

December 5, 2018

Tomaszów Mazowiecki, Poland

First World Cup in Arena Lodowa

Track records are to be expected at the Arena Lodowa, when the world's fastest speed skaters line-up for the third leg of the ISU World Cup Speed Skating in Tomaszów Mazowiecki this weekend. The newly built indoor track opened its doors last year and hosted its first international event, when the ISU Junior World Cup Speed Skating visited two weeks ago.

Herzog favourite in ladies' sprint

The World Cup weekend will start with the ladies' 500m, in which the field is wide open because Olympic Champion [Nao Kodaira](#) (JPN) is absent in Poland. The Japanese empress of the sprint won all four 500m World Cup races so far. [Vanesse Herzog](#) (AUT) came second on all four occasions and she'll be aiming at her first 500m gold of this World Cup season. [Angelina Golikova](#) clinched three bronze medals and [Olga Fatkulina](#) (RUS) was on the podium once. At the Junior World Cup two weeks ago Dutch Michelle de Jong set a new track record at the Arena Lodowa (38.78).

Herzog already won a 1000m World Cup race this season and she'll have set sights on taking another one on Friday night. Even without Kodaira, she faces tough competition in [Brittany Bowe](#) (USA), who already claimed a silver and a bronze medal in the 1000m this season. Kodaira's compatriot [Miho Takagi](#) and Dutch veteran [Ireen Wüst](#) are fourth and fifth in the 1000m ranking.

Kulizhnikov to challenge Japanese dominance

In the men's 500m Japan's [Tatsuya Shinhama](#) and [Ryohei Haga](#) are the surprising numbers one and three in the World Cup ranking, with Olympic Champion [Håvard Lorentzen](#) (NOR) in second place. World record holder [Pavel Kulizhnikov](#) (RUS) hopes to bounce back after a disappointing weekend at the outdoor World Cup in Tomakomai, when he even decided not to start in the second 500m and the 1000m.

Kulizhnikov had won the first 1000m of the World Cup season in Obihiro, with [Kjeld Nuis](#) (NED) coming second. Olympic Champion Nuis leads the World Cup ranking, after he clinched gold in Tomakomai, but he'll be absent in Tomaszów Mazowiecki, because the Dutch trade team LottoNL-Jumbo chose to skip the Poland World Cup to go training in Italian Collalbo. Nuis' teammate [Thomas Krol](#) (NED), who is second in the World Cup ranking, will be absent too. [Kai Verbij](#) (NED), who completes the current all Dutch top three in the 1000m ranking, will be aiming for the top spot after this weekend.

Japanese ladies eye tenth consecutive win

In the Team Pursuit the Japanese ladies are looking for their tenth consecutive World Cup win. The Olympic Champions were in a league of their own at the Obihiro and Tomakomai World Cups, with the Netherlands and Canada both taking a silver medal and Russia grabbing the bronze twice. The Polish ladies, currently fourth in the ranking, are dreaming of a podium finish on home soil.

The Netherlands leads the Men's Team Pursuit ranking, but the Dutch will have to skate without [Patrick Roest](#), who dragged the team to victory in Tomakomai, after the Netherlands had come second without the World Allround Champion in Obihiro. Russia won the Obihiro Team Pursuit and is second in the ranking. Norway and Japan are the current numbers three and four.

Yuskov hopes to take advantage of Dutch absence

On Saturday the main course will be the Men's and Ladies' 1500m, while the sprinters will enter the rink for the second 500m. Brittany Bowe defends her top position in the ladies 1500m, after a previous gold and bronze medal. The American has to keep Miho Takagi and Ireen Wüst at bay. Wüst won the second 1500m race this World Cup season, after finishing fourth in the first one, while Takagi took two silver medals.

[Denis Yuskov](#) (RUS) is gearing up win back the 1500m top spot, in absence of the Dutch top three in the World Cup ranking. The Russian won the first 1500m World Cup race in Obihiro, but skipped the outdoor competition in Tomakomai and saw Kjeld Nuis, Patrick Roest and Thomas Krol seizing power. Yuskov dropped to eleventh place after Tomakomai. His main rivals for the top spot in the ranking will be the current numbers four and five [Seitaro Ichinohe](#) (JPN) and [Sverre Lunde Pedersen](#) (NOR).

Endurance specialists on Sunday

On Sunday the sprinters skate their Team event, before the endurance specialists will enter the rink for the Ladies' 3000m and the Men's 5000m. [Esmee Visser](#) (NED) hopes to bounce back from a disappointing outdoor performance in Tomakomai. The Olympic 5000m champion finished 12th in the 3000m, after having won the event at the Indoor Arena in Obihiro in the previous week. [Isabelle Weidemann](#) (CAN) took full advantage of the tough and varying outdoor conditions to win her first World Cup gold two weeks ago. The Canadian climbed to third place in the ranking behind [Natalya Voronina](#) (RUS). Leader [Martina Sáblíková](#) (CZE) has not won a World Cup race this season yet.

Patrick Roest will not defend his top position in the long distance World Cup, after having won gold and bronze in the first two 5000m races of the season. The numbers two, three and four, Sverre Lunde Pedersen, [Aleksandr Rumyantsev](#) (RUS) and [Bart Swings](#) (BEL), will battle to take over the lead.

For full entry lists and further information regarding the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series please visit: 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.