

November 14, 2019

Minsk, Belarus

Zueva hopes to shine again in Minsk

The International Speed Skating season kicks off in Belarus with the first of six [ISU World Cup Speed Skating events](#) on Friday 15 November. The Minsk Arena hosts the ISU World Cup Speed Skating for the second time in history, after the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final in 2018, when [Marina Zueva](#) (BLR) took her career first ISU World Cup Speed Skating medal with silver in the 3000m. Zueva will start in the 1500m, the 3000m and the Mass Start on home soil this weekend.

The home crowd will also look forward to [Vitaly Mikhailov](#) (BLR) and [Aleksei Kirpichnik](#) (BLR), who managed to surprise the mass start bunch at last year's ISU World Cup Speed Skating event in Tomakomai (JPN). Mikhailov eventually ran away with his career first, and to this date only ISU World Cup Speed Skating win.

Long distances

The ladies 3000m will be the first event on Friday. [Martina Sáblíková](#) (CZE) will defend last season's long distance crown. Apart from Zueva, the Czech track record holder (4.03,79) faces competition from last year's ISU World Cup Speed Skating runner-up [Esmee Visser](#) (NED), who won the Dutch trials in 4.00,27 ahead of Olympic 3000m Champion [Carlijn Achtereekte](#). [Natalya Voronina](#) (RUS), who was third in last season's ISU World Cup Speed Skating, also showed early season form winning the Russian national 3000m title in 4.02,58.

[Aleksandr Rumyantsev](#) (RUS) won the men's long distance last season. He only came fifth in the Russian national championships two weeks ago. [Patrick Roest](#) (NED) seems to be the big favorite for the 5000m in Minsk. The ISU World Allround Speed Skating Champion won the Dutch trials in both the 5000m and the 10,000 confidently, skating an exceptional track record in the longest distance with 12:42.97. [Sven Kramer](#) (NED), who also qualified for the ISU World Cups, holds the Minsk 5000m (6:19.17) and 10,000m (13:11.98) track records.

After the long distances the opening day in Minsk will conclude with the Team Sprint events for men and ladies.

Kulizhnikov absent

On Saturday the men will skate the 1000m and the mass start, while the ladies will line-up for the 500m and the 1500m. On Sunday it's the other way around. Competition in the sprint distances will be fierce in both the men's and the ladies' field this season, but the men's 500m field in Minsk is wide open because [Pavel Kulizhnikov](#) (RUS) sustained an injury in training last week. The Russian 500m world record holder will be absent at the first two ISU World Cup legs. Japan's [Tatsuya Shinhama](#) (JPN), who was the 500m world record holder for a couple of minutes at last season's ISU World Cup Speed Skating Final in Salt Lake City, will be present however. The Japanese prodigy already won the Japanese national titles in the 500m and the 1000m this season.

Competition will be exceptionally strong in the men's 1000m. Last season both [Kjeld Nuis](#) (NED) and [Thomas Krol](#) (NED) managed to beat the ten-year-old world record by Shani Davis (USA), but last week the two had to settle for second and third place at the Dutch trails behind [Kai Verbij](#) (NED).

Kodaira versus Herzog

The ladies 500m will most likely feature another battle between 2018 Olympic Champion [Nao Kodaira](#) (JPN) and last year's ISU World Speed Skating Champion [Vanesse Herzog](#) (AUT). In the

double distance, world record holder [Brittany Bowe](#) (USA) started the season strong with a track record (1:13.76) at the American World Cup trials in Milwaukee. Last year's 1000m and 1500m ISU World Cup Speed Skating winner will take up the battle with runner-up [Miho Takagi](#) (JPN) again. Takagi took home the Japanese national titles in the 1000m, the 1500m and the 3000m two weeks ago. [Jorien ter Mors](#) (NED) is back on the ice to challenge Bowe and Takagi's dominance. The 2018 Olympic 1000m champion missed last season due to a knee injury, but won the 500m, the 1000m and the 1500m at the Dutch trials in November.

Korean eyes on mass start

In the mass start Korea hopes to continue their reign with defending champions [Bo-Reum Kim](#) (KOR) in the ladies field and [Cheon-Ho Um](#) (KOR) in the men's competition. [Irene Schouten](#) (NED) and [Francesca Lollobrigida](#) (ITA), last year's number two and three, will also be back in contention and in the men's field [Ian Quinn](#) (USA) could be the new kid on the mass start block. The 26-year-old American only skated one World Cup race in his career before, but he'll be at the start in Minsk and he showed good form when he won a marathon race in the B Division in Heerenveen, the Netherlands, before travelling to Minsk for the World Cup. Quinn will join double mass start World Champion [Joey Mantia](#) in the USA team.

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.

Where to Watch

Viewers will be able to watch either 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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For further information on ISU Speed Skating visit <https://www.isu.org/speed-skating>

ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series 2019/20:

[Minsk \(BLR\) - Nov 15 – 17](#)

[Tomaszów Mazowiecki \(POL\) – Nov 22 – 24](#)

[Nur-Sultan \(KAZ\) – Dec 6 – 8](#)

[Nagano \(JPN\) – Dec 13 – 15](#)

[Calgary \(CAN\) – Feb 7 – 8](#)

[Final – Heerenveen \(NED\) – Mar 7 - 8](#)

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.