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For immediate release

ISU World Cup Speed Skating 2014/15 - Seoul (KOR) Day 1

The second leg of the ISU World Cup Speed Skating series 2014/15 in Seoul (KOR) started with a couple of big surprises on Friday. The day went by without any Dutch victories, while 42-year-old Claudia Pechstein (GER) won the Ladies' 5000m, Noa Kodaira (JPN) beat Sang-Hwa Lee (KOR) in the ladies' 500m, Sverre Lunde Pedersen (NOR) took his first World Cup win in the 1500m and Pavel Kulizhnikov (RUS) blasted to another 500m win. In both longer distances the Track Record was improved and one skater improved a personal best time.

Grand Old Lady Claudia Pechstein (GER) wins 5000m in track record time

In the Ladies' longest distance Pechstein set a track record of 7:07.77, to leave Olympic Champion Martina Sáblíková (CZE) in second place. Ivanie Blondin (CAN) took the bronze.

Slow times marked most of the day. Canadian Clara Hughes' more than 10-year-old track record (7:10.66) seemed to stand the test at first. Olympic fourth Olga Graf (RUS) had won the B-division in 7:15.11, but in the A-division the first lady to skate under 7.20 was Blondin (CAN), who also won last week's mass start. She managed to post 7:14.53, but that time was bettered by Pechstein in the next pair.

The German veteran skated a flat race to the very end, before Sáblíková entered the rink in the final pair. The 27-year-old Czech couldn't keep up with Pechstein's speed from the very start, nor did she manage to keep a steady pace at the end. With 7:13.08 Sáblíková managed to stay just ahead of Blondin. Pechstein, who already held the record of the oldest World Cup winner in history, sharpened her own record: she is 42 years and 272 days old. It was Pechstein's 32nd World Cup victory in total and her 6th in the 5.000m. Her first victory was 19 years ago in Oslo.

Sáblíková leads the World Cup with 160 points, Pechstein has 140 and Jorien Voorhuis and Diane Valkenburg (both NED) 120. Wüst dropped to sixth place as she did not race on Friday.

Nao Kodaira (JPN) beats Sang-Hwa Lee (KOR) on home ice

Last week on home ice in Obihiro, Nao Kodaira twice finished second behind Sang-Hwa Lee in the 500m. The Japanese skater took revenge when she beat the Korean Olympic Champion in a direct duel in Seoul on Friday. Lee lost a 500m race for the first time since March 2013.

Kodaira finished in 38.05. Lee took silver with 38.18 and Judith Hesse (GER), the only other Lady to set a time under 39, clinched bronze in 38.95.

Multiple Olympic short track champion Seung-Hi Park (KOR), who switched to long track this season, skated a new personal best of 39.13 to finish 11th, just before Olga Fatkulina (RUS). The

Olympic silver medalist finished in a disappointing 12th time. Vanessa Bittner (AUT) seemed to be intimidated by German pair mate Hesse and could not repeat last week's 500m bronze. She finished 15th.

Lee still leads the World Cup with 280 points, Kodaira has 260, before Hesse (151) and Dutch youngster Floor van den Brandt (141), who finished fourth on Friday.

Pavel Kulizhnikov (RUS) strikes again in the 500m

After having won the second 500m last week, 20-year-old Kulizhnikov overpowered the rest of the field when he skated 34.94 in the shortest distance in Seoul on Friday. His team mate Ruslan Murashov (RUS) took bronze in 35.36. Tae-Bum Mo (KOR) set the same time, but clinched silver with a 0.001 difference.

Nico Ihle (GER) finished fourth and Espen Aarnes Hvammen (NOR) fifth. Jan Smeeckens (NED), who won the first men's 500m last week, only ended up 10th.

Kulizhnikov is the sole leader in the World Cup with 280 points, Smeeckens is still second with 208 points and Murashov third with 200 points.

Norwegian Sverre Lunde Pedersen (NOR) wins 1500m in track record

Sverre Lunde Pedersen (NOR) celebrated his first World Cup victory setting a new track record in the 1500m. With 1:47.76 he was almost a second faster than Shani Davis' 10-year-old track best. Dutchmen Wouter Olde Heuvel and Kjeld Nuis took silver and bronze. Davis also beat his own previous track record, but his 1:48.49 only got him sixth place on Friday.

When Pedersen took the ice, Olympic Champion Zbigniew Bródka (POL) was leading in 1:49.04. The Norwegian made the difference in the second part of the race, with the fastest two final laps of the field: 27.7 and 28.8.

Olympic medalists Denny Morrison (1:48.38) and Koen Verweij (1:48.40) handed the public a spectacular race in the penultimate pair, but couldn't beat Pedersen's time. With only Nuis and Olde Heuvel yet to enter the rink, they were in the silver and bronze medal spot. Nuis exploded from the start to take the lead, but with a 29.2 final lap Olde Heuvel gained 1.5 seconds on Nuis to snatch the silver in 1:48.02. Nuis got bronze with 1:48.30.

Nuis leads the Cup with 170 points, followed by Olde Heuvel with 160 and Pedersen with 128.

For full results of the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series 2014/15 please refer to <http://www.isureults.eu/> and <http://www.isu.org/en/speed-skating/series/isu-world-cup-speed-skating>

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>

The ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series continues tomorrow with the Men's 10,000m, the Ladies' second 500m, and Men's 1000m and the Ladies' 1500m.

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ISU World Cup Speed Skating Seoul (KOR) - Medal Winners

5000 m Ladies

1	Claudia Pechstein	GER	7:07.77 TR
2	Martina Sáblíková	CZE	7:13.08
3	Ivanie Blondin	CAN	7:14.53

500 m Ladies

1	Nao Kodaira	JPN	38.05
2	Sang-Hwa Lee	KOR	38.18
3	Judith Hesse	GER	38.95

500 m Men

1	Pavel Kulizhnikov	RUS	34.94
2	Tae-Bum Mo	KOR	35.363
3	Ruslan Murashov	RUS	35.364

1500 m Men

1	Sverre Lunde Pedersen	NOR	1:47.76 TR
2	Wouter Olde Heuvel	NED	1:48.02
3	Kjeld Nuis	NED	1:48.30

For further information please contact

ISU Media Coordinator
Selina Vanier
Phone: +41 21 612 66 66
email: vanier@isu.ch