



## Press release

18 November 2017

### Norway and Japan on top again on day 2 in Stavanger

It was another happy day for Norwegian speed skating. After Håvard Holmefjord Lorentzen (NOR) won two gold medals on Friday, Sverre Lunde Pedersen (NOR) and Sindre Henriksen (NOR) took gold and bronze, respectively, in the Men's 1500m on Saturday. Ronald Mulder (NED) won the Men's 500m.

Nao Kodaira (JPN) and Miho Takagi (JPN) confirmed Japan's current dominance in Ladies' speed skating, winning the 500m and the 1500m, respectively.

#### **Norway rules men's 1500m**

Norway not only took gold and bronze in the men's 1500m, four of the home nation's skaters finished in the top ten.

Sverre Lunde Pedersen clinched his second career individual World Cup win and Sindre Henriksen made his individual podium debut. Joey Mantia (USA) grabbed silver.

Pedersen finished in 1 minute, 45.07 seconds, Mantia took 1:45.28, while Hendriksen stopped the clock at 1:45.37.

The difference was made in the final lap. Pedersen needed just 27.4 seconds for the final 400 meters. Eight skaters were faster than the Norwegian at the 1100-meter split, but only one competitor other than Pedersen was capable of skating a sub-28-second final lap – his compatriot, Allan Dahl Johansson, who finished in sixth place in 1:45.58.

The tenth place of Håvard Bøkko (NOR) meant that the top ten skaters included four Norwegians. Speed skating in the nation seems to be enjoying a resurgence after a poor decade. The results had been a long time coming, Pedersen explained:

“It takes time to build up a new generation. We've been a big group of young skaters a little longer but now we get older, so we just had to wait some years. It's always been there. “

Henriksen was happy to give the home crowd something to cheer for:

“Last season was not so good for us, but we've been patient and working really good. We have a good mentality in the team and now it pays off.



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“We have a lot of [speed skating] tradition in Norway of course. People want this and finally we turned it around.

“This is a dream come true for me. Who would have thought this some years ago.”

Henriksen had made an important technical change to improve his 1500m races:

“I’ve been racing with the hand on the back in the 1500m this year and that really pays off, because I have really long legs, I can get more momentum in the straights.

“This is the second time I’ve done it in competition.”

## **Mulder victorious in competitive Men’s 500m**

Ronald Mulder beat an extremely competitive field to take gold in the men’s 500m in 34.62 seconds. The first 16 skaters finished within 0.36 seconds of the winner.

Daichi Yamanaka (JPN) grabbed a surprising silver medal in 34.65s, while Friday’s silver medalist, Hein Otterspeer (NED), finished in 34.76s to add a bronze medal to his honors.

For Mulder it was his fifth World Cup win in the 500m, his previous victory dating back to the 2015/16 season, when he took gold in Heerenveen.

“I have not won very often, so this feels very good,” Mulder said.

Mulder took advantage of the draw, which put him in the penultimate pair versus his compatriot, Otterspeer.

“That was good,” Mulder said. “He skated very good yesterday and his in form. My opener was better today. On the back stretch, I could draft behind Hein and the final corner was good. It was a solid race.”

The 31-year-old was surprised to see his younger rival from Japan, 27-year-old Yamanaka, take the silver medal .

“No disrespect, but I had never heard of him before this weekend, but this gives Japanese Speed Skating a boost. They have a couple of very good skaters, you already could see that coming last season.

“It shows how competitive the 500m is. This man [Yamanaka] is also a candidate for Olympic gold.”

Lorentzen, who had won Friday’s 500m and 1000m, finished in sixth place in 34.79s on Saturday.



## **Takagi claims another Ladies 1500m gold**

Miho Takagi claimed her second 1500m gold medal this season. Heather Bergsma (USA) took silver and Lotte van Beek (NED) grabbed the bronze medal.

Takagi made the difference in her final lap. Paired with Lotte van Beek in the final race, the 23-year-old Japanese skater was 0.36 seconds behind Bergsma's time at 1100m, but she finished 1.18 seconds ahead of the American lady in 1 minute, 55.30 seconds.

Takagi skated 30.9s in her final lap, while Bergsma needed 32.4s for the final 400 meters and Van Beek 31.8s.

Bergsma, whose 25.1s over the opening 300m was the fastest of the entire field, crossed the line at 1:56.48. Van Beek finished in 1:57.51.

Although Takagi, as an endurance skater, doesn't train with sprint queen Nao Kodaira, the success of her compatriot is an inspiration.

"We both have good results this season. We push each other to a higher level," Takagi said.

"My goal this season is the Olympic Games. I can still do better than I've shown here, especially in the corners. I need to gain more speed in the corners."

Silver medalist Bergsma is slowly but confidently working on her form.

"The opener and the first lap were what I expected. I still have some work to do on the last lap, but it comes.

"I need a little more rest. I did two [skating] marathons before the season and last weekend a Mass Start. It all adds up. Once I rest a little, my laps will become better.

## **Kodaira maintains perfect World Cup record**

Kodaira was the star of the show again as she claimed gold once more and set another track record.

After winning in 37.08 seconds in the 500m on Friday, the World Champion maintained her perfect World Cup record this season finishing in 37.07s in the second 500m on Saturday.

Angelina Golikova (RUS) was 0.78 slower to take silver. The 26-year-old Russian took her first individual World Cup medal last week, clinching bronze in Heerenveen. After finishing sixth in 38.05s on Friday, she bounced back with 37.85s on Saturday.

Sang-Hwa Lee (KOR) was the last of three skaters who managed to stay under 38 seconds, taking bronze in 37.95s on Saturday. The world record holder had posted 38.08s on Friday.



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Kodaira leads the 500m World Cup ranking with the maximum score of 400 points from four races. Lee comes second with 270, while Vanessa Herzog (AUT), who finished sixth in 38.10s on Saturday, is third overall with 235 points.

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

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**About ISU World Cup Speed Skating 2017/18 Series**

The ISU World Cup Speed Skating is a series of international Speed Skating competitions which takes place annually. The Series started in 1984 and usually consists of six or seven events including the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final. Skaters can earn points at each competition, and the skater who has the most points on a given distance at the end of the series is the World Cup winner of that distance. Skaters also cumulate Grand World Cup points each time they compete in a distance. During the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final, the Lady and the Man with the most Grand World Cup points is crowned the Grand World Cup winner.

The results on the individual distances in the World Cup ranking are the main qualifying method for the ISU World Single Distances Speed Skating Championships.

A number of World Cup titles are awarded every season, for Men: 500 m, 1000 m, 1500 m, combined 5000 m / 10000 m, Team Pursuit, Mass Start and Team Sprint. For Ladies 500 m, 1000 m, 1500 m, the combined 3000 m / 5000 m, Team Pursuit, Mass Start and Team Sprint.