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For immediate release

ISU World Junior Speed Skating Championships 2015

Patrick Roest (NED) took his second consecutive allround title at the ISU Junior World Allround Speed Skating Championships in Warsaw on February 20-22. Min-Seok Kim (KOR) took silver and Marcel Bosker (NED) bronze. In the ladies' tournament Melissa Wijfje traded last year's silver allround medal for a gold, before team mate Sanneke de Neeling and Yelizaveta Kazelina (RUS).

The 80 male and 65 female competitors skated for the World Junior title in Single Distances as well as for the Allround title. The format for the men's allround combination was changed from 500-3000-1500-5000m to 500-1500-1000-5000m. The individual titles in the 500m were no longer awarded after two races, but after one. The Team Sprint and the Mass Start were added to the World Junior Championships program.

The ice rink in Warsaw is outdoors, the first day was sunny, the second and third day clouded and more windy. The track records fell in the men's 1500m and the 5000.

Ladies: Vanessa Bittner and Melissa Wijfje divide distance titles

Vanessa Bittner (AUT), who had top-10 results in the 500m and the 1000m at the senior World Single Distance Championships in Heerenveen last week, powered to gold in those events in Warsaw. Wijfje won both the 1500m and the 3000m.

Bittner's winning 500m time was 40.26. Darya Kachanova (RUS) finished second in 40.49 and Nan Sun (CHN) third with 40.54. Close together on places four to six were De Neeling, Mi Jang (KOR) and Kazelina in 40.63, 40.64 and 40.65. Wijfje was ninth in 41.06.

In the 1500m, Wijfje had to race alone because her pair mate Bittner withdrew to focus on the 1000m title. It did not prevent Wijfje from winning, in 2:04.15. Her main rival, De Neeling, finished in second place with 2:05.29. Ji-Woo Park (KOR) took the bronze in 2:06.80. Nikola Zdráhalová (CZE) landed just outside the podium in 2:06.89 and Kazelina was fifth in 2:07.40.

After the first day, De Neeling led the overall classification with 82.393 points. Wijfje was close behind with 82.443. At some distance Kazelina (83.116) and Sun (83.160) were close together in third and fourth place.

Bittner started the second day with 1000m gold in 1:19.73. De Neeling increased her lead in the ranking with the second time in 1:20.44. Kazelina (1:20.63) kept Wijfje (1:21.20) off the podium. Tessa Boogaard (NED), who won the 1000m World Cup, was disqualified after two false starts.

After three distances De Neeling had 122.613 points and Wijfje 123.043. Kazelina (123.431) had a bigger advantage over Sun (124.265) and got closer to Wijfje. De Neeling had a 2.58 second advantage over Wijfje at the start of the the 3000m and she was far from save. Wijfje set 4.22.58

and De Neeling was not able to defend her lead, losing time on her team mate in all but the first and the final laps. She finished in 4:26.46, which was enough for silver in the distance as well as in the allround classification. Kazelina skated 4:27.65 for bronze in the distance and in the allround classification.

Isabelle Weidemann (CAN) set 4:28.55 to finish fourth in the distance and Sun did not start in the final distance.

Melissa Wijfje: “Winning the allround was difficult as Sanneke de Neeling was very good and it was very close, 0.2 of a second, and I am happy I won. It was closer than ever.”

Patrick Roest (NED) finishes on every podium

Patrick Roest finished on the podium in each single distance, but the winners of the four distances each had a different nationality. Jun-Ho Kim (KOR) won the 500m, Roest the 1500m, Fan Yang (CHN) the 1000m and Nils van der Poel (SWE) the 5000m.

Jun-Ho Kim was the only one to open below 10 seconds (9.78) in the 500m. He went round in the fastest lap (26.65) as well and set 36.43 in the final pair. His pair mate Fan Yang was the only other skater to finish sub-37 in 36.72 and the two of them were almost a second faster than Roest, who took the bronze in 37.70.

In the 1500m Roest skated a junior and a senior track record time in 1:52.31. Min-Seok Kim, still a B-junior, finished second in 1:53.26, and Emery Lehman (USA) was 0.04 second faster than Sergej Trofimov (RUS) to take the bronze in 1:53.82.

After the first day, Roest already had a big gap over his chasers. Yang had lost ground, when he finished tenth place (1:56.21) in the 1500m and sprinter Jun-Ho Kim did not race the entire allround tournament. Roest had 74.736 points, Yang was still second with 75.465. Min-Seok Kim (75.893) and Marcel Bosker (76.440) followed in third and fourth place.

On the second day Roest started the 1000m against Stanislav Palkin (KAZ) in the 23rd of 26 pairs. Palkin opened fast, but Roest could follow and soon take over the lead. They set the two fastest times, 1:13.01 for Roest after a 28.7 last lap, and 1:13.82 for Palkin. In the final pair Yang took the victory with 1:12.80. World Cup winner Wesly Dijs (NED) finished fourth, 0.03 behind Palkin.

Min-Seok Kim finished fifth and kept his third position overall, a full point behind Yang, who was still 0.6 point behind Roest. It gave Roest a safe margin for the 5000m. Christopher Fiola (CAN) had moved up to rank 4 before Bosker, who was only 12th in the 1000m.

Roest dominated the 3000m without losing a race this World Cup season. However, the longest distance in the World Championships was 5000m and that proved to be just one lap too much. Roest was in the lead all the way until the final lap, where his speed dropped and Nils van der Poel (SWE) won, like in 2014, with a very even race. The track record, which was held by Slawomir

Chmura (POL), was broken three times. Emery Lehman was the first when he set 6:50.37. Roest than sharpened the time to 6:47.46, only to see Van der Poel finish in 6:46.57 fifteen second later. Van der Poel captured gold, Roest took silver and Emery Lehman (USA) was third.

The 5000m ended Yang's medal hopes in the allround classification. With 7:12.95 the Chinese skater dropped to fourth place. Min-Seok Kim set 6:54.80 to secure 2nd place in the allround classification and Bosker skated 6:50.87 to take the allround bronze.

Korea dominates Team Sprint

Both the Korean men and the ladies won the new Team Sprint event, in which 11 countries in the Ladies' field and 13 in the men's field participated. The Dutch decided to save energy for the Team Pursuit and did not compete, even though they won the World Cup for the ladies.

In the ladies' field it was close, when Koreans Min-Sun Kim, Mi Jang and Cho-Won Park raced against Xue Lin, Xiaoxuan Shi and Nan Sun from China. Nan-Sun finished well in 1:33.91, but Park had crossed the line after 1:33.72, to secure the gold. The Russian ladies Daria Kachanova, Anastasia Chepil and Elizaveta Kazelina took bronze in 1:34.16.

In the men's field a crash of one of the skaters just after the start cost Team Canada a place on the podium. Korean skaters Seung-Yong Yang, Jun-Ho Kim and Min-Seok Kim won in 1:24.22. Norway narrowly outskated Russia for silver. Bjørn Magnussen, Henrik Fagerli Rukke and Magnus Myhren Kristensen finished in 1:25.43, whereas Viktor Mushtakov, Danila Bobyr and Mikhail Kazelin 1:25.49.

Netherlands Team Pursuit titles

The Dutch ladies won the Team Pursuit. Korea settled for silver, while Japan took the bronze. Sanneke de Neeling, Esmee Visser and Melissa Wijfje finished in 3:14.61; Ha-Eun Kim, Cho-Won Park and Ji-Woo Park in 3:17.90. Nene Sakai, Ayano Sato and Mizuho Takayama set 3:18.85. Host-country Poland finished in fourth place before Canada and Germany.

The men's races mirrored the ladies' races. The Dutch team with Marcel Bosker, Wesly Dijs and Patrick Roest opened fastest and Korea (Min-Seok Kim, Hyun-Min Oh and Ki-Woong Park) followed closely, even took the lead briefly, but then the Dutch continued strong to win in 4:01.50. Korea's 4:02.46 was enough to win silver. Japan finished in 4:04.69 to take the bronze. Canada (4:08.86) and Russia (4:09.90) were the only other teams that managed to finish within 4:13.

Another title for Bittner in the Mass Start

After proving to be the best sprinter in the 500 and 1000m, Vanessa Bittner won the Mass Start race in the sprint as well. Nobody escaped from the pack, although Wijfje tried towards the end of the race. Bittner could easily follow and outprint her. Cho-Won Park (KOR) passed Wijfje in the final sprint as well and took the silver, Wijfje settled for bronze. Elena Møller-Rigas (DEN) won the intermediate sprint and thus secured fourth place, before Leia Behlau (GER) and Michelle Uhrig (GER).

Vanessa Bittner: “I tried to begin easy and in the end I had enough power, so it was good for me. I knew if Melissa wanted to win she had to go fast. I was looking for her, when she picked up the speed I followed her.”

In the men’s Mass Start, the Korean Hyun-Min Oh won the title. Marcel Bosker (NED) added a silver and Bin Zhou (CHN) took bronze.

Immediately after the first lap Aoi Yokoyama (JPN) tried to escape, but Linus Heidegger (AUT) and Emery Lehman chased him, and they took first and second place in the intermediate sprint. They tried to break away but Van der Poel and Benjamin Donnelly (CAN) chased and brought the pack to the leaders. While skaters were trying to set-up a good position for the final sprint, Roest attempted to pass along the inside, but he could not find room to make enough speed. The Koreans passed on the outside and won fairly easy. Min-Seok Kim was the first to cross the line, before Hyun-Min Oh. However, Kim was disqualified for a kick-finish and the title was for Oh. Roest moved up to fourth in time, but he did not gain any intermediate points, so was ranked 7th.

Patrick Roest commented on his weekend: “It went pretty well, podium on every distance. Before the championships started I thought it would be harder than last year, but I was in a very good shape, so it was a good championships for me.

“In the mass start I was waiting for the sprint but it did not go well for me. The Koreans are very good, they are waiting until the end and when it is a sprint they always win.”

The World Junior Championships is available as a live stream here: <https://new.livestream.com/K-Vision/WJSSCH2015>

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ISU Junior World Speed Skating Championships – Warsaw (POL) - Medal Winners

500m Ladies

1	Vanessa Bittner	AUT	40.26
2	Darya Kachanova	RUS	40.49
3	Nan Sun	CHN	40.54

1000m Ladies

1	Vanessa Bittner	AUT	1:19.73
2	Sanneke de Neeling	NED	1:20.44
3	Yelizaveta Kazelina	RUS	1:20.63

1500m Ladies

1	Melissa Wijfje (prolongation)	NED	2:04.15 TR
2	Sanneke de Neeling	NED	2:05.29
3	Ji-Woo Park	KOR	2:06.80

3000m Ladies

1	Melissa Wijfje	NED	4:22.58
2	Sanneke de Neeling	NED	4:26.46
3	Yelizaveta Kazelina	RUS	4:27.65

500m Men

1	Jun-Ho Kim	KOR	36.43
2	Fan Yang	CHN	36.72
3	Patrick Roest	NED	37.30

1000m Men

1	Fan Yang	CHN	1:12.80
2	Patrick Roest	NED	1:13.01
3	Stanislav Palkin	KAZ	1:13.82

1500m Men

1	Patrick Roest	NED	1:52.31 TR
2	Min-Seok Kim	KOR	1:53.26
3	Emery Lehman	USA	1:53.82

5000m Men

1	Nils van der Poel	SWE	6:46.57
2	Patrick Roest	NED	6:47.46
2	Emery Lehman	USA	6:50.37

Allround Ladies

1	Melissa Wijfje	NED	41.06(30)-2:04.15(1)-1:21.20(4)-4:22.58(1) 166.806
2	Sanneke de Neeling	NED	40.63(4)-2:05.29(2)-1:20.44(2)-4:26.46(2) 167.023
3	Yelizaveta Kazelina	RUS	40.65(5)-2:07.40(5)-1:20.63(3)-4:27.65(3) 168.039

Allround Men

1	Patrick Roest	NED	37.30(3)-1:52.31(1)-1:13.01(2)-6:47.46(2) 151.987
2	Min-Seok Kim	KOR	38.14(17)-1:53.26(2)-1:13.91(5)-6:54.80(5) 154.328
3	Marcel Bosker	NED	38.26(23)-1:54.54(5)-1:14.69(12)-6:50.87(4) 154.872

Team Sprint Ladies, 3 laps

1	Min-Sun Kim, Mi Jang, Cho-Won Park	KOR	1:33.72
2	Xue Lin, Xiaoxuan Shi, Nan Sun	CHN	1:33.91

3	Daria Kachanova, Anastasia Chepil, Elizaveta Kazelina	RUS	1:34.16
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Team Sprint Men, 3 laps

1	Seung-Yong Yang, Jun-Ho Kim, Min-Seok Kim	KOR	1:24.22
2	Bjørn Magnussen, Henrik Fagerli Rukke, Magnus Myren Kristensen	NOR	1:25.43
3	Viktor Mushtakov, Danila Bobyr, Mikhail Kazelin	RUS	1:25.49

Team Pursuit Ladies, 6 laps

1	Sanneke de Neeling, Esmee Visser, Melissa Wijfje	NED	3:14.57
2	Ha-Eun Kim, Cho-Won Park, Ji-Woo Park	KOR	3:17.96
3	Nene Sakai, Ayano Sato, Mizuho Takayama	JPN	3:18.85

Team Pursuit Men, 8 laps

1	Marcel Bosker, Wesly Dijs, Patrick Roest	NED	4:01.50
2	Min-Seok Kim, Hyun-Min Oh, Ki-Woong Park	KOR	4:02.46
3	Riki Hayashi, Seitaro Ichinohe, Aoi Yokoyama	JPN	4:04.69

Mass Start Ladies, 10 laps

1	Vanessa Bittner	AUT	6:00.34
2	Cho-Won Park	KOR	6:00.69
3	Melissa Wijfje	NED	6:00.70

Mass Start Men, 10 laps

1	Hyun-Min Oh	KOR	5:09.79
2	Marcel Bosker	NED	5:09.82
3	Bin Zhou	CHN	5:09.95

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