

Press release

30 September 2017

Audi ISU World Cup Short Track Budapest HUN, Day 1

The Republic of Korea started their World Cup campaign in style, bagging three of the four gold medals up for grabs on the first day of the Audi ISU World Cup Short Track at the BOK Hall in Budapest, Hungary.

The 2015 overall world champion Choi Min Jeong (KOR) dominated the ladies' events side, winning both the 1500m and 500m.

However, the big home hope for the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games claimed she is still far from her best shape.

"I felt a lot of pressure and I think that I'm not ready for it (PyeongChang 2018) yet," Choi said after the 1500m win.

"I am a bit more relaxed after winning but I think that my condition is now only 60 per cent of what it should be."

Kim Boutin (CAN) stayed in the top-two throughout the whole 1500m final and Deanna Lockett (AUS) won bronze after a penalty on Shim Suk Hee (KOR).

"It's my first-ever World Cup medal so it's always going to be really exciting. I've been waiting for this for a long time," Lockett said.

Shim came back to take bronze in the women's 500m, Arianna Fontana (ITA) claiming silver.

"I didn't feel that I'm 100 per cent ready to race and in particular the 500 is really hard for me right now, so my goal was to follow someone for one or two laps and pass before the Koreans were coming," the Italian said.

The Koreans, taking seven of the 12 podium positions available on Saturday, started the men's competition with a gold and a silver in the 1500m event.

Lim Hyo Jun (KOR) won ahead of Hwang Dae Heon (KOR), the distance's world record-holder Sjinkie Knegt of the Netherlands forced to settle for a bronze medal.

"I think that we have a strong team this season. I did a good job because my teammates helped me out. I'd like to say thank you to the other members of the team," silver medalist Hwang said.



The duo were back on the podium after the men's 500m final, also then Lim ahead of Hwang. However, home favourite Shaolin Sandor Liu (HUN) won the gold medal – and the biggest cheers – as he came back from missing out on a medal in the 1500m.

"It felt really good in front of the home crowd. They were really loud, surprisingly, really nice and made me feel really good. I saw the medals at a press conference and I really wanted to get one, so I was working for that," Liu said.

"I was a little bit down after the 1500m but I was there with my head and put the race together.

Liu's girlfriend, world champion Elise Christie (GBR), had a tougher day. The British favourite injured her front thigh muscles and hip flexor in Thursday's competitions, and could finish only in fourth in the 1500m and missing the Final A in the 500m.

"I've been skating really strong this summer, training on the longer distances, but then I got this injury on Thursday and my performances haven't really been the best," Christie said.

"My teammates are saying, 'You came fourth in the world, a lot of people would be happy with that', but I find it hard to go out and compete and not be able to produce what I feel that I'm capable of.

"I know that when it repairs I will be stronger. At the Olympics I won't have this problem because I'll be far more rested."

The Audi ISU World Cup Short Track in Budapest continues on Sunday with finals in 1000m and relays.

Full [results and classifications](#). Follow the discussion on social media by using **#WCShortTrack** and **#ShortTrackSkating** and watch the live stream on the [ISU Skating Channel](#).

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).