78 in the fourth pair, was the only other skater to beat the 4:10 barrier. Blondin, who has two Mass Start World Cup wins to her tally, got her career first World Cup podium in a 3000m race winning the bronze medal.

For full results of the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series 2016/17 please refer to <http://www.isuresults.eu/> and <http://www.isu.org/en/speed-skating/series/isu-world-cup-speed-skating>

The ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series continues tomorrow with the Men's 500m, the Ladies' and Men's 1000m and the Ladies' and Men's Team Pursuit .

About ISU World Cup Speed Skating 2016/17 Series

The ISU World Cup Speed Skating circuit consists of six events across Asia and Europe. The series starts in Harbin (CHN) on November 11-13 and moves to Nagano (JPN) on November 18-20. In December the Series goes to Europe stopping in Astana (KAZ) on December 2-4 and to Heerenveen (NED) on December 9-11. On January 27-19 2017 the fifth leg of the event will be in Berlin (GER) and the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final will take place in Chelyabinsk (RUS) on March 10-12. The full ISU Calendar of Events is available here:

<http://www.isu.org/en/news-and-events/calendar-of-events>

The ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series is available as a live stream on the ISU Skating Channel. Please note that geoblocking may be required in certain territories

<http://livemanager.eurovision.edgesuite.net/isu/index.html>

For further information please contact:

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ISU World Cup Speed Skating Harbin (CHN) medalists

500m Ladies

1	Nao Kodaira	JPN	38.00
2	Maki Tsuji	JPN	38.17
3	Jing Yu	CHN	38.18

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5000m Men

1	Sven Kramer	NED	6:21.60
2	Jorrit Bergsma	NED	6:22.38
3	Erik Jan Kooiman	NED	6:26.43

3000 m Ladies

1	Martina Sáblíková	CZE	4:08.26
2	Marije Joling	NED	4:09.40
3	Ivanie Blondin	CAN	4:09.78