

November 24, 2018

Obihiro, Japan

## **Sensational solo hands Mikhailov first WC gold**

**Belarussian Vitaly Mikhailov won his first career World Cup gold with a sensational solo in the Men's mass start. In the ladies' competition Ireen Wüst clinched her career 22<sup>nd</sup> World Cup gold in the 1500m.**

### **Shinhama takes 500m double**

[Tatsuya Shinhama](#) (JPN) struck again in the Men's 500m. After he took his maiden World Cup win in track record time in Friday's 500m, the 22-year-old sprinter crushed the track record once more on the Tomakomai Highland Sports Center on Saturday. With 35.20 seconds, he was 0.24 seconds faster than [Viktor Mushtakov](#) (RUS), who took silver. The 21-year-old Russian was 0.33 faster than he had been on Friday, when he ended up fifth. Mushtakov's older team mate and tutor [Pavel Kulizhnikov](#) (RUS) pulled out for Saturday's race after a disappointing sixth place on Friday.

[Yuma Murakami](#) (JPN) clinched Saturday's bronze after his silver medal in the first 500m run in Tomakomai. He equaled his Friday time of 35.53 to keep Dutchman Kai Verbij (35.63) and Jan Smeekens (35.66) off the podium.

Shinhama pushed Kulizhnikov off the top in the World Cup ranking. With 204 points he has a 30 point lead over [Håvard Lorentzen](#) (NOR). The Olympic Champion came seventh in 35.74 on Saturday. [Ryohei Haga](#) (JPN), who finished eighth, is in third place with 154 points.

### **Dutch podium sweep**

Last week's 1500m winner [Denis Yuskov](#) (RUS) was absent in Tomakomai and the Dutch men took full advantage. [Kjeld Nuis](#), [Patrick Roest](#) and [Thomas Krol](#) swept the podium, with Japan's [Seitaro Ichinohe](#) (JPN) leading the rest of the field in fourth place.

Nuis took on team mate and Roest in the second last pair. The set-up was clear. The Olympic 1500m Champion would start fast and hang in, while the World Allround Champion was going to pace his race with a moderate start to accelerate towards the end. With 24.26 Nuis did start fast, but Roest was only 0.25 behind. It gave Nuis the perfect opportunity to draft behind Roest's back at the first cross-over, and he was 0.8 seconds faster in the lap. Nuis took another 0.2 seconds in the penultimate lap and although Roest did make up time with a 28.8 final lap versus 29.5 for Nuis, the race was already over. Nuis was the only one to skate under 1:48 with 1:47.61. Roest stopped the clock at 1:48.20.

Thomas Krol took the ice in the final pair. He managed to start faster than Nuis, but he was slower throughout the rest of the race and despite still being faster than Roest at the 1100m split, he eventually had to settle for bronze behind his two team mates.

After two races Nuis, Roest and Krol are also on top of the 1500m World Cup ranking in the exact same order. Ichinohe is fourth and Yuskov dropped back to 11<sup>th</sup> place.

### **Mikhailov sees attack rewarded in Mass Start**

[Vitaly Mikhailov](#) (BLR) surprised everyone to take his first World Cup in the Mass Start gold. Together with compatriot [Aleksei Kirpichnik](#) the 32-year-old Belarussian set up a surprise attack

straight from the start. Kirpichnik was the first to jump. After the first intermediate sprint he waited for Mikhailov, who was a little behind and the two cooperated until Kirpichnik had to give way.

The riders in the bunch hesitated and no one wanted to waste energy in the chase, resulting in a gradually increasing gap for the sole leader. With three laps to go, Mikhailov still had a 300m advantage over the bunch and he managed to stay well ahead until the end.

Cheonho Um (KOR) beat Bart Swings (BEL) in the silver medal sprint to take the lead in the World Cup rankings. Swings is second and Livio Wenger (SUI) third.

### **Wüst beats Takagi and Bowe in 1500m**

[Ireen Wüst](#) (NED) captured her career 22<sup>nd</sup> 1500m World Cup win in Tomakomai. [Miho Takagi](#) (JPN), who was unbeaten in five World Cup 1500m races last season but came second last week in Obihiro, had to settle for silver again. Last week's winner [Brittany Bowe](#) (USA) took the bronze medal.

[Francesca Lollobrigida](#) (ITA), who came third in the B Division last week, was promoted to the A Division and set a high bar in the second pairing already, when she clocked 2:00.01. Her time stood until Wüst was the first to break the two-minute-barrier, stopping the clock at 1:58.742 in the eighth pairing.

Miho Takagi and [Antoinette de Jong](#) (NED) challenged Wüst's time in the penultimate pair, but Takagi came more than half a second short with 1:59.28, and De Jong finished in 1:59.95 to take fourth place, just ahead of Lollobrigida, who ended up in fifth place.

In the final pairing, last week's winner Bowe exploded from the start. The 30-year-old American was ahead of Wüst in all split times until 1100m, but she couldn't maintain her pace and finished in 1:59.82.

Bowe kept the lead in the 1500m World Cup ranking with 108 points. Takagi came level in points and Wüst retained third place with 103 points.

### **Business as usual for Kodaira**

[Nao Kodaira](#) (JPN) was not as fast as she had been on Friday, but 38.26 seconds was more than enough to secure her second 500m win of the weekend. Vanesse Herzog (AUT) took her fourth consecutive silver medal in 38.56, while [Brittany Bowe](#) (USA) took her second bronze medal of the day.

Kodaira and Herzog extended their lead as number one and two in the 500m World Cup ranking. [Olga Fatkulina](#) (RUS) came sixth on Saturday and dropped to fifth place in the ranking behind [Angelina Golikova](#) (RUS) and Bowe.

### **Bo-Reum Kim wins Mass Start**

Without last week's winner and Olympic Champion [Nana Takagi](#) (JPN) and Olympic bronze medalist [Irene Schouten](#) (NED), the ladies' Mass Start field seemed to be decapitated, but [Bo-Reum Kim](#) (KOR) was present to take the honors.

[Esmee Visser](#) (NED) was the first to set-up an attack in a race that was hampered by many crashes in the back of the bunch. [Claudia Pechstein](#) (GER) countered and Visser never really

managed to get away from the pack. Her compatriot [Mellissa Wijfje](#) took over the lead in the penultimate lap, while the bunch was gearing up for a final sprint. [Francesca Lollobrigida](#) (ITA) went to the front for the final lap and was still in the lead on the final straight, but Kim came from behind to edge her out on the line and take the gold medal. Lollobrigida got silver and [Ivanie Blondin](#) (CAN) came third.

Bo-Reum Kim took over the lead from Nana Takagi in the Mass Start World Cup, with Lollobrigida in second and Blondin in third. Takagi dropped to ninth place and Schouten to 14<sup>th</sup>.

For full entry lists and further information regarding the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series please visit: [isu.org/speed-skating](http://isu.org/speed-skating). Results are [here](#) and you can follow the discussion on social media by using #WCSpeedSkating and #SpeedSkating.

The ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series will be available on in some countries on the ISU Skating Channel.

#### **About ISU World Cup Speed Skating 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. The World Cup Competitions held from November to December serve as qualifying events for entry quotas at the ISU European, World Single Distances, World Sprint and World Allround Speed Skating Championships. A number of World Cup titles are awarded every season; For Men: 500m, 1000m, 1500m, combined 5000m / 10,000m, Mass Start, Team Pursuit and Team Sprint. For Ladies 500m, 1000m, 1500m, the combined 3000m / 5000m, Mass Start, Team Pursuit and Team Sprint. For further information please visit [isu.org/WorldCupSpeedSkating](http://isu.org/WorldCupSpeedSkating).