

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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Press release

Heerenveen, January 6, 2017

ISU European Speed Skating Championships #EuroSpeed

The New Year starts with a new format in Speed Skating from January 6-8. Heerenveen's Thialf stadium will host the first ever ISU European Speed Skating Championships combining the inaugural European Sprint and traditional European Allround competitions. The Men's Sprint tournament and the Ladies' Allround tournament will be on Friday and Saturday, whereas the Men's Allround and the Ladies' Sprint competitions will be on Saturday and Sunday.

Competition format

Unlike the World Cup, in which Skaters race for single distance titles, at the European Sprint and Allround Championships performances in four distances add up to the final ranking. In both tournaments times are calculated based on the 500m, for example the 1500m time will be divided by 3. In the Allround tournament the Men will skate 500m, 5000m, 1500m and 10,000m. The ladies Allround competition features 500m, 3000m, 1500m, 5000m races. In the Sprint competition both the Men and the Ladies race the 500m and the 1000m twice.

Kramer and Sáblíková favorites in Allround tournament

Sven Kramer conquered his seventh European Allround title in Minsk (BLR) last year. The Dutchman has a record nine podium finishes at the last ten European Championships (Gold 8 – Silver 1) and will attempt to add a ninth gold in his hometown this weekend.

The Ladies' Allround tournament will probably be another battle between Martina Sáblíková (CZE) and Ireen Wüst (NED). Wüst won four out of the last ten European Allround titles and Sáblíková five, including last year in Minsk, when Wüst came second.

Tough battle for inaugural Sprint titles

The inaugural Sprint title will be hard fought. Kjeld Nuis (NED) Mika Poutala (FIN) and Nico Ihle (GER) are the ones to beat in the Men's competition. The Dutchman has won all three 1000m races in this season's World Cup but Ihle is ranked fifth in the 1000m World Cup and Poutala has one podium finish in the same distance and ranked seventh in the 500m World Cup.

The Ladies' Sprint competitions have been dominated by Asian and American skaters in the past decade. Dutch ladies' Marrit Leenstra and Jorien ter Mors are aiming at the first European title, but they will face a lot of competition from the likes of Olga Fatkulina (RUS), Karolína Erbanová (CZE) or Austrian youngster Vanessa Herzog.

For full results of the ISU European Speed Skating Championships 2017 please refer to <http://www.isureults.eu/>

About ISU European Speed Skating Championships 2017

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Official Series Hashtag: #EuroSpeed

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