

# The Shinano Mainichi Shimbun

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## 1998 Nagano Olympic Winter Games Day 10

### 1,500m speed skating: Yet another world record tumbles

Another world record tumbled at the M-Wave on Monday as Dutch speed skater Marianne Timmer won the women's 1,500-meter title and denied Germany's Gunda Niemann-Stirnemann her second gold medal of the Nagano Olympics.

Timmer, a sprint specialist, posted a phenomenal time of 1 minute, 57.58 seconds at the indoor ice oval to slash 0.29 second off the old world record set by Canada's Catriona LeMay Doan in Calgary last November.

Niemann-Stirnemann, skating alone in the final pairing, smiled after winning the silver with a distant 1:58.66. The bronze went to American

Chris Witty in 1:58.97.

Speed skaters have praised the fast ice of the M-Wave for the past two weeks and have decorated the rink with world records in the men's 1,500 and 5,000 meters as well as in Monday's race.

The Olympic record has also been smashed in all seven races held so far.

Timmer got a bear hug from Dutch sprint team coach Peter Mueller, the mentor of American Olympic greats Bonnie Blair and Dan Jansen and together they collapsed to the ice in joy.

Timmer became the first Dutchwoman to win this event since Yvonne van Gennip did so in

1988.

Six more pairs of skaters followed her, and one by one they fell short of her time. When Niemann-Stirnemann, winner of last week's 3,000-meter title, crossed the line with a slower time, Timmer got a big hug and kiss from Canadian Kevin Overland, the men's 500-meter bronze medalist.

Japan's Chiharu Nozaki skated 2:02.78 for 15th place, one slot ahead of Japanese teammate Aki Tonoike who clocked 2:02.84. Mie Uehara was 21st.



Larissa Lazutina (L) and her teammates are all smiles

### Russia wins women's cross country relay, Japan 10th

Elena Vaelbe, who swept all five cross country titles at last year's Nordic world championships, made a decisive run to help Russia win the gold medal of the women's 4 x 5-kilometer relay event Monday.

The Russians, also featuring Nagano individual gold medalists Larissa Lazutina and Olga Danilova, completed the relay in 55 minutes, 13.5 seconds at the rugged Snow Harp

course in Hakuba — 24.5 seconds in front of silver medal winner Norway.

Italy took the bronze finishing 1:39.8 behind winner Russia.

Host Japan was 10th.

Tomomi Otaka and Sumiko Yokoyama kept Japan in sixth place before its third runner — Fumiko Aoki — slumped back into 10th and anchor Kumiko Yokoyama failed to regain any

ground.

"I'm tired both physically and mentally. I must have felt the heavy burden on my shoulders," said Aoki, considered Japan's top cross country skier going into the Nagano Games.

Aoki posted disappointing showings in the three individual events held so far in Nagano. Her best finish was 29th in the 10-km freestyle pursuit. (Kyodo News)

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