

December 8, 2019

Shanghai, China

ISU World Cup Short Track Speed Skating – Day 2

Speed queen [Kim Boutin](#) again proved why she is the skater to beat over Short Track's shortest and wildest distance, claiming her fourth successive 500m gold on day two of the ISU World Cup in Shanghai.

Such is Boutin's raw speed over 500m this season, the Canadian could even afford to be slightly below par in China, taking the gold just ahead of Netherland's [Suzanne Schulting](#) and Italy's [Martina Valcepina](#) despite a performance she later described as below her best.

"I'm focusing a lot on my technique and I felt my last two laps today were really bad, so I need to work on that," she said. "I still feel like I have a lot of things to learn, and maybe that's why I'm continuing to do well. It was the first time I've skated against these particular girls in a final, so it was interesting to see how they race."

Boutin is now the pre-eminent skater in Canada's women's team following the retirement of Marianne St Gelaais, but it was not long ago she considered quitting the sport to pursue a career in children's education. But while she still has ambitions in that field, it could be a while yet before she hangs up her skates for good.

"Over the summer I questioned myself a lot," she said. "But we changed our training a little bit to make sure I keep going to work on my skills, which helped. I'm always in love with the sport, just sometimes you need some motivation and you need to think outside of the box to find ways to challenge yourself to keep going."

"I hope I can help the younger girls to grow and learn, there's some really good rookies in the team, they're pretty strong individually and at the relay, so for me it's also a case of trying to keep team Canada on track."

Boutin had less luck in an action-packed mixed 2000m relay final, where only two teams finished the race. Both Canada and the USA were penalized, with the Netherlands claiming gold after just pipping Russia on the line.

Last man standing in Men's 500m final

But even that was not as dramatic as the men's 500m final, which featured three crashes.

Hungary's [Shaoang Liu](#) took the early lead before slipping and taking Kazakhstan's [Abzal Azhgaliyev](#) with him. This left [Shaolin Sandor Liu](#) and Olympic champion [Wu Dajing](#) battling it out for gold and silver, a race that the Chinese star appeared to be about to win before crashing on the final corner as he attempted to pass Liu, leaving the Hungarian to cross the line alone.

Wu picked up silver – Shaoang Liu the bronze – but appeared to sustain a serious injury in the crash and was later taken to hospital in an ambulance.

"Things happened so fast in that race, I didn't even really realize what was going on," Shaolin Liu said. "I wasn't feeling in really good shape so I was trying to survive. It was a really close finish. Wu Dajing was coming for two laps, which was tough. I haven't seen the video yet, but I was just biting the air so bad, and just trying to finish the race. The only reason I won is because he fell, otherwise he definitely would have passed me."

It means that the elder Liu is now the season's top 500m skater, having also won gold in Montreal. He insists that the success is somewhat surprising as he doesn't feel in great shape after having his pre-season training hampered by injury.

"I wouldn't call myself a sprinter, I think I'm just super lucky," he said. "I'm just doing the 500m this year because I'm not in my best shape. I don't think I'm tough enough to skate the 1000m or the 1500m right now."

Kim makes a comeback to individual glory

The day's other two finals saw the Republic of Korea again demonstrate their remarkable strength in depth. In the Ladies' 500m final, [Kim Alang](#) claimed her first individual World Cup gold since the 2014/2015 season, timing her race perfectly to beat compatriot [Choi Min Jeong](#) and Canada's [Courtney Lee Sarault](#).

"I'm so thrilled to get an individual gold again after such a long time," said Kim, who won 3000m Relay gold medals with the Korean team at both the Sochi 2014 and PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics. "I had a year off after PyeongChang and right now I don't feel like I'm 100%, but I think I've recovered to 60% of my best."

China's skaters in the spotlight

Another athlete who knows a thing or two about layoffs is China's [Han Tianyu](#), who missed the entire 2018/19 season after getting married and starting a family. He is returning to somewhere near his best, and claimed silver in the men's 1500m behind Korea's [Lee June Seo](#). "I'm not there yet, but I trained really hard over the summer and I've been working on my strength," he said. "The 1500m is a strong event, the competition has just got better and better over the years. It feels good to win a medal in it because almost every race there's four or five different countries in the final, no one really dominates it. That shows the standard is rising."

Tianyu's compatriot [An Kai](#) also picked up a medal for China, winning the 1500m bronze despite feeling a little jaded after competing in Nagoya last weekend. "I'm in good form, but with the back to back World Cups, the gap is so short, it drains your energy," he said. "Right now I'm not at my very best, so I'm delighted to get a medal."

With Beijing 2022 on the horizon, Korean national coach Lee Jae Kyeng said he is monitoring the Chinese skaters closely.

"They are a little better here than usual because it's a World Cup in China," he said. "I keep watching for the Chinese team, I know they are getting better and they have a stronger coaching staff with the support from the Chinese government. I know what it's like ahead of a home Olympics, as I was also under a lot of pressure from my country ahead of PyeongChang 2018. Hopefully they are strong in Beijing."

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.