

November 15, 2019

Bjugn, Norway

Olympic season start for the Speed Skating Juniors

The first of three [ISU Junior World Cup Speed Skating events](#) will be held in the Fosenhallen in Bjugn, Norway this weekend. Together with the second leg in Enschede, the Netherlands, this competition will serve as a qualifying event for the 2020 Winter Youth Olympic Games in Lausanne 2020. Last year's Norwegian ace [Hallgeir Engebråten](#), who won the 1500m and the 3000m ISU Junior World Cup, left the junior ranks to try his luck in the senior competition, but in the ladies field Dutch Femke Kok, who won last year's ISU World Junior Speed Skating title, is still eligible for the junior ranks, although she cannot qualify for Lausanne anymore.

Eligibility for Lausanne

Not all juniors who skate in the ISU Junior World Cup are eligible for the [Youth Winter Olympic Games](#), which will be held in St. Moritz (SUI). This YOG is only open to Juniors B, born between January 1, 2002 and December 31, 2004. The ISU World Cup is open to Junior A and Junior B Skaters, born between July 1, 2000 and June 30, 2004, and to Junior C Skaters born between July 1, 2004 – June 30. Apart from the Junior competition there's also a Neo-seniors division, which is open to skaters born between July 1, 1996 and June 30, 2000.

Who will fill the Dutch gap?

The Netherlands dominated the ladies' competition in the ISU Junior World Cup last year. With Michelle de Jong winning the 500m, Robin Groot the 1000m and Paulien Verhaar taking gold in both the 1500m and the 3000m. The Dutch ladies also won the team pursuit. Italy's Laura Peveri was the only non-Dutch skater to win an ISU World Cup event, claiming the mass start gold.

De Jong will skate senior ISU World Cup Speed Skating events this year and Verhaar is also not eligible for the junior ranks anymore, but Groot and Peveri will compete in Bjugn. They will face new youngsters, among whom probably Victoria Stirnemann (GER), daughter of three-time Olympic Champion and eight-time ISU World Allround Speed Skating Champion Gunda Niemann-Stirnemann. The German prodigy, who is eligible for Lausanne 2020, won her first ISU Junior World Cup medals as a B junior last season.

New names

The men's Junior competition will see a lot of new names. All the winners of last season's ISU Junior World Cups have gone up to the senior ranks. Apart from Engebråten in the 1500m and the 3000m, Artem Arefyev (RUS) won the 500m and Sergei Loginov (RUS) the 1000m. Dutch Yves Vergeer grabbed the mass start ISU World Cup and Russia won the Team Pursuit.

Past champions

Good performances in the ISU Junior World Cup Speed Skating do not guarantee future success, but many Junior Champions went on to win senior silverware too. [Ayano Sato \(JPN\)](#), the 2016 ISU Junior World Cup winner in de Mass Start, won captured the Olympic Team Pursuit title in PyeongChang two years later together with the Takagi sisters [Miho](#) and [Nana](#).

Other successful junior champions include 2017 ISU European and ISU World Sprint Speed Skating Champion [Kai Verbij](#) (NED), who won the ISU Junior World Cup Mass Start in the 2011/12 season and the ISU Junior World Cup 1000m in the 2012/13 season.

For further information on ISU Speed Skating visit <https://www.isu.org/speed-skating>. Subscribe to the [ISU Newsletter](#) to receive the latest information and follow the conversation with [#SpeedSkating](#).

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ISU Junior World Cup Speed Skating Series 2019/20:

[ISU Junior World Cup Speed Skating - Qualifying YOG 2020 - Bjungr \(NOR\) Nov 16 – 17](#)

[ISU Junior World Cup Speed Skating - Qualifying YOG 2020 - Enschede \(NED\) Nov 23 - 24](#)

[ISU Junior World Cup Speed Skating Final - Minsk \(BLR\) Feb 15 - 16](#)

About ISU Junior World Cup Speed Skating Series

Since the inaugural Junior World Cup 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.