

January 29, 2019

Helsinki, Finland

## **Russia rule in ice cold Helsinki**

**With nine gold, six silver and nine bronze medals in the junior and neo-senior competitions combined, Russia dominated the second leg of the ISU Junior World Cup Speed Skating in Helsinki. The ice cold Oulunkylän liikuntapuisto outdoor rink also witnessed a new talent with a familiar name on the podium. Victoria Stirnemann (GER), daughter of three-time Olympic Champion and eight-time World Allround Champion Gunda Niemann-Stirnemann, won her career first Junior World Cup medals.**

### **Dutch dominate ladies' junior competition**

The Netherlands, who did not participate in the neo-senior category, topped the junior medal table with five gold, four silver and two bronze. Robin Groot clinched three gold medals in total, winning the 1000m, 1500m and Mass Start. In absence of compatriot Femke Kok, who had won the 1000m and the 1500m at the first World Cup in Tomaszów Mazowiecki, Poland, Groot also took the World Cup lead in all three distances.

Michelle de Jong (NED) won the 500m and retained her lead in the 500m World Cup classification. The younger sister of European Allround champion Antoinette took another gold medal joining Maud Lugters and Naomi Verkerk in the Team Sprint. The Dutch ladies carried home the overall World Cup victory, with their second victory in the second and last Team Sprint event of the season.

China's Yuhan Ma was the only non-Dutch junior lady to take gold, winning the 3000m in 4:32.15. With silver in 4:35.96 Paulien Verhaar (NED) climbed to the World Cup lead in the longest junior distance.

Sixteen-year-old Victoria Stirnemann, still a category B junior, clinched a bronze medal in the 1000m, and a silver in the 1500m.

### **Another double for Engebråten**

In the men's junior competition Hallgeir Engebråten (NOR) repeated his 1500m and the 3000m wins of the first Junior World Cup in Tomaszów Mazowiecki. The Norwegian long-distance prodigy retained the lead in the World Cup rankings in those two distances.

With Sergei Loginov in the 1000m, Artem Arefyev in the 500m, and the Team Sprint, Russia won three gold medals in the men's junior competition. Loginov and Arefyev lead the World Cup rankings in the respective distances, and together with Nikolai Trusov they also took home the overall World Cup in the Team sprint, winning the second and final race of the season.

Gabriel Odor (AUT) took his career first Junior World Cup gold medal, when he beat Teun de Wit (NED) on the final sprint to the line.

### **Suslova queen of neo-seniors**

Veronika Suslova (RUS) was the queen of the neo-senior competition in Helsinki, with two gold medals, two silver medals and one bronze. The 20-year-old started with a bronze in the 1000m, and silver medals in the 3000m and the Team Sprint on Saturday, before taking the highest podium spot twice in the 1500m and the Mass Start on Sunday.

Anna Opytova (RUS) won the 1000m, but Suslova retained the lead in the 1000m World Cup ranking. She's also on top of the 1500m and the Mass Start rankings. China won the neo-seniors ladies' Team Sprint World Cup final ranking, after a bronze medal in the first World Cup and gold in Helsinki.

China's Adake Er Ahena won individual gold in the 3000m to take the World Cup lead. Her compatriot Dongxue Xi won the 500m, but Romania's Mihaela Hogas climbed to the top of the 500m World Cup ranking with a silver medal on Sunday.

### **Two gold medals for Shkolin**

In the men's neo-senior competition Egor Shkolin (RUS) ran away with gold in the 3000m and the 1500m, taking the World Cup lead in those two distances. Finland's Samuli Suomalainen won the 1000m on home soil, but Odin By Farstad (NOR) took the World Cup lead with a silver medal. Norway took a back-to-back win in the Team Sprint to win the final ranking on Saturday.

On Sunday, Russia's Ruslan Zakharov won the 500m, while Jeffrey Rosanelli (ITA) retained the World Cup lead with a silver medal. Fridtjof Petzold (GER) concluded the men's neo-senior competition with gold in the Mass Start.

For further information regarding the ISU Junior 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 #JWCspeed and #SpeedSkating.

### **About ISU Junior World Cup Speed Skating Series**

Since the inaugural Junior World Cup in in 2008/09 many youngsters have had their first taste of international competition in Junior World Cup events. The format is comparable to the Senior World Cup Speed Skating Series, but the juniors only have three events in the whole season. After Tomaszów Mazowiecki the competition will resume in Helsinki on January 26-27, and the final will be held at Baselga di Piné on February 9-10. In 2016 a neo-senior World Cup was added to the Junior World Cup Series.

Participation in the Junior World Cup is open to Junior A and Junior B Skaters, born between July 1, 1999 and June 30, 2003, and to Junior C Skaters born between July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2004. Participation in the Neo-seniors division is open to Skaters born between July 1, 1995 and June 30, 1999.

For further information please visit <https://www.isu.org/speed-skating/events/junior-world-cup-speed-skating>