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Tomaszów Mazowiecki, Poland

Russian men dominate in Poland

Pavel Kulizhnikov (RUS) and Vanesse Herzog (AUT) won the second 500m of the ISU World Cup Speed skating in Tomaszów Mazowiecki, Poland, on Saturday. Denis Yuskov (RUS) took gold in the 1500m and Miho Takagi (JPN) won her first 1500m race of this season beating Olympic Champion Ireen Wüst (NED)

Olympic revenge for reborn Kulizhnikov

After struggling with injuries last year, [Pavel Kulizhnikov](#) (RUS) is back to his old self this season. With 34.67 seconds the World Record holder was 0.16 seconds faster than he had been on Friday. [Tatsuya Shinhama](#) (JPN) took the silver medal in 34.87 and his compatriot [Yuma Murakami](#) (JPN) came third in 34.95. The two Japanese sprinter both improved upon their times from the day before. Their compatriot and Friday's silver medalist was 0.25 slower and had to settle for fourth place in 35.23.

Shinhama retained his top position in the 500m World Cup ranking with 296 points, but Kulizhnikov is closing in with 272 points in second place. [Håvard Lorentzen](#) (NOR), who finished sixth in 35.26 on Saturday, is third with 260 points.

Kulizhnikov won three 500m races and two 1000m races after three World Cup events. "I'm feeling very well from the start of the season," he said. "I was very motivated because we were not at the Olympics last year. Now I'm back to the plan I had since I was 15-16 years-old."

Kulizhnikov struggled with injuries last year, but he had knee surgery over the summer and everything is fine again. "I missed being in first place, but everything is fine now. I even feel better than I did before."

Yuskov back in contention in 1500m World Cup

Kulizhnikov's compatriot [Denis Yuskov](#) (RUS) struck on the 1500m, after having skipped the 1500m World Cup race in outdoor Tomakomai, Japan, two weeks ago. "I don't like skating on outdoor ovals," he said. "We have indoor rinks and I think outdoor is something of the past. I had already planned a training camp during this World Cup."

Yuskov beat Konrad Niedźwiedzki's (POL) track record (1:48.11) by 1.33 seconds, when he stopped the clock at 1 minute and 46.78 seconds. [Seitaro Ichinohe](#) (JPN) came second in 1:47.38 and [Min-Seok Kim](#) (KOR) took the bronze medal in 1:47.85.

Ichinohe took the lead in the 1500m World Cup rankings with 137 points, in absence of Dutchmen [Kjeld Nuis](#), [Patrick Roest](#) and [Thomas Krol](#), who were in first, second and third place after two World Cup events. Yuskov (120 points) climbed to joint second place with Kim. The Russian looks forward to compete with the Dutchmen in Heerenveen next week. "It's not an easy fight in the 1500m World Cup this season. The new points system keeps everyone closer together in the rankings and now that the Dutchmen were absent this weekend, it's going to be an exciting season. My main goal will be the 1500m at the World Single Distance Championships in Inzell, but the 1500m World Cup is another big goal."

Herzog wins another 500m gold

[Vanesse Herzog](#) (AUT) shaved another 0.03 seconds off the track record she had set on Friday's 500m. Skating versus Brittany Bowe (USA), who had won Friday's 1000m, the Austrian stopped the clock at 37.94. Bowe trailed by 0.28 seconds to take the bronze medal and [Olga Fatkulina](#) (RUS) took the silver medal again in 38.10. [Daria Kachanova](#) (RUS), who took Friday's bronze medal had to settle for fifth place in 38.45 and [Angelina Golikova](#) (RUS) came fourth in 38.35.

In absence of Nao Kodaira (JPN) Herzog increased the gap on top of the 500m World Cup ranking. With 336 points, she is 76 points ahead of the Japanese Olympic Champion, who is sixth after having won the first four races of the season. "Kodaira will not catch me anymore, because I will skate all races this season", she said. Fatkulina is Herzog's closest rival for the 500m World Cup. The Russian is second with 272 points. Bowe comes third with 257 points.

Despite being out of contention for the World Cup, Kodaira still is the one to beat in the ladies' 500m. "I'm always happy to race against her when she's there, but if she's not present, I'm also happy to win," Herzog said. The Austrian knows what to do to come closer, but it's not easy: "I have to improve my start. She's almost two tenths faster in the opener, but my full lap is about the same. That's the thing I have to improve this season, or maybe next season."

Season first for Takagi

[Miho Takagi](#) (JPN) won all four 1500m races she skated last World Cup season, but this season she had to settle for silver in the first two races of the World Cup series. In Tomaszów Mazowiecki she was back on top again. In a battle with Olympic Champion [Ireen Wüst](#) (NED), who had won the 1500m in Tomakomai two weeks ago, the Olympic silver medalist started cautiously, trailing her pair-mate 0.46 seconds at the 700m split. In the second half of the race Takagi, managed to maintain her speed better than Wüst and she stopped the clock at 1:57.32. Wüst crossed the line 0.89 seconds later to take silver. Brittany Bowe came third in 1:58.25.

Takagi took over the World Cup lead from Bowe, who had won the first 1500m of the season in Obihiro. The Japanese leader collected 168 points in three races. Wüst is second with 157 points and Bowe third with 156 points.

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 #WCSPeetSkating 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.