

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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Press release

Heerenveen, December 10, 2016

ISU Speed Skating World Cup Heerenveen Day 2 #WCSpeed

Ireen Wüst (NED) was back on the top spot of the World Cup podium when she won the 1500m on Day 2 of the ISU Speed Skating World Cup in Heerenveen. Kjeld Nuis also won the Men's 1500m on home soil. Joey Mantia (USA) ran away with gold after an exciting race in the Men's mass start and Bo-Reum Kim (KOR) sprinted to the Ladies' Mass Start gold after a brave solo effort in vain by Mia Manganello (USA). Japan won the ladies Team Sprint and USA the Men's.

Wüst back in winning mood for home crowd

Ireen Wüst won her first 1500m World Cup race since 2014. The Dutchwoman took a break after the first two World Cups in Nagano and Harbin to beat Heather Bergsma and Miho Takagi (JPN) on home soil in Thialf. Wüst clocked 1:55.34, Bergsma 1:55.99 and Takagi 1:56.08.

Wüst was happy, although she still saw room for improvement: "It's good to win again after two years, but I've been two seconds faster in Thialf in the past." She felt that her break during the Astana World Cup had been good. "I've always taken a break after the first two World Cup to train in the sun and work on the basics. When I returned to the ice last week, I felt I lacked a little speed, but that did not worry me. That's the advantage of being thirty and growing grey hairs, you know from experience that things will turn around."

World Cup leader Marrit Leenstra (NLD) was paired to Heather Bergsma (USA) in the final pair. Bergsma, who had won the first two 1500m World Cup races, was second in the ranking. Bergsma had a quick start and crossed ahead of Leenstra coming from the outer lane at the first crossing. Leenstra hung in and stayed close however. The American lady won the race, but she had to bow her head for Wüst. Leenstra ended up fourth

Miho Takagi, who won in Astana, was happy to win bronze. She tried a different race plan in Heerenveen: "I used to skate more relaxed in the first 700m, but now I tried to make more speed before the 700m split. It's difficult because you get tired, but it worked out well, so I'm satisfied."

Gold despite sore shoulder for Nuis

Kjeld Nuis won the Men's 1500m despite a sore shoulder after he crashed with a mountain bike at a training camp in Italy last week. The Dutchman clocked 1:45.11 to beat Russian Denis Yuskov (1:45.41) and compatriot Patrick Roest (1:46.42).

"Jac [Orie] was quite angry, but now we can laugh about it", said Nuis. The skater had gone mountain biking without his coach's consent when he crashed into a tree. "It bothered me at the start. I had trouble to find my balance", he said. He was satisfied about his race. "It went well technically and I was able to push through towards the end. I happy with a 1:45 time, but pretty soon it will be a 1:44."

Yuskov was less happy with the silver although he had enjoyed the atmosphere in the final pair versus Joey Mantia. "My wife and my six-year-old son were in the stands for the first time in

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Heerenveen and they really enjoyed it, but I'm not really satisfied with my race", he said.

Mantia was not satisfied either, but he was able to produce a great smile, when he won the mass start at the end of the day. "I just had a little bit of fire lit up burning under me, and it worked to my advantage", he laughed with the Mass Start medal around his neck. "I was a little flat and a bit tired going into the 1500m and you have to give everything you have. Coming fifth Mantia managed to stay on top of the World Cup ranking with 270 points. Yuskov got closer in second place with 270 points and Nuis climbed to third place with 205 points.

Japanese ladies win Team Sprint again

This season's second Ladies' team sprint produced the exact same result as the first in Nagano. Japan took gold ahead of Russia, with the Netherlands completing the podium in third place. The Dutch girls Bo van der Werff, Anice Das and Sanneke de Neeling, clocked 1:28.80 to beat Canada in the second pairing. Norway, who skated solo in the first race, were disqualified. In the final pairing Japan's Arisa Go, Maki Tsuji and Noa Kodaira confidently beat Russia (Nadezhda Aseeva, Angelina Golikova, Olga Fatkulina). Japan took the lead right from the start, increasing the gap to more than a second after three laps.

Japan stayed on top of the World Cup ranking with 200 points. Russia is second with 160 points and the Netherlands third with 140 points.

USA first in Team Sprint Men

Team USA won the Men's team sprint after not having raced in the first Team Sprint event in Nagano. Kimani Griffin, Jonathan Garcia and Mitchell Whitmore clocked 1:19.97. Canada (Laurent Dubreuil, Christopher Fiola, Vincent De Haitre) came second in 1:20.29 and Poland (Artur Nogal, Piotr Michalski, Sebastian Klosinski) took the bronze medal in 1:20.58.

The one gold medal did not take USA into the top three of the World Cup ranking after two Team Sprint races. Canada, who won in Nagano, leads the pack with 180 points. Germany, second in Nagano and fifth in Heerenveen, is second with 130 points and the Netherlands, who finished fourth on home soils, is third with 110 points.

Kim steels win after brave Manganello effort in Mass Start

Bo-Reum Kim took her second World Cup gold of the season in the ladies Mass Start. After an exciting race the Korean beat Dutch Irene Schouten and Italian Francesca Lollobrigida in the bunch sprint.

Team USA took the initiative. Heather Bergsma and Mia Manganello attacked early on together with Chinese Dan Li. After the first intermediate sprint Manganello went solo with Dan Li and Bergsma still in front of the pack. Manganello came as close as 80 meters from catching up with the bunch, in which all skaters played a game of wait and see. With three laps to go, the bunch picked up pace.

Annouk van der Weiden made an effort, followed by compatriot Irene Schouten. The brave Manganello was caught with only one lap to go, and Kim took full advantage of the work Schouten and Van der Weijden had done. Schouten had to settle for silver and Francesca Lollobrigida, who had also helped chasing down Manganello, was rewarded with a bronze medal.

Despite her second place Schouten was happy with the race and with her tactics. "This was great

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for the crowd. Most of the times the bunch skates together into the final lap and the race is decided by a sprint. It's better for the public to have some action. We waited on purpose. Our coach [Geert Kuiper] told us to wait. Of course it was a gamble, but I sort of knew that the American would not last until the end. It would have been different if it would have been [Martina] Sáblíková (CZE)." Schouten also said that waiting was a Dutch statement on their race tactics in general. "They always let us do all the hard work. This time we wanted others to do their part too."

With her victory Kim climbed to the top of the World Cup ranking with 340 points. Ivanie Blondin (CAN), who finished tenth, dropped to second place with 308 points and Lollobrigida is third with 260 points.

Mantia's revenge

The Men's Mass Start was as exciting as the Ladies'. Joey Mantia ran away with the flowers after a solo effort in the last two laps, with Seung-Hoon Lee winning the bunch sprint for silver. Dutch Evert Hoolwerf grabbed the bronze.

"I went into the mass start and I was going to lay it all out there", Mantia said. Instead of his female compatriot Manganello, Mantia decided on a wait-and-see tactics in the Men's event. Japanese Ryosuke Tsuchiya was the first to try a solo breakaway and he was in front at the first two intermediate sprints. Peter Michael (NZL) tried a jump to catch up, Viktor Hald Thorup (NOR) also made an effort, as did Jorrit Bergsma (NED).

Ryosuke Tsuchiya got caught and Livio Wenger (SUI) tried his luck in a solo attempt, but the bunch did not let him go. Mantia chose the right moment. "I was not going to sprint for any intermediate sprints", the American said. "Just sit in the pack and hopefully it would stay together. It did and it just slowed down at the perfect moment for me, with somewhat around two laps to go. It was now or never and I went."

Mantia gave it his all and did not look back until the final straight, celebrating quite early with the sprinting bunch behind. "I was tired", he laughed afterwards. "I had no idea how far they were, or how close. The last straight I looked back and there was nobody else. And I was tired. It's nice to be able to stand up on the last straight."

With his silver medal Lee retained the Mass Start World Cup lead with 262 points. Andrea Giovannini (ITA), who finished fifth in Heerenveen, is second with 190 points and Mantia climbed to third with 178 points.

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 in Heerenveen (NED) continues on Sunday with the Ladies' 5000m, the Ladies' and Men's 1000m and the Men's 10,000m.

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

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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>

ISU World Cup Speed Skating Heerenveen (NED) medalists

1500m Ladies

1	Ireen Wüst	NED	1:55.34
2	Heather Bergsma	USA	1:55.99
3	Miho Takagi	JPN	1:56.08

1500m Men

1	Kjeld Nuis	NED	1:45.11
2	Denis Yuskov	RUS	1:45.41
3	Patrick Roest	NED	1:46.42

Team Sprint Men

1	USA (Kimani Griffin, Jonathan Garcia, Mitchell Whitmore)	USA	1:19.97
2	Canada (Laurent Dubreuil, Christopher Fiola, Vincent De Haitre)	CAN	1:20.29
3	Poland (Artur Nogal, Piotr Michalski, Sebastian Klosinski)	POL	1:20.58

Team Sprint Ladies

1	Japan (Arisa Go, Maki Tsuji, Noa Kodaira,)	JPN	1:27.55
2	Russia (Nadezhda Aseeva, Angelina Golikova, Olga Fatkulina)	RUS	1:28.68
3	Netherlands (Bo van der Werff, Anice Das, Sanneke de Neeling,)	NED	1:28.80

Mass Start Ladies

1	Bo-Reum Kim	KOR	8:31.73
2	Irene Schouten	NED	8:31.82
3	Francesca Lollobrigida	ITA	8:31.83

Mass Start Men

1	Joey Mantia	USA	8:05.60
2	Seung-Hoon Lee	KOR	8:05.94

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3	Evert Hoolwerf	NED	8:06.40
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World Cup Ranking

1500m Ladies

1	Marrit Leenstra	NED	290
2	Heather Bergsma	USA	280
3	Miho Takagi	JPN	270

1500m Men

1	Joey Mantia	USA	270
2	Denis Yuskov	RUS	260
3	Kjeld Nuis	NED	205

Team Sprint

1	Japan	JPN	200
2	Russia	RUS	160
3	Netherlands	NED	140

Team Sprint Men

1	Canada	CAN	180
2	Germany	GER	130
3	Netherlands	NED	110

Mass Start Ladies

1	Bo-Reum Kim	KOR	340
2	Ivanie Blondin	CAN	308
3	Francesca Lollobrigida	ITA	260

Mass Start Men

1	Seung-Hoon Lee	KOR	262
2	Andrea Giovannini	ITA	190
3	Joey Mantia	USA	178