

January 31, 2020

Milwaukee, Wisconsin (USA)

Korean sprint double kicks off inaugural Four Continents Championships

The Republic of Korea won the first two titles at the inaugural ISU Four Continents Speed Skating Championships in Milwaukee on Friday. Kim Min Sun and Kim Joon-Ho took the sprint double winning the Ladies' and Men's 500m respectively. USA's Mia Kilburg-Manganello celebrated a 3000m victory on home ice, while Vitaliy Schigolev and Dmitry Morozov handed Kazakhstan a 1-2 in the Men's 5000m. Gold in the Team Sprint events went to the Canadian ladies and the Korean men.

Ladies' 500m: First title for Kim

"Awesome" was the word [Kim Min Sun](#) (KOR) used to describe her feelings after having won the first ever gold medal in the brand new equivalent of the European Championships for non-European countries.

Kim stopped the clock at 38.41 to leave [Brooklyn McDougall](#) (CAN) 0.11 seconds behind in second place. Kim's compatriot [Kim Hyun-Yung](#) took bronze in 38.55.

Despite her gold medal, the 20-year-old was not completely satisfied with her performance.

"I made some mistakes at the start, but [overall] the motion was nice," she said. "That's what got me to first place."

Kim later picked up a silver medal in the Team Sprint and she will also compete in Sunday's 1000m, but the shortest sprint distance remains her favorite event.

"My main objective for this season is the World Cup final. I want to end up sixth in the ranking," said Kim, who is currently ranked seventh in the 500m World Cup.

[Brooklyn McDougall](#) (CAN) celebrated her second place with a big smile.

"It's really cool to come here for the first time ever [at the ISU Four Continents Championships]," she said. "I hope that they keep it around for the upcoming years. It's a cool event, and perfect to gain experience."

"We have some of the veterans from the World Cup in our team, but also some of the newbies like myself, who've only been doing a few international competitions."

The 21-year-old Canadian will get an early chance to make use of the experience gained in Milwaukee next week at the fifth leg of the World Cup in her home town of Calgary.

"That will be my first senior World Cup, so I have a lot of big hopes for it," she said.

Ladies' 3000m: Kilburg-Manganello celebrates home victory

[Mia Kilburg-Manganello](#) put up a great fight to win the Ladies' 3000m. The US skater held back a little after a fast start. Racing in the final pairing, she had slower split times than [Nadezhda Morozova](#) (KAZ) had posted when she skated the fastest time of the field in the penultimate pairing.

Roared on by the home crowd and her parents, who took a six-hour drive from Ohio to see their daughter compete in Milwaukee, Kilburg-Manganello managed to close the gap in the final three laps.

Heading into the final lap she was only 0.03 seconds behind. By the time she reached the finish line she was 0.80 seconds ahead, stopping the clock at 4:07.00. Morozova had to settle for silver while Japan's [Nana Takahashi](#) took bronze in 4:11.00.

After having won her career-first individual World Cup medal with bronze in the mass start in Nagano, Japan, last month, Kilburg-Manganello celebrated her first international title on home ice.

"It's fantastic," she said. "I was actually a bit more nervous than I've been in a long time going into the race. I think [that is] because it's at home. I have family here, it's personal."

Having the national anthem being played in her honor was an emotional moment for the 30-year-old. "I don't think it was ever played for me before," she said with a smile.

"The effort in the actual race was probably the best part about it. [It's] one step closer, showing that progress is being made, coming off the World Cup."

After the fourth leg of the World Cup in Japan in December, Kilburg-Manganello had not competed in any serious races and she lacked rhythm.

"I tend to do better and better as I race," she said. "[I] get more comfortable with the effort.

"Today showed that I have the lungs, and the legs are getting stronger, but I need to be able to have that feel."

Ladies' Team Sprint: Canada takes the honors

Friday's action ended with the Team Sprint.

In a field of four, Canada's [Noemie Fiset](#), [Béatrice Lamarche](#) and [Brooklyn McDougall](#) took gold, Korea's [Kim Hyun-Yung](#), [Kim Min Ji](#) and [Kim Min Sun](#) silver and China's Xiangyu Chen, [Lin Xue](#) and [Mei Han](#) bronze, keeping the home trio of Blair Cruikshank, [Erin Jackson](#) and Chrysta Rands off the podium.

Men's 500m: Track record and gold for Kim

Kim Joon-Ho faced [Alex Boisvert-Lacroix](#) (CAN) in the final pairing of the men's 500m on Friday afternoon.

When the duo entered the rink, [Roman Krech](#) (KAZ), [Laurent Dubreuil](#) (CAN) and [Yuya Oikawa](#) (JPN) were in podium positions, only 0.01 seconds apart with Krech on top with a time of 34.94 seconds.

The last pair crushed Krech's time, with Kim crossing the line in a track-record 34.59 and Boisvert-Lacroix trailing by 0.13 seconds. They pushed Krech back to bronze and nudged Dubreuil off the podium.

Boisvert-Lacroix was delighted to pick up a medal, although he felt it could have been a golden performance.

"I made a little mistake before the second corner," he said. "I missed two strides. The timing was really off and I think I lost the race there."

"[Kim] had an amazing race. 34.59 is really quick at sea level, but I got pretty close."

The Canadian had not known what to expect when he travelled to Milwaukee last week.

"After the [Canadian World Championships] trials in January, I went back home to Montreal where I only skated short track. I only skated long track for two days here, so this was getting back into racing mode for [the World Cup next weekend in] Calgary and the world championships [in Salt Lake City in mid-February]."

To have his name in the Four Continents history books meant a lot to the 32-year-old.

"I'm happy they try something new, and in five or 10 years nobody will remember who was here and who was not. It doesn't matter if the Chinese and the Japanese did not bring their 'A team'. I showed up and I'm happy with the result."

Men's 5000m: Kazak double

[Vitaliy Schigolev](#) and [Dmitry Morozov](#) also showed up. The Kazak pair faced each other in the final race of the men's 5000m, after local hero [Emery Lehman](#) (USA) had skated the fastest time of all previous pairings.

Lehman's 6:23.29 was not fast enough to discourage the Kazaks, who went out quicker and paced each other to a higher level.

Morozov led most of the way, but it was Schigolev who skated away with the gold medal in 6:19.33, leaving his compatriot 0.14 seconds behind.

"It's good that we fought together," Morozov said. "He helped me [with a draft] at the back stretch twice."

Schigolev was happy to race at the ISU Four Continents tournament, where he and Morozov each recorded a personal best on the way to the podium.

"It's a good competition," he said. "And it's our first medal at an international competition, for both of us."

For Emery Lehman, a former junior world champion in the 5000m, it was also a career-first international medal at senior level. He appreciated it even more because it came on home ice.

"I've kind of hoped to have an international event here at the Pettit [National Ice Center] my whole career," he said.

"This is my home base. I go to school 10 minutes away, I've trained here since I was nine years old. To win a medal here in front of my family and friends is really special."

Men's Team Sprint: Gold for Korea

The Korean sprinters ([Cha Min Kyu](#), [Kim Jin-Su](#) and Kim Joon-Ho) wrapped up Friday's competition with gold in the team sprint.

China's [Hou Kaibo](#), Wang Hoalian and Xu Fu took silver while Kazakhstan earned bronze through [Alexander Klenko](#), [Roman Krech](#) and [Stanislav Palkin](#).

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](#).

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