

February 12, 2022

Beijing, China

Women's 500m race is blessed with Olympic Spirit **Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games**

No matter the result, the Beijing 2022 Women's 500m contains one of those stories that make the Olympic Games just that little more special than any other championships. It's about Olympic spirit. After [Erin Jackson](#) (USA) messed up her race at the USA Olympic Trials, teammate [Brittany Bowe](#) sacrificed her qualifying spot. Being the favorite doesn't make it easier for Jackson, who faces a highly competitive field, and as her hiccup at the trials showed, even the smallest mistake can be deadly in the 500m.

Flood of emotions

Arriving in Beijing, Erin Jackson (USA) still found it hard to believe she would actually get the opportunity to chase an Olympic dream she believed she had blown. "I had a job to do and I failed to do it, plain and simple," Jackson said of her performance in the 500m at the Trials, when an error on the second straight dropped her outside the automatic qualification places. The 2015 and 2016 World Sprint Champion Brittany Bowe (USA), made no such mistake and grabbed the win, only to turn round and hand her spot in Beijing to her fellow Floridian.

"When she first told me she would have my back I hugged her and hugged her, and as I hugged her, I was trying not to cry," Jackson said. "It was a flood of emotions, where you don't really know what you feel." Bowe, a specialist in the 1000m and 1500m, felt that Jackson had "earned the right" to be in Beijing after her four World Cup wins earlier this season. "I am glad she would say something like that, but I feel it would be a strange thing for me to say because technically I didn't qualify," the 29-year-old Skater said.

Jackson has spent most of her sporting career, and indeed life, looking up to Bowe, having first watched her on the track on inline skates as a wide-eyed 10-year-old. Less than four years apart in age, the pair has followed similar sporting paths, both winning inline world championship medals before moving on to the ice. The PyeongChang 2018 Olympics were Jackson's first, only just having transferred to the ice the year before. She came in 24th at 2.26s behind winner [Kodaira Nao](#) (JPN), who beat defending Champion [Lee Sang-Hwa](#) (KOR) to silver.

Many contenders

Lee (KOR) quit in 2019, but Kodaira (JPN) is still going strong. The 35-year-old athlete is only one of the many title contenders at the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games. This season Kodaira won one World Cup race and she finished second four times.

After not having had the chance to compete at the 2018 Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang, the athletes representing the Russian Olympic Committee are also in the mix for the podium spots in Beijing. Reigning world Champion [Angelina Golikova](#), [Olga Fatkulina](#) and [Daria Kachanova](#) are ranked second, fourth and eighth in this season's World Cup.

Poland's [Andzelika Wójcik](#) also put her name on the favorite's list, when she took her career first World Cup gold in a new national record and the world's fourth season time at the World Cup in Salt Lake City on

December 5, 2021. "It's a real good feeling," she then said. "Until now, I didn't think I could make it (winning a World Cup race), but everything is possible."

Wüst and Nuis as inspiration

After starting her World Cup career with a four race winning streak, 2020 and 2019 World Junior Champion [Femke Kok](#) (NED) entered the senior ranks with a blast last season. This season she only took one bronze medal in the World Cup series, but last January she bounced back winning gold at the European Championships in Heerenveen (NED). In Beijing, Kok shares an apartment with teammates [Ireen Wüst](#) and [Kjeld Nuis](#), who already retained their Olympic 1500m titles last Monday and Tuesday. "When you see that, you can only think, wow, I want that too," Kok said on Friday. "I've been here for quite a while now, and I'm really eager to skate a race."

Men's Team Pursuit

Before the Women take the ice for the 500m, the Men will skate their quarter final races in the Team Pursuit. The semi-finals and finals are scheduled for Tuesday February 15, 2022.

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What's next ?

Sunday, February 13, 2022
Men's Team Pursuit, Quarterfinals, 21:00 (local time)
Women's 500m, 21:56 (local time)

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