

February 29, 2020

Hamar, Norway

Takagi and Shinhama win historic Sprint titles

"I think she's the greatest skater at this very moment, but she's a bit more modest herself" said Japan coach Johan de Wit (NED) about [Miho Takagi](#) (JPN). The 25-year-old from Obihiro won three distances at the ISU World Sprint Championships in Hamar, to take the title and thus hold both the World Sprint and the World Allround title on her list of honors. Last year's champion [Nao Kodaira](#) (JPN) took silver and [Olga Fatkulina](#) (RUS) bronze.

Meanwhile, [Ireen Wüst](#) (NED) took the lead in the ladies' Allround tournament, which started on Saturday.

In the men's Sprint tournament, [Tatsuya Shinhama](#) (JPN) followed Takagi's footsteps winning the title on Saturday. The 23-year-old sprinter was the first male skater from Japan to become World Sprint Champion since Akira Kuroiwa in 1987. [Laurent Dubreuil](#) (CAN) came second to take the first male Canadian World Sprint medal since Jeremy Wotherspoon in 2008 and [Cha Min Kyu](#) (KOR) seized bronze.

Defending champion [Patrick Roest](#) (NED) took a first-day lead over home favorite [Sverre Lunde Pedersen](#) and Japan's [Seitaro Ichinohe](#) (JPN) the men's Allround tournament.

Sprint: Takagi solidifies lead in 500m

Defending World Sprint champion [Nao Kodaira](#) (JPN) bounced back from coming second in the first 500m on Friday, winning the shortest distance on Saturday. With 37.46 seconds in the final pairing versus [Miho Takagi](#) (JPN), the Olympic 500m champion was 0.07 faster than she had been the day before.

Takagi was 0.01 slower than she had been on Friday, but 37.52 was enough to stay well ahead of Kodaira in the rankings. Going into the final 1000m, the gap between them was 1.61 seconds.

"This time I really focused on 500m," Takagi said. "I don't have the experience like some others with the 500m. I tried to relax. Stay calm, I said to myself."

Behind the two Japanese skaters, [Olga Fatkulina](#) (RUS) and [Angelina Golikova](#) (RUS) were mixed up in a thrilling battle for third place. In Saturday's 500m Golikova beat Fatkulina in 37.57, to gain back 0.14 seconds on her compatriot. Fatkulina would enter the 1000m with an 0.11 second margin over her team-mate.

Sprint: No room for doubt in 1000m

In the conclusive 1000m, Takagi did not leave room for any doubt. With 1:13.93 she was the only one to skate under 1:14 in the double sprint distance.

[Jutta Leerdam](#) (NED) came second in 1:14.47, to end up fifth overall and [Brittany Bowe](#) (USA) was third in 1:14.56 to finish sixth in the ranking.

Kodaira could not threaten Takagi, coming sixth in the final distance, but with 1:14.88 she easily kept Fatkulina at bay for the overall silver. The Russian was fifth in the 1000m with 1:14.85, and held off compatriot Golikova for the bronze medal.

Takagi becomes the first female skater to win both the World Sprint title and the World Allround title (which she won in 2018), since Anni Friesinger (GER) who won the World Sprint title in 2007 and the World Allround title in 2001, 2002 and 2005.

According to coach Johan de Wit she could have won the World Allround title too, if the tournament had not been held at the same time.

"[She could have won the World Allround Championships] easily," De Wit said.

"We made the choice [to skate the Sprint Championships] in December, because she was incredibly fast in the 1000m in Nagano [World Cup in December], when she beat [Nao] Kodaira with a big margin."

"She could've skated the Allround tournament and be way ahead of the rest after the 500m already, but choosing for the sprint, we thought: wouldn't it be great if she pulled that off?"

For Takagi the World Sprint title also meant redemption after a disappointing ISU World Single Distance Championships in Salt Lake City two weeks ago, when she had not been able to perform at top level due to a fever, and had to settle for individual bronze in the 1000m.

After winning in Hamar she said: "Very happy to win, but I really wanted to win at the World Single Distance Championships. That was my goal."

Allround: Wüst on top after two good races

The ladies' Allround tournament started with a 500m win for [Karolina Bosiek](#) (POL) in 38.76, but the Polish skater dropped to thirteenth place after the 3000m, in which she finished eighteenth with a time of 4:12.90.

[Ireen Wüst](#) (NED) was the most consistent skater on Saturday. With a fourth place (38.96) in the 500m and a third place (4:02.60) in the 3000m, the six-time champion led the overall ranking at the end of the day.

"Two good races today, but it's tight," Wüst said. "I don't know about my 5000m tomorrow, usually it's ok when my 3000m was good."

"But in an Allround tournament you always have to look at the next distance. That's the 1500m, and that's the distance in which I just won the world title two weeks ago."

[Martina Sáblíková](#) (CZE) won the 3000m in 4:01.89, but the five-time champion was not able to make up much for a poor outing in the 500m (eighteenth in 40.30). The five-time champion was tenth after two distances, trailing Wüst by 3.67 seconds for Sunday's 1500m.

"I still I don't think she's the main rival at the moment," Wüst said. "I have to fear the other two more."

By 'the other two', Wüst means [Ivanie Blondin](#) (CAN) and [Melissa Wijfje](#) (NED), who are second and third after Saturday's races. The Canadian is 0.66 behind and the Dutch 0.68. Blondin is content and looking forward to Sunday. She said: "Hopefully two more great races. It's always been my dream to be on the podium at a World Championships and given the results from today, it might happen now. I'm still not safe yet and there's still a lot of racing to come."

Sprint 500m: Shinhama expands margin

In the men's events, [Tatsuya Shinhama](#) (JPN) and [Laurent Dubreuil](#) (CAN) started the second day of their battle for the World Sprint title against each other in the final pairing of the second 500m, with the Japanese leader of the ranking coming out on top.

Shinhama stopped the clock at 34.39, just 0.08 outside the 2008 track record set by Jeremy Wotherspoon (CAN). Dubreuil managed to control the damage, but still conceded 0.17 setting 34.56. The Canadian faced a 0.79 second gap towards Shinhama in the final 1000m.

[Cha Min Kyu](#) (KOR) edged out [Yamato Matsui](#) (JPN) to climb to third place after the third of four distances. The Korean set 34.72 to come third in the second 500m with the Japanese podium contender finishing fourth in 34.90. Cha and Matsui were more than a second behind in the concluding 1000m, with the Korean having an 0.15 second margin over his Japanese rival.

Sprint 1000m: Dubreuil puts pressure on

In the 1000m [Kjeld Nuis](#) (NED) made amends for a poor outing on Friday, coming first in 1:08.38. It was too little, too late for the Dutchman, who ended up seventh in the ranking.

Dubreuil skated in the penultimate pairing and entered the rink with confidence and doubt at the same time. He said: "I had a really good [second] 500m so I was clear from [dropping to] third, fourth or fifth, but then it's a long two hours and you think: don't fall or don't screw up..."

The Canadian did anything but screw up. With 1:08.39 he only fell short of Nuis' time by 0.01, with only Shinhama and Cha yet to come in the final pairing.

"I tried not to be defensive," Dubreuil said. "I did a great race and put the pressure on Tatsuya [Shinhama]."

Dubreuil even thought he might win the title for a moment during Shinhama's race.

"After 600m [into Shinhama's race] I saw his time on the screen and his lead was shrinking, but then his last 200m was really good. He really flipped it back on."

Shinhama clocked 1:08.71 to come third in the 1000m, securing the title with a 0.235 point lead over Dubreuil.

Cha took fourth place in the 1000m with 1:08.73, to keep [Kai Verbij](#) (NED) at bay for the bronze medal.

Shinhama said: "I was surprised. I did not expect this. I came here to win the 500m, maybe. Honestly, I cannot believe this."

Shinhama's coach Johan de Wit (NED) had seen it coming though.

"He [Shinhama] can skate a good 1000m too, he's shown that last year already. This season he did not skate too many 1000m races. He was a bit overtrained and not good at the national championships in December.

"After that he's just done easy cycling, and he slowly recovered. This [winning the World Sprint title] doesn't surprise me at all."

Allround: Pedersen rides on waves of home crowd but Roest in pole position

Inspired by compatriots Takagi and Shinhama, [Seitaro Ichinohe](#) (JPN) started the men's Allround tournament winning the 500m in 36.17 seconds.

Canadian youngster [Tyson Langelaar](#) (CAN) came second in the 500m and [Shane Williamson](#) (JPN) third.

Whereas Langelaar and Williamson dropped in the ranking after the 5000m, Ichinohe stayed in contention for the podium clocking 6:24.63 for eighth place in the second distance.

Ichinohe will start the final day in third place, 2.04 seconds behind defending champion [Patrick Roest](#) (NED) in the 1500m, and 0.97 seconds behind home favorite [Sverre Lunde Pedersen](#).

Roest bounced back from a poor display at the World Single Distance Championships in Salt Lake City two weeks ago, when he did not manage to take any silverware.

"I feel a bit relieved, that it works and that I can do it. I was not really satisfied with my 500m (seventh in 36.52), and I was a bit nervous about my 5000m beforehand.

"I went in cautiously, and I noticed that it went a lot better [than in Salt Lake City] and was able to keep moving without being strained."

Roest won the 5000m in 6:14.35, with Pedersen coming second in 6:19.40. The Norwegian has been struggling for most of the season after a bike crash in September. Riding the waves of an enthusiastic sold-out Vikingskipet, he finally found his groove.

"It's been a tough season, but now my body feels better," he said. "I'm doing my best races of the season here and the home crowd gave me a lot of energy. I really enjoyed it and I appreciate the support."

To take the title Pedersen has to make up 0.365 points in the ranking, which equals 1.07 seconds in the 1500m.

Pedersen doesn't give up easily though: "It will be really difficult, but there's still two races to go."

For full entry lists and further information regarding the ISU World Speed Skating Championships please visit the [Championships 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>

About ISU World Speed Skating Championships

Hamar, Norway, will host the first combined World Allround and Sprint Speed Skating Championships in history. The World Allround and Sprint Championships used to be held separately. There will be four titles at stake in Hamar: the men's and ladies' Allround titles and the men's and ladies' sprint titles.

The ISU has organised the World Allround Championships for Men since 1893 (unofficial Championships were held in the years 1889-1892) and the World Allround Championships for ladies since 1936 (unofficial Championships were held in the years 1933-1935). Since 1996 the men's and women's World Allround Championships are held at the same time and venue. The World Sprint Championships will be held for the 51st time.

Unlike the World Cup, in which Skaters race for single distance titles, at the World Allround and Sprint Championships performances in four distances add up to the final ranking. The rankings are calculated according to the Samalog method. All times are measured in seconds and then converted to points, using the average times on 500 meter units. For a 1,000m race the time in seconds divided by two, for the 1,500 meters, the time in seconds is divided by three, and so on.

In the Allround tournament the Men will skate 500m, 5000m, 1500m and 10,000m and the Ladies' competition features 500m, 3000m, 1500m, 5000m races. In the Sprint tournament both the Men and the Ladies will skate two 500m races and two 1000m races.