

Press release

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Rivals look to fight back in Netherlands after Republic of Korea's dominant display in Budapest

The Audi ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating series continues in Dordrecht, Netherlands, between Thursday October 5 and Sunday October 8, 2017. It is the second of four international events that will help determine who qualifies for the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games.

If the first World Cup fixture of the season last weekend in Budapest is anything to go by, the Republic of Korea will enjoy an extraordinarily successful home Olympics. They continued the dominance shown at the at the 2017 ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Championships back in March by winning six of the eight events in front of a vocal Hungarian crowd.

Catching the eye the most was Republic of Korea's Choi Min Jeong. She scooped a remarkable full-set of first places, winning the 500m, 1000m, 1500m and 3000m Ladies' relay.

Such form helped ease the pressure of being the big home hope for medals at PyeongChang 2018, although Choi claimed there was still room for improvement. "I'm really happy, I feel more confident now," she said. "I'm not ready for (PyeongChang 2018) yet – I think my condition is only 60 per cent what it should be."

The likes of Canada's Kim Boutin, who came 2nd in the 1000m and 1500m, Italian Arianna Fontana (2nd in the 500m) and Great Britain's Elise Christie (3rd in the 1000m), who was carrying an injury, could only watch Choi with admiration as she beat them again and again. Dordrecht will be a chance for them to prove that the whole season won't be a one-woman race.

Choi's teammates also looked strong during the Budapest weekend, with Shim Suk Hee, Kim A Lang and Kim Ye Jin combining to beat Canada (2nd) and Russia (3rd) in the 3000m relay.

Canada's Marianne St-Gelais, meanwhile, will also be optimistic of improving on her Budapest showing (4th in the 500m and 2nd in the 3000 relay). Elise Christie, the 1000m, 1500m and overall World Champion, will also have been disappointed with the opening weekend, although a thigh injury clearly hampered her performances. Other names to look out for include Australian Deanna Lockett (3rd in the 1500m), Kexin Fan from China and Suzanne Schulting who will be looking to please in front of a Dutch home crowd.

In the men's events, Lim Hyo Jun led the way. He won the 1000m and 1500m, with teammate Hwang Dae Heon finishing 2nd in both races. Their excellence is down to a sense of unity, believes Hwang. "We have a strong team this season and I did a good job because my teammates helped me out," he said. "I'd like to say thank you to the other members."

But local hero Sandor Shaolin Liu— born to a Chinese father and Hungarian mother – broke the Korean deadlock in the individual races by taking the 500m final. “It felt really good in front of the home crowd,” he said. “They were really loud, really nice.”

In the 5000m relay, meanwhile, a Canada team made up of Charles Hamelin, Charle Cournoyer, Samuel Girard and Pascal Dion were victorious. China were second, and Japan third, with the Republic of Korea missing their only podium of the weekend, finishing fourth.

Should we expect more of the same in Dordrecht? Not necessarily. Some major names perhaps started the season a little slowly. South Korea’s Seo Yi Ra, the current men’s World Champion in 1000m, should contend this year, while the Netherlands’ Sjinkie Knegt, crowned 500m World Champion back in March, will be determined to impress on home turf. Strong contenders also include Canadian Samuel Girard and Chinese favorites Tianyu Han and Dajing Wu.

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).