



UCI TRACK CYCLING
WORLD CUP

CAMBRIDGE
NEW ZEALAND

Media Release

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Australia, Germany impress at UCI Track World Cup qualifying

An international field was put to the test on the opening day of the UCI Track World Cup in Cambridge, New Zealand.

Over 200 riders took to the boards for the team pursuit and sprint qualifying at the new Avantidrome, the first time New Zealand has hosted a track event of this stature.

Australia came out swinging to qualify fastest in the men's 4000m team pursuit.

Losing Glenn O'Shea just 2000m into their ride proved no barrier for Australia, who still managed to record a blistering time of 3:56.403. The remaining team members Alex Edmondson, Jack Bobridge and Michael Hepburn rode a classy race to comfortably secure the top qualifying spot.

"We are pretty happy," said Hepburn of his first race on the track since 2013.

"We have had a few days on the track now, but until race day you are never really sure what time is possible. We saw the teams before us and we gauged our time off that and just stuck to our schedule. It was a relatively smooth ride and everyone was in control."

The Australian's time bettered that of current world champions New Zealand by over two seconds.

"Tomorrow is a new day but obviously two seconds is a fair bit in team pursuing. I would rather be in our position than on the other foot," said Hepburn.

Despite suffering a spectacular crash in their qualifying ride, the Danish quartet of Lasse Norman Hansen, Casper Pederson, Rasmus Quaad and Casper von Folsach recovered quickly to complete a re-ride which was fast enough to see them qualify third.

Australia will face Switzerland in the first round tomorrow while New Zealand takes on Denmark.

In the women's event, World Cup leaders Allison Beveridge, Laura Brown, Jasmin Glaesser and Kristi Lay of Canada proved that their success in the opening round in Cali, Colombia last month was no fluke by once again setting the fastest time.

Australia was the only team to come close to Canada's time of 4:19.35, finishing less than a second slower. It was the first time that the rainbows of world champions Annette Edmondson, Ashlee Ankudinoff and Amy Cure were on display in a World Cup, with the trio joined by Georgia Baker who replaced an ill Melissa Hoskins.

“We’ve only been here three days so we didn’t quite know what to expect today or what the conditions were going to be like,” said Glaesser. “I think it was a little slower than in training so we had to pick it up a bit and adapt but I think we adapted really well to finish off strong.”

Canada will face USA in the first round on Saturday morning while Australia will ride against New Zealand.

In the men’s team sprint qualifying all eyes were on the heat between Cali World Cup winners Germany and 2014 world champions New Zealand.

It was the German trio of Rene Enders, Joachim Eilders and Max Niederlag who had the speed to not only hold off the Kiwis, but also beat the benchmark set by the Australian Jayco-AIS team.

Germany posted a time of 43.151 with the Kiwis - Ethan Mitchell, Sam Webster and Eddie Dawkins - stopping the clock just 0.25 seconds later.

It was then a nervous wait to see if the final teams, world champions France and Track Team Brandenburg, would knock them off the top of the leaderboard. Both teams failed to fire with Germany and New Zealand securing themselves a second showdown in tomorrow’s gold medal final.

Team Jayco-AIS will face Great Britain for the bronze medal.

Current women’s team sprint world record holders Jinje Gong and Tianshi Zhong of China set the fastest time with 32.711 to move through to the gold medal race against Australia’s Kaarle McCulloch and Steph Morton.

Laurine van Riessen and Elis Ligtlee of the Netherlands out-rode the French combo of Sandie Clair and Virgnie Cueff to move through to the bronze medal ride against the German powerhouse team of Miriam Welte and Kristina Vogel.

CAPTION: Jack Bobridge leads the Australian men’s team pursuit who qualified fastest on the opening day of the UCI Track World Cup in Cambridge.

The image is free for editorial use. Credit: Dianne Manson

NOTE: For individual Summaries of each qualifying performance, flash quotes, results and images: <http://www.trackworldcup.nz/news>

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