

December 14, 2019

Nagano, Japan

Russian men dominate, as Bowe and Blondin add more golds to their tally

Russia's men set the standard on Day 2 of the World Cup in Nagano, blowing away a track record and winning both gold medals on offer: the 2nd 500m and the Team Pursuit, clinching the overall Team Pursuit World Cup in the process.

In the women's competition [Ivanie Blondin](#) won another gold in the 3000m on Saturday adding to Friday's mass start win, and [Brittany Bowe](#) (USA) showed no mercy in the ladies' 1000m, taking her third gold in three races so far this season.

500m Men: Russians bring down track record

While Japan had doubled up for gold and silver on Day 1's 500m, it was the Russians who took the top two spots in the 2nd 500m at the ISU World Cup Speed Skating on Saturday.

[Viktor Mushtakov](#) and [Pavel Kulizhnikov](#) raced to gold and silver respectively, ahead of Friday's winner [Yuma Murakami](#) (JPN).

Murakami faced his team-mate, and Friday's runner-up, [Tatsuya Shinhama](#) in the final pair, facing a tough challenge put up by the Russian pair.

With a time of 34.52 seconds, world-record holder Kulizhnikov took 0.06 seconds off Murakami's track record from the day before.

Mushtakov, who had won a career-first World Cup gold in the 500m in Kazakhstan last weekend, shaved another two hundredths off that mark to bring the record at Nagano's M-Wave down to 34.50.

"I did not think of the track record at all. I was focused on skating well technically," Mushtakov said.

"It was not perfect, but I skated a lot better than yesterday. My opener was not very good, but the full lap was smooth."

For his part, Kulizhnikov is glad to have left behind the injury troubles which kept him out of the first three World Cups of the season.

"Physically, I'm fully recovered," he said after following Friday's bronze with a silver over the same distance on Saturday. "Now I have to get rid of it in my head too."

Content with their own performance, the Russians were relaxed as they watched their Japanese rivals in the final pair.

"If they had been faster, they would have earned it today," Mushtakov said.

In the event, the Japanese pair had to settle for bronze and fourth place, with Murakami admitting that the speed of the Russians had put him off.

"They skated so fast," he said. "I felt pressure to win today. I tried to stay focused, not to make any mistakes, to stay aggressive."

"In the first 300 meters I was able to execute my skating well, but then it became more difficult, because [the legs were tired from] yesterday's 500m race and the team sprint.

"My next challenge is to stay consistent."

ISU World Cup Speed Skating [Standings 500m Men](#)

Team Pursuit Men: Russians take gold to clinch overall Team Pursuit World Cup

The Russian endurance specialists followed the example of their sprinting compatriots to win the Team Pursuit. [Aleksandr Rumyantsev](#), [Danila Semerikov](#) and [Ruslan Zakharov](#) stopped the clock at 3:42.93 in the second pairing.

That victory confirmed Russia as overall winners of this season's Team Pursuit World Cup.

"We have a strong team. It's different from last year but we are skating well together," Zakharov said.

Skating well they certainly are, but Semerikov insisted that winning the World Cup does not make Russia favorites for gold at the World Single Distance Championships in Salt Lake City in February.

"The World Cup in Team Pursuit is different from the major championships," he said. "The Dutch will have their strongest line-up and [\[Sverre Lunde\] Pedersen](#) (NOR) will be the engine of Norway again."

In Nagano the Dutch fielded a junior team because their big guns are preparing for the Dutch national single distance championships, the nation's qualifiers for the European and world championships later this season. Beau Snellink, Harm Visser and Jordy van Workum ended a distant seventh, 14.93 seconds behind the winners.

Without anchor Pedersen, Norway's [Håvard Bøkko](#), Hallgeir Engebråten, and Kristian Ulekleiv had to settle for fifth place at 4.51.

Only hosts Japan managed to get close to Russia, finishing in 3:42.99 to take silver. After having skipped the World Cup in Nur-Sultan last time out, [Seitaro Ichinohe](#), [Ryosuke Tsuchiya](#) and [Shane Williamson](#) had been aiming for gold in their home World Cup.

"We tried a different strategy, going faster from the start," a disappointed Ichinohe explained. "We did not manage to hold on, but we gained a lot of experience today."

Team effort is key in this discipline, and the Japanese men drew inspiration from the stirring performances of their national rugby team at the World Cup in Japan earlier this year.

"They had a slogan 'One Team' and we feel the same. We are racing together as a team and it shows, because we're becoming more and more competitive," Ichinohe said.

Canada has a competitive team too, although [Ted-Jan Bloemen](#), [Jordan Belchos](#) and Tyson Langelaar had to settle for bronze in 3:44.87 after last week's silver in Nur-Sultan.

Belchos, who won individual gold in the Mass Start on Friday, said that youngsters Graeme Fish and Langelaar have added depth to the Canadian team.

"With Graeme having his first and Tyson his first two [starts in the Team Pursuit World Cup], we finished fourth, second and third [in the three legs]. It tells me that the program of our whole team is getting there and we probably have a good future when Ted [-Jan Bloemen] and I decide to quit, whenever that is."

Bloemen hopes to improve on third place at the World Single Distance Championships in the USA in February.

"We're definitely in contention," he said. "We had a chance in the World Cups to try different things and every time we got a little better."

ISU World Cup Speed Skating [Standings Team Pursuit Men](#)

1000m Ladies: Flawless race for Bowe

Bowe was flawless as she beat pair-mate [Olga Fatkulina](#) (RUS) to the line in a track-record time of 1:14.34.

"I felt very composed," the USA skater said. "I'm really happy, because I'm pretty tired this week. Nearing the end of an eight-week trip and having a pretty tough journey from Kazakhstan. The good thing is that everybody had the same travel schedule."

Fatkulina managed to track Bowe pretty well in the first part of the race but had to bow her head in the final lap, ending up eighth overall in 1:15.62.

"I knew it would be close," Bowe said. "She had a great lap in her 500m yesterday. I knew it would be a fast 600 meters and I know I can close stronger than her."

"But hats off to her, she did not get her skates [delivered] until Thursday night so she did not have an optimal week either."

Only three skaters managed to stay under 1:15. [Sanneke de Neeling](#) (NED) was the first, clocking 1:14.89 in the second pairing. The Dutch sprinter realized it was fast, but had to wait another eight pairs to really know what it would be worth.

"The race did not even feel that good actually," she said. "But when I saw my time I knew it was very fast."

[Miho Takagi](#) (JPN) skated in the next pair. She posted a far-from-perfect race and seemed to have finished a few thousandths of a second behind De Neeling, but a little later the time was corrected and Takagi was 0.003 faster.

"I've got to admit that I shouted some expletives when I saw that," De Neeling said with a big smile. "I thought 'oh no, am I going to end up fourth again?'. But she did not."

After a long and anxious wait, the 23-year-old Dutch skater was presented with a career-first individual World Cup medal, clinching the bronze.

"I knew I had a big chance today," she said. "Last week I blew it in the first 200 meters so I needed a good start."

Takagi also enjoyed a good start, and a flawless first 600 meters. "I felt I was on a good pace, but when I hit the corner my speed was a bit too high and I couldn't hold the curve," she said.

The Japanese racer slipped away but managed to stay on her feet to finish the race and seize the silver medal.

ISU World Cup Speed Skating [Standings 1000m Ladies](#)

3000m Ladies: Blondin rockets to more golden glory

In case there was any doubt, [Ivanie Blondin](#) (CAN) proved her claim to be the best endurance skater in the field at the moment.

Having won last week's Team Pursuit, 1500m and 5000m in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, on Saturday she added 3000m gold to Friday's Mass Start win in Nagano.

Posting 4:00.24, she was more than three seconds faster than [Martina Sáblíková's](#) 2016 track record of 4:03.56.

"It's just [about] consistency," explained Blondin after the race. "I sat down with Remmelt [coach Remmelt Elderling, NED] yesterday and he told me I should try to do four 31 laps, but I said that I could actually do two 30 laps first and that's pretty much what I did today."

Two 30 laps, three 31 laps and two concluding laps of 32.36 and 33.04 were enough to keep the experienced Sáblíková and [Isabelle Weidemann](#) (CAN) at bay.

"Nobody is faster than Ivanie [Blondin] at the moment," said silver medallist Sáblíková. "She's like a rocket and I don't have the power to beat her at the moment. I had a great race versus Isabelle [Weidemann] and I skated faster than I did in 2016, so I'm happy."

Blondin felt blessed with Sáblíková's compliments. "Coming from her it's pretty incredible. She's one of my heroes and I've always looked up to her. She's always been very supportive as well. It's pretty surreal."

Weidemann, who was paired up with the Czech skater at last week's World Cup, enjoyed racing Sáblíková again.

"It's always challenging racing Martina," she said. "She's so good tactically, so there's a lot for me to learn from her. She's beaten me twice now. I hope that I can come back."

"I'll watch the video and figure out how. She's so consistent on the straightaways. Her strides are so beautiful, she conserves a lot of energy."

ISU World Cup Speed Skating [Standings 3000m Ladies](#)

For full entry lists and further information regarding the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series please visit the [Series Page](#) on ISU.org. Click [here for results](#).

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](#)

IG: [@isuspeedskating](#)

Facebook: [@ISUSpeedSkating](#)

Twitter: [@ISU_Speed](#)

Follow the conversation with #SpeedSkating.

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](https://www.isu.org/WorldCupSpeedSkating).