



# US SPEEDSKATING PRESS RELEASE

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## **US Speedskating Announces Long Track World Championship Team**

*Nine Olympians highlight the roster skating at the official Winter Olympics long track test event*

**KEARNS, Utah** – US Speedskating announced today the 2016-17 ISU World Single Distance (WSD) Championship team that will skate in Gangneung, Korea on February 9-12. The event is the official 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympic Games test event and the first speed skating races ever held at the newly constructed Gangneung Oval.

Current ISU Grand World Cup leader **Heather Bergsma** (High Point, N.C.) and seven-time WSD Championship medalist **Brittany Bowe** (Ocala, Fla.) are two of many headliners on the U.S. team. Bergsma, a two-time Olympian, has five World Cup victories this season and has won six career WSD Championship medals. Bowe, the back-to-back World Sprint champion, sat out the first three World Cup events this season due to an injury but qualified for the WSD Championships in the 500m and 1000m by racing in World Cup Heerenveen including winning bronze in the 1000m.

Leading the men will be two-time Olympic champion **Shani Davis** (Chicago, Ill.) and 2014 Olympian **Joey Mantia** (Ocala, Fla.). Davis has won 15 career WSD Championship medals with eight of those being gold medals. Mantia currently ranks third in the men's ISU Grand World Cup standings and leads the men's 1500m and Mass Start overall point rankings.

Of the 11 skaters making the team, nine of them are Olympians and six competed in last year's WSD Championship roster that competed in Kolomna, Russia.

"All 11 athletes on the roster have made tremendous progress over the course of the season and we expect them to have excellent results in Gangneung and through the rest of the season," said **Guy Thibault**, High Performance Director for US Speedskating. "We will be one year away from the 2018 Winter Olympic Games when racing begins in Korea. This meet is an important stepping stone in our Olympic preparation going forward and gives us a taste of what's to come next February."

Also representing the U.S. in Gangneung will be 2015-16 World teammates **KC Boutiette** (Tacoma, Wash.) and **Mitch Whitmore** (Waukesha, Wisc.). They are joined by three skaters with previous WSD Championship experience, in **Jonathan Garcia** (Houston, Texas), **Brian Hansen** (Glenview, Ill.) and **Mia Manganello** (Crestview, Fla.). Making their first career World Singles roster will be **Petra Acker** (Clifton Park, N.Y.) and **Kelly Gunther** (Clinton Township, Mich.), who will be partnering with Manganello for the Women's Team Pursuit event.

In addition, Bergsma, Garcia, **Sugar Todd** (Omaha, Neb.) and Whitmore earned rosters spots for the World Sprint Championship team that will compete in Calgary on February 25-26. The World Sprint team was selected following the U.S. Long Track Championships that took place at the Utah Olympic Oval in Kearns, Utah on January 6-8.

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A full list of the individuals that earned spots on the 2016-17 World Single Distance and World Sprint can be found below:

## **World Single Distance Championships – Gangneung, Republic of Korea (Feb. 9-12)**

### **Men**

KC Boutiette (Tacoma, Wash.) – Mass Start

- Four-time Olympian with 18 career WSD starts
- Ranks 11th overall in the ISU World Cup Mass Start Rankings

Shani Davis (Chicago, Ill.) – 1000m, 1500m

- Two-time Olympic Champion
- 15 career WSD medals including gold in the men's 1000m at the 2014-15 WSD Championships

Jonathan Garcia (Houston, Texas) – 1000m

- 2014 Olympian and part of gold medal-winning Sprint team on Dec. 10, 2016 in Heerenveen
- Finished 21st in the 1000m at the 2014-15 World Single Distance Championships in Heerenveen

Brian Hansen (Glenview, Ill.) – 1500m

- Olympic silver medalist will be making his fifth WSD Championship team
- Two WSD medals including a silver medal as a Team Pursuit member in 2011-12

Joey Mantia (Ocala, Fla.) – 1000m, 1500m, Mass Start

- Making his third consecutive WSD Championship team
- Current leader in the men's 1500m and Mass Start overall points tables

Mitch Whitmore (Waukesha, Wisc.) – 500m

- American Record-holder in the men's 500m
- Earned a bronze medal, his second career World Cup medal, in the 500m on Dec. 9, 2016 in Heerenveen

### **Women**

Petra Acker\* (Clifton Park, N.Y.) – Team Pursuit

- Making her first career WSD Championship team roster
- Member of three-straight World Junior Championship teams (2009-2012)

Heather Bergsma (High Point, N.C.) – 500m, 1000m, 1500m, Mass Start

- Making her seventh WSD Championship team and has won six WSD medals
- 2014-15 World Champion in the 500m

Brittany Bowe (Ocala, Fla.) – 500m, 1000m

- Seven career WSD medals including two golds (2014-15 1000m and 1500m)
- Only skater to win three individual medals during the 2015-16 WSD Championships

Kelly Gunther\* (Clinton Township, Mich.) – Team Pursuit

- Making first career WSD Championship team roster
- Represented the U.S. in the 2015-16 World Allround Championships

Mia Manganello (Crestview, Fla.) – 1500m, 3000m/5000m, Mass Start

- 2006-07 WSD Team Pursuit member
- Ranks fourth overall in the ISU World Cup Mass Start points table

*\* first career WSD Championship roster*

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## **World Sprint Championships - Calgary, Alberta, Canada (Feb. 25-26)**

### **Men**

Jonathan Garcia (Houston, Texas)

Mitch Whitmore (Waukesha, Wisc.)

### **Women**

Heather Bergsma (High Point, N.C.)

Sugar Todd (Omaha, Neb.)

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### **About US Speedskating**

From Pond to Podium, we are US Speedskating. We grow and nurture a sport where all ages can experience the thrill of speed and the camaraderie of the skating community. US Speedskating is responsible for the development of speed skating from grassroots to the highest elite racing programs. US Speedskating is recognized by the United States Olympic Committee and the International Skating Union as the governing body for the sport of speed skating in the United States. The Organization has won 86 Olympic medals to-date, making it one of the most successful sports in U.S. Olympic history. US Speedskating is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), on [Facebook](#) and at [www.usspeedskating.org](http://www.usspeedskating.org).