

October 31, 2019

Salt Lake City, USA

New faces, old champions and comeback queens as ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating starts in Salt Lake City (USA)

The ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating season gets under way in Salt Lake City on 1 November, with some fascinating racing in store.

The line-up in America this weekend is as notable for its absences as for the athletes that are in attendance. There are not many countries that can afford to drop the overall ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Champion from their racing squad for the year, but the Republic of Korea is one of them.

2019's ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Championship gold medalist (and overall ISU World Cup Short Track 500m winner) [Lim Hyojun](#) has not made the cut this season. Neither has [Kim Gun Woo](#), who was explosively brilliant at the end of the season, or [Hong Kyung Hwan](#), who also skated consistently.

That will leave [Hwang Dae Heon](#) as Korea's most recognisable and successful skater on the roster, with [Park Ji Won](#) and [Lee June Seo](#) also retaining their places from last year.

The trio that have replaced the world champion and two other regular World Cup medalists in the squad? Park In Wook, Kim Dongwook, Kim Dageom. All ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating debutants, not much is known about them outside Korea at this point – but to make the grade, they must be fast.

Also missing are 2015 ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Champion and double Olympic medalist [Sjinkie Knegt](#), who isn't in the Netherlands squad – but is back in training – and Great Britain's [Elise Christie](#), the 2017 ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Champion who is targeting a January comeback.

There's a notable comeback, however, from Italy's [Arianna Fontana](#) – the 500m gold medalist at PyeongChang 2018 – who returns after a season off, and contemplating retirement. Canada's legendary [Charles Hamelin](#), a three-time Olympic gold medalist, is back for another term too.

Races at the start of the season are notoriously unpredictable, as athletes get to grips with action on the ice again after an intensive summer of training. But recent warm-up and qualification tournaments offer some indication as to who is in good form and may be in contention in Salt Lake City.

The ISU Shanghai Trophy, held in early October, offered a short programme of events (1000m, Relay and Mixed Relay). [Suzanne Schulting](#), the Netherlands star who dominated last season and ended up as overall ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Champion, seems to have carried her form into the new campaign.

In Shanghai, she won the 1000m in her usual dominant style, just ahead of Hungary's [Petra Jaszapati](#), who had an excellent 2018-19 season. New face Zhang Chutong of China also looked promising in Shanghai and has made the squad for Salt Lake.

[Sandor Shaolin Liu](#) of Hungary won the men's 1000m – ahead of Zhang Tianyi of China. Also making the final was [Semen Elistratov](#) of Russia, a strong presence in races all last season, and Sandor Shaolin's brother [Shaoang Liu](#). They all looked sharp and should be in contention this weekend.

The 2019 Canadian Championships, held at the end of October, also offers some insight. In the women's field, despite their roster of promising young competitors like [Alyson Charles](#) and [Courtney Lee Sarault](#), there is one clear standout athlete at the moment: [Kim Boutin](#).

The 24-year-old, who got overall bronze at the last ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Championships, won all six available gold medals at the national meeting in Montreal, and should feel at home on North American ice over the next couple of weeks.

[Steven Dubois](#) meanwhile dominated the men's racing, also taking all six golds, and will offer the Koreans stiff competition this season, especially over 1500m.

[Choi Min Jeong](#) of Korea, the ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Champion for three of the last five seasons, will doubtless be in contention next year, should she stay fit. [Kim Ji Yoo](#), ranked sixth overall last season in ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating racing, is also likely to be strong. Completing the Korea women's side are [Kim A Lang](#), [Noh Ahreum](#), [Noh Do Hee](#) and Seo Whimin.

In the Ladies' field, several other excellent skaters should be in contention, including Poland's [Natalia Maliszewska](#), [Hanna Desmet](#) of Belgium, China's [Fan Kexin](#), Germany's [Anne Seidel](#), Russia's [Sofia Prosvirnova](#) and [Ekaterina Efremenkova](#), Netherlands' [Lara van Ruijven](#) and [Yara van Kirkhof](#).

In the Men's, look out for [Kazuki Yoshinaga](#) of Japan, while Chinese pair [Ren Ziwei](#) and [Wu Dajing](#) will be dangerous in the shorter distances.

The most likely American to give fans in Utah something to smile about on home ice will be [Maame Biney](#). Raised in Salt Lake City, this is her ice.

Biney won 500m gold and overall bronze at the ISU World Junior Short Track Speed Skating Championships last year, and also got onto her first senior ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating podium in 2018/19 with a bronze in Torino. Whether she is capable of mixing it regularly with a dauntingly strong senior Ladies' field over this season will be fascinating to see.

Where to watch and follow the ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating 2019/20?

Viewers will be able to watch via their national broadcaster/channel and for countries where there are no broadcasters, the ISU will offer a live stream on the [Skating ISU YouTube Channel](#). You will find the full list in the Where to watch news [here](#).

Subscribe to the [ISU Newsletter](#) to receive the latest information and the "Where to Watch" news. You can also subscribe to the [Skating ISU YouTube Channel](#) to receive notifications when live streams start or new videos are published.

Highlights, clips, interviews, behind the scenes:

YouTube: [ISU Skating](#)

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Follow the conversation with #ShortTrackSkating.

For further information on ISU Short Track Speed Skating visit : <https://www.isu.org/short-track>.

ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating Series events 2019/20:

[Salt Lake City \(USA\) – November 1 - 2](#)

[Montréal \(CAN\) – November 8 – 10](#)

[Nagoya \(JPN\) – November 29 – December 1](#)

[Shanghai \(CHN\) – December 6 – 8](#)

[Dresden \(GER\) – February 7 – 9](#)

[Dordrecht \(NED\) – February 14 – 16](#)

About ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating Series

The World Cup series consists of nine distances 500, 1000 and 1500 meters for Ladies and Men, Ladies 3000 meters Team Relay, Men 5000 meters Team Relay and a Mixed Gender Relay over 2000 meters.

The competitions have a single distance character and are held in separate sessions over three days. Day 1 is dedicated to all Qualifying Rounds. Days 2 and 3 the last Qualifying Rounds (if necessary) take place, followed by the World Cup sessions.

For the Mixed Gender Relay Teams (2 Ladies & 2 Men), the Ladies 3000 meters Relay races and Men 5000 meters Relay races a maximum of four Skaters shall compete and must belong to the same ISU Member.