

December 5, 2021

Salt Lake City, USA

Mantia (USA) lives up to expectations with 1500m gold on home ice

[Joey Mantia](#) (USA) lived up to his expectations and the enthusiastic home crowd's by winning the men's 1500m on the second day of the ISU Speed Skating World Cup in Salt Lake City. Having emptied the tank in the King's Race, Mantia did not factor in the Mass Start final on Saturday. [Bart Swings](#) (BEL) grabbed his career fifth Mass Start win in the World Cup, cashing in on a clever and powerful attack with six laps to go.

In the ladies' competition, [Miho Takagi](#) (JPN) left the Utah Olympic Oval with mixed feelings. The Japanese all-rounder won the 1000m in 1 minute and 11.83 seconds, only 0.22s short of [Brittany Bowe's](#) (USA) world record. Later in the afternoon Takagi seemed to be on track for another gold in the ladies Team Pursuit, but her sister, [Nana Takagi](#), crashed in the final lap and Canada ran away with their second Team Pursuit win of the season. [Andzelika Wójcik](#) (POL) kicked off Saturday's competition with a career first World Cup win and a national record in the ladies' 500m.

Mantia chases the world record

Mantia had put all his cards in the first half of the Olympic season on the home World Cup at the Utah Olympic Oval. He felt the pressure when he got up on Saturday morning.

"I felt a little weird this morning, a little nauseous, maybe a little bit of the nerves got the best of me," he said.

The 34-year-old American aimed at the world record on the fast high altitude ice, but missed out by 0.98s, finishing in 1 minute and 41.15 seconds.

"I had my eyes on the old record, it's what I've been working for the last few years," he said. "I think I could have attacked the second lap a little more aggressively, but without the help from the air pressure, I don't think the world record was even possible today.

"(I was) hoping to get under the 1.41 mark and to be in the 1.40, but I'm very happy with it. It's consistent. And it's a huge confidence builder going into the Olympics."

Mantia also narrowly missed out on the American record (1.41.04), set by Shani Davis in 2011.

"I wish I would have got that. I was thinking if I don't get the world record today, I would really, really like the American record. Shani is an amazing skater and that's what I've had my eye on for a while."

Mantia will get another shot at both records at next weekend's World Cup, which also will be held at a high altitude rink.

"It's Calgary next," he said. "So, one more chance if we get some luck with that. I might give another go (for the world record) in the 1500m."

Coming third, second and first in three 1500m races this season, Mantia climbed to second place in the World Cup rankings.

"I always felt in the back of my mind that I was a good 1500m skater. Just, I've never really been able to put it out there in a race.

“It’s been pretty random over my career. Have a good one and then have a bunch of bad ones and a good one, but I feel like I’ve validated on how to be more consistent,” Mantia said. “Even the bad ones are still on the podium now.”

World Cup leader Ning

[Ning Zhongyan](#) (CHN) still leads the 1500m World Cup with two silvers and a gold. Having been paired to Mantia, the Chinese ace finished second in 1:41.38.

“I’m really happy with my time,” Ning said. “To skate a personal best, and also to break the Chinese record again.”

Ning said he enjoyed the home crowd cheering for Mantia during the race.

“There was so much cheer for him, and when I heard the crowd I imagined that they were cheering for me, so that gave me a lot of energy,” Ning said. “In Beijing (at the 2022 Olympic Games in February) it will be the other way around.”

[Thomas Krol](#) (NED) took 1500m bronze in 1:41.89. The Dutch world champion was happy to be back on the podium after poor 1500m outings in Poland and Stavanger.

“I lacked a bit of confidence in the 1500m because I skated not that well in the last two races. So, I was really hoping to be better today,” Krol said. “In the end I’m really happy how it went. (It’s a) good confidence builder towards the Dutch trials”

Wit and power hand Swings Mass Start gold

In the men’s Mass Start, Bart Swings executed his race plan perfectly.

“My plan was to make it a hard race. Here on (high) altitude, it’s very fast corners, very fast laps, so there’s a lot of pressure in the corners,” he said. “It’s a hard race already, and I know if I get some attacks in there and make it extra hard it can get into my advantage.

“At six laps to go, I saw the right time to go. There was a little bit of slowing down in the peloton. So, I went and it was a good moment.”

Swings was accompanied by [Viktor Hald Thorup](#) (DEN) and [Ruslan Zakharov](#) (RUS), and managed to get rid of his fellow escapees with two laps to go.

“The gap wasn’t super big, and I saw that they (the pack) still had pace with three laps to go. With two laps to go, I knew I had to go for my final sprint, because if the guys in the back start skating 23 (second) laps, they can close in really fast.”

Swings crossed the line solo, with Thorup and Zakharov coming second and third.

Takagi (JPN) sets high bar

Miho Takagi skated versus compatriot [Nao Kodaira](#) (JPN) before World Cup leader Bowe and fourth ranked [Jutta Leerdam](#) (NED) took the ice in the final pairing.

Being one of the most versatile all-around skaters in the current ladies’ field, Takagi made her mark in the final lap, showing just a bit more stamina than the more sprint-oriented rest of the field.

With a lap time of 27.74, Takagi was the only one to skate the final lap under 28 seconds.

"I've skated for over 10 years," she said of her versatility. "I've always done many different races, so now my body knows what to do."

Coming only 0.22 short of the world record had surprised her.

"I didn't really set any goals or anything, but when I finished and looked at the time and realized, 'Oh my god, this is so close.' I had mixed feelings, happy but disappointed at the same time."

Leerdam said she wasn't scared off by the bar getting set so high.

"(I thought) it's a fast time, but I did it before, so maybe I can still do it," she said.

In an exciting race versus Bowe, the Dutch European sprint champion made amends for a black-out in the 500m, when she stopped skating because she thought she had made a false start. The starter did not shoot for a second time, however. The race was on, but Leerdam had already lost all speed.

"I was a little mad at myself. And I thought, what just happened? It was very blurry. I just tried to forget it because, of course, you feel like stupid and dumb, but you can't change anything after, so I focused on the 1000m, and just went for it," Leerdam said.

Leerdam beat Bowe, finishing in 1:12.25. She was happy with her performance after all.

"Even now, after the race, I still think I can do a 1.11. Even today, I could have done it, but there's room for improvement. So that's always good."

Bowe took bronze in 1:12.60. "Dirty gold", she labeled her medal.

"(It's) obviously not what I had wished for, but (it was) a solid race. I just didn't get the speed going on that first lap and Miho (Takagi) had a great, great race, a great first lap and Jutta (Leerdam) also had a great race," Bowe said, "So I'll have to take the third for now, but (I'm) always going for the gold."

Bowe retained the lead in the World Cup ranking, however.

"I couldn't be more pleased with how the season has gone so far. Winning two out of the three 1000s, I can't ask for much more than that. I just have to continue to stay focused, continue to work and hopefully gold in Beijing."

Japan leaves Team Pursuit gold to Canada

After having come second behind Canada in the season's first World Cup in Poland, Japan's [Ayano Sato](#), [Miho Tajagi](#) and [Nana Takagi](#) were on track for gold in Salt Lake City, with a 1.97s advantage over Canada entering the final lap.

They were not able to bring it home, however. Nana Takagi crashed out in the final lap, got up again, but finished last.

"It's very difficult to break it down," Miho Takagi said. "The three of us, we're still discussing what exactly happened."

After having had some varying line-ups over the past seasons, Japan is back in the formation that won the 2018 Olympic title and they aim for a back-to-back title in Beijing next year.

"We're focused on the Olympics. We were really skating to the best of our abilities today, so that's why we're really disappointed about the crash," Takagi said.

Initially the Canadian ladies ([Ivanie Blondin](#), [Valérie Maltais](#) and [Isabelle Weidemann](#)) were not aware of Japan's tough luck, but they gratefully accepted the present, winning their second Team Pursuit gold of the season in 2 minutes and 52.39 seconds.

"I didn't even realize it happened until we came around and then we saw Nana was gathering herself," Blondin said.

"In the next few weeks, we're going to be watching their race. They're a great competition. I think we can definitely contend with them."

The Netherlands ([Irene Schouten](#), [Melissa Wijfje](#) and [Ireen Wüst](#)) finished second in 2:52.69 on Saturday, and Russia ([Yevgenia Lalenkova](#), [Natalya Voronina](#) and [Elizaveta Golubeva](#)) took bronze in 2:56.22.

Maiden win for Wójcik

Saturday's action started with a big surprise. Andzelika Wójcik (POL) won the second ladies' 500m of the World Cup weekend in 36.77, beating her own Polish national record for the second time in two days. On Friday she had come in fourth in 37.03s.

"It's a real good feeling," she said of her career first World Cup win. "Until now, I didn't think I could make it (winning a World Cup race), but everything is possible.

"I was working a lot to improve my technique because I think everything is there. The power is there and the ability to make good times.

"I was feeling really good in the beginning of the season. In Inzell (Germany), I made a huge personal best and national record. That was a huge surprise for me, and I thought this could be a really good season."

[Angelina Golikova](#) (RUS) came only 0.01s short of Wójcik and took silver in the second 500m at the Utah Olympic Oval. [Olga Fatkulina](#) (RUS) came in third with a time of 36.93s.

[Erin Jackson](#) (USA) had won four out of five 500m World Cup races so far this season, including Friday's race in Salt Lake City, but her second race on home ice didn't pan out the way she had wanted.

"I had what I think is a bit of a false start, so a little hesitation there but it wasn't pulled back. You have to be ready for everything. It just comes down to being able to refocus after something like that," Jackson said.

Jackson finished sixth in 37.02s, but retained the lead in the World Cup rankings.

500m Women

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

1000m Women

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

1500m Women

ISU World Cup Speed Skating [Standings 1500m Women](#)

3000m Women

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

Mass Start Women

ISU World Cup Speed Skating [Standings Mass Start Women](#)

Team Pursuit Women

ISU World Cup Team Pursuit Women [Standings Team Pursuit Women](#)

Team Sprint Women

ISU World Cup Team Sprint Women [Standings Team Sprint Women](#)

500m Men

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

1000m Men

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

1500m Men

ISU World Cup Speed Skating [Standings 1500m Men](#)

5000m Men

ISU World Cup Speed Skating [Standings 5000m Men](#)

Mass Start Men

ISU World Cup Speed Skating [Standings Mass Start Men](#)

Team Pursuit Men

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

Team Sprint Men

ISU World Cup Team Sprint Women [Standings Team Sprint Men](#)

The event entry quotas for the individual distances will be determined by the [Special Olympic Qualification Classification \(SOQC\)](#) based on results from the different ISU World Cup Speed Skating Competitions and the full details are available in [ISU Communication 2405](#).

For full entry lists and further information regarding the ISU World Cup Speed Skating Series please visit: isu.org/speed-skating. Results are [here](#) and you can follow the discussion on social media by using #SpeedSkating.

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.

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[Stavanger \(NOR\) - Nov 19 - Nov 21, 2021](#)

[Salt Lake City \(USA\) - Dec 03 - Dec 05, 2021](#)

[Calgary \(CAN\) – Dec 10 - Dec 12, 2021](#)

[Final – Heerenveen \(NED\) – Mar 12 - Mar 13, 2022](#)

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. However during the Olympic season the Series consists of five Events.

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 and during the Olympic season they are Olympic Qualifying Events. 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 Women 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).