

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION

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Press release

Hamar, 3 March, 2017

ISU World Allround Speed Skating Championships

#AllroundSpeed

Dutch record champion Sven Kramer is the outright favorite to win his career ninth World Allround Speed Skating title in Hamar this weekend. In the ladies' tournament Ireen Wüst (NED) will again challenge Martina Sáblíková (CZE), who will aim for a third consecutive title. The Vikingskipet, officially known as Hamar Olympic Hall, will host the ISU World Allround Speed Skating Championships for the sixth time since 1993.

Competition format

A total of 24 ladies and 24 men from 14 different countries will compete in the big combination. The Ladies' big combination consists of 500m, 3000m, 1500m, and 5000m and the men have to skate 500m, 5000m, 1500m and 10,000m. Points will be calculated on the basis of the 500m (e.g. time from the 1500m and 5000m will be divided by 3 and 10 respectively).

Classic Wüst- Sáblíková battle in ladies' tournament

Martina Sáblíková managed to hold off Ireen Wüst last year, when the Czech skater won her career fourth and third consecutive World Allround title, but this season Wüst seems to be stronger than ever.

The Dutchwoman, who won a total of nine medals at World Allround Championships (5 gold, 2 silver, 2 bronze) beat her arch rival in the ISU European Allround Speed Skating Championships in Heerenveen in January, and also took the 3000m World title at the ISU World Single Distances Speed Skating Championships in Gangneung in February.

Sáblíková won the 5000m Single Distance title and in Hamar. She will try to cut her losses in the first three distances to hit hard in the final 5000m.

Neither Wüst nor Sáblíková is close to a record amount of World Allround Titles. German Gunda Niemann-Stirnemann still tops the all-time list with eight titles and a record streak of five titles between 1995 and 1999. However, if Wüst ends up on the podium, she will be the only Lady to have won a total of eleven medals at the World Allround Championships.

Despite being the favorites, Sáblíková and Wüst will certainly not race in a league of their own. Last season, Antoinette de Jong claimed the third podium spot and she also took bronze at this year's European Championships. The 21-year-old Dutch prodigy was much closer to the top two in Heerenveen than last year in Berlin.

Another contender for a podium spot could be Russia's Olga Graf, who came fifth in this season's European Championships and already won silver at the World Allround Championships in 2014. Ida Njåtun also knows how to win a World Allround medal. The 26-year-old Norwegian took bronze in the 2015 tournament.

Kramer aims at ninth title

Sven Kramer is the man to beat in the Men's tournament. The Dutchman added a record extending eighth World Allround Title to his impressive tally in Berlin last year and he even

Official Series Hashtag: #AllroundSpeed

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seems to have improved his Allround potential with a highly competitive 1500m this season.

Kramer's prime challenger is his countryman Jan Blokhuijsen, who already won two silver and two bronze medals at the World Allround Championships in the past. In absence of Kramer Blokhuijsen won this year's Dutch Allround title and he came second behind Kramer in the European Allround Championships in Heerenveen last January.

Sverre Lunde Pedersen beat Blokhuijsen for silver last year, but the Norwegian has not had a very good season so far. Hampered by illness he was not in top condition at the ISU World Single Distances Speed Skating Championships and at the ISU European Allround Speed Skating Championships finished in sixth place.

Bart Swings (BEL) took bronze at this year's European Championships. The 26-year-old also ended up third at the 2013 World Allround Championships.

Denis Yuskov, who took silver in 2015, is on the start list as a substitute. The unpredictable Russian decided to call it quits after winning the 500m in last years' World Allround Championships. If either Danila Semerikov or Sergey Trofimov decides not to start, Yuskov could be up there for a surprise.

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

About ISU World Allround Speed Skating Championships 2017

The ISU World Allround Speed Skating Championships is a four race tournament, in which skaters compete in the big combination. The Ladies' big combination consists of 500m, 3000m, 1500m, and 5000m and the men have to skate 500m, 5000m, 1500m and 10,000m. Points will be calculated on the basis of the 500m (e.g. time from the 1500m and 5000m will be divided by 3 and 10 respectively).

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