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Hamar, Norway

Ladies break two 2008 track records in Hamar, Kulizhnikov takes Men's 500m gold and Dutch sweep 1000m

Speed Skating fans at Hamar's Vikingskipet watched two track records set on the second day of the ISU World Cup Speed Skating. [Nao Kodaira](#) (JPN) won the 500m in 37.25 seconds to skate Jenny Wolf's (GER) 2008 time of 37.52 seconds into the history books, while [Brittany Bowe](#) (USA) took 1000m gold in 1 minute, 14.79 seconds, to beat another German 2008 track record: Anni Friesinger's 1:14.81.

[Pavel Kulizhnikov](#) (RUS) took charge in the Men's 500m World Cup ranking winning gold with what he described as a "so-so race". [Kai Verbij](#) (NED) led a Dutch podium sweep in the 1000m, but the European Champion did not skate the race of his life either. Both men considered the Hamar World Cup as a preparatory race for next week's showdown at the World Single Distance Championships in Inzell, Germany.

Herzog closing in on Kodaira

Nao Kodaira maintained her unbeaten 500m record in this season's World Cup, but her absence at the third leg in Poland leaves the World Cup ranking top spot to [Vanesse Herzog](#) (AUT). In Hamar, the two faced each other in the eighth pairing. Kodaira was 0.17 seconds faster over the first 100m but Herzog managed to win back a little in the full lap. Her 37.37s also bettered Wolf's previous record. [Angelina Golikova](#) (RUS) was more than half a second slower to take bronze in 37.91s.

Herzog was happy to retain her World Cup lead with the silver medal. "I had the fastest lap today so I'm happy," the 23-year-old said. "I'm stable with my starts and I'm satisfied with my 10.4 [over the opening 100m], but she [Kodaira] does 10.2 and that's a pretty big difference. The European Sprint Champion feels like she's closing in on the Olympic 500m champion.

"Coming out of the final corner she was a bit in front of me and I was closing the gap in the final 100 meters." The World Single Distance Championships take place in Inzell, Germany next week, and Herzog does not think that Kodaira is unbeatable. "I have a chance but it has to be a perfect race for me."

Kodaira was happy to test her legs after a long period of training in January. "This is my first race since the last year's national championships in Japan during the end of December and I think 500m was OK," she said.

"Overall, it was a good preparation for next week's World Single Distance Championships. I'm looking forward to it. I just want to sleep well, eat well for it and express myself on the ice."

Bowe rules 1000m

[Brittany Bowe](#) (USA) took her third consecutive 1000m win to extend her lead in the World Cup ranking. The US athlete skated against Kodaira in the final pair. Until that moment, [Lotte van Beek](#) (NED) had led the field having skated 1:15.42 in the second pairing.

"I wondered what was happening when I saw all the other races and no one managed to beat my time," van Beek said. "And then it was only one race to go, so I knew I was on the podium, which came as a surprise." Van Beek did not qualify for the World Single Distance Championships but she did earn a ticket for the World Cup Final in Salt Lake City in March. "It's sad that I will not skate in Inzell but that's my own fault," she said. "I should have been better in December [at the Dutch Single Distance Championships] to qualify but that's how it works. I'm happy that I could show that I can still be fast and that I will skate in Salt Lake City."

Kodaira and Bowe also showed that they can still skate fast. Bowe started in the inner lane, of which she took full advantage. She said: "I knew I needed to get moving so she wasn't sitting on me on that first back stretch, and then when she went under me I just tried to use her and continue building my strength through that 600m, to chase her down on the [second] back stretch. And there was the track record. I'm pleased with that. It sets me up well for next week, when it really counts."

Kodaira took silver in 1:15.25. "I think I need more speed in the first half", she said.

Kulizhnikov takes charge

[Pavel Kulizhnikov](#) (RUS) started in the final pairing versus [Tsubasa Hasegawa](#) (JPN). World Cup leader [Tatsuya Shinhama](#) (JPN) had skated the 12th-fastest time until that moment, leaving Kulizhnikov the perfect opportunity to grab the World Cup lead and that's exactly what he did. With 34.65s, he left [Kim Jun-Ho](#) (KOR) 0.06 seconds behind in second place. [Dai Dai Ntab](#) (NED) took bronze in 34.77.

Kulizhnikov said: "It was a so-so race. It looked OK but it's a little cold in here which did not feel very good."

Kulizhnikov has won the last four 500m races and overtakes Shinhama in the World Cup ranking. Norway's [Håvard Lorentzen](#) (NOR), who finished a disappointing 13th in 35.09, is in third place.

Verbij leads Dutch sweep

Kai Verbij, who won the European Sprint title in Collalbo, Italy in January, took gold in the 1000m. He finished in 1:08.47, leaving [Thomas Krol](#) (1:08.53) and [Kjeld Nuis](#) (1:08.71) in second and third place respectively.

"It was a good race for a training race," Verbij said. "Next week [at the World Championships in Inzell] I hope to do better and today I noticed a couple of things I can work on. But this doesn't tell us anything about my chances in Inzell. This is just one moment, and next week is another moment."

Krol was pleased with his performance and with the color of his medal: "I won a gold medal in Heerenveen of course, and a couple of bronzes, but I did not have a silver yet. This was my first race in three weeks and I'm satisfied. It was 95 percent OK."

Kulizhnikov came fourth in 1:08.87 after breaking a spring in his clap-skate at the start. "I felt it in the first corner so I couldn't skate a good opener and I couldn't skate a good race after that either."

The Russian is confident about his shape for the World Single Distance Championships: "I feel great, but it's sprinting so it's pure fortune next week."

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 [#WCSpeed](#) and [#SpeedSkating](#).

The ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series will be available on YouTube 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.