



PRESS-RELEASE - Preview for BMW IBSF World Cup in Innsbruck/AUT

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The second half of the season in the BMW IBSF World Cup kicks off in Innsbruck Nikitina, Tretiakov, Jamanka and Friedrich lead the overall standings

Innsbruck (RWH) The World Cup and European Championships in Königssee (GER) brought the first half of the BMW IBSF World Cup 2018/2019 to a close. In the second half of the World Cup season, focus now turns to the Olympic Sliding Track in Innsbruck, Austria, where athletes competing in the disciplines of skeleton and bobsleigh will take to the stage. The competition will later move on to St. Moritz (SUI), Lake Placid (USA) and Calgary (CAN). The BMW IBSF 2019 World Championships in Whistler (CAN) form the conclusion and high point of the post-Olympic winter season at the beginning of March.

The skeleton athletes were in for a disappointment at Königssee: Due to the immense snowfall on the roofs of the track buildings, their races were cancelled the week before they were due to take place. Russian competitors Elena Nikitina (women's skeleton) and Alexander Tretiakov (men's skeleton) now arrive in Innsbruck at the top of the World Cup leaderboard. Both athletes have secured wins in two of their three races so far, giving them a good 20-point lead over their competitors currently in second place.

In the 2-woman and 2-man bobsleigh, both Olympic winners are currently enjoying a comfortable lead: After three wins in four races, Mariama Jamanka (GER) is 124 points ahead of her teammate Stephanie Schneider (GER). Francesco Friedrich won all four of his races, taking him into the lead with a perfect score of 900, 96 points ahead of Latvia's Oskars Kibermanis. Olympic Champion Friedrich also defended his lead against current title holder Johannes Lochner (both GER) in the overall standings for the 4-man bobsleigh. ©RWH2019

European Skeleton Championships to be made up in Innsbruck Jamanka, Friedrich and Lochner crowned European Bobsleigh Champions

Innsbruck (RWH) Following the cancellation of the skeleton races due to unfavourable weather conditions in Königssee, the European Skeleton Championships are now high on the agenda at the BMW IBSF World Cup in Innsbruck. The races on Friday (18th January - 9.15am men's skeleton, 2.30pm women's skeleton), conducted in a standard race-in-race mode, will now also count as the European Championships. The titles are currently held by Russia's Elena Nikitina and Martins Dukurs from Latvia.

Fresh from their wins in Königssee, the European Champions in bobsleigh will stake their claim to the crown at the fifth BMW IBSF World Cup 2018/2019. Olympic champions Mariama Jamanka and Francesco Friedrich (both GER) will arrive with their second and fourth European Championship gold (respectively) already in the bag. Johannes Lochner gained his third European Championship title in a row in the 4-man bobsleigh. ©RWH2019





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Innsbruck timetable

Date/Time CET		Race
Friday, 18 January	9.15 am	Men's Skeleton, run 1
	11 am	Men's Skeleton, run 2
Friday, 18 January	2.30 pm	Women's Skeleton, run 1
	4 pm	Women's Skeleton, run 2
Saturday, 19 January	9 am	2-Man Bob, run 1
	10.30 am	2-Man Bob, run 2
Saturday, 19 January	2 pm	Women's Bobsleigh, run 1
	3.30 pm	Women's Bobsleigh, run 2
Sunday, 20 January	2 pm	4-Man Bob, run 1
	3.30 pm	4- Man Bob, run 2

Additional information, photos and videos from the BMW IBSF World Cup are available on our social media channels / IBSFsliding:



The official hashtag for the World Cup is **#BMWworldcup**.

The [bobsleigh media guide](#) and [skeleton media guide](#) contain the most important up-to-date background information on our athletes for each individual World Cup location.

On the IBSF website, you'll also find a [news ticker](#) for all World Cup races, the [results tables](#) with both individual and overall race times as well as current [World Cup standings](#).

Additional photos of the BMW IBSF World Cup events can be downloaded for editorial use on the [IBSF Flickr account](#). Please always use the listed credit.

Our [TV partners](#) will broadcast news and live streams from the BMW IBSF World Cup in more than 40 countries across the globe. What's more, viewers can access the live stream for all the World Cup races from almost any country in the world via the [IBSF website](#) and our [YouTube channel](#), with commentary provided by Martin Haven.





Austria's most successful bobsleigh pilot Christina Hengster will not take to the track
Innsbruck (RWH) Austria's most successful bobsleigh pilot to date will no longer make an appearance in the 2018/2019 winter season: Christina Hengster announced her retirement from the sport prior to the start of the season. "It wasn't an easy decision but I really believe it's a good time for me to bow out", wrote the 32-year-old on bobteam-hengster.at. Christina Hengster has been a face on the international bobsleigh scene since 2004 and is Austria's most successful female bobsleigh athlete. She began her career as a pusher for pilot Silke Zeuner, with whom she placed third in the overall standings in the European Cup and took home two National Champion titles. After switching to the steering rope in 2007, Christina Hengster started racking up the highlights of her sporting career: In 2012 she became Junior World Champion; 2016 saw her place third in the overall standings of the BMW IBSF World Cup and take home the bronze medal with her team at the 2016 World Championships held on her home turf in Innsbruck. 2017 also brought her a bronze medal in the European Championships. Christina Hengster ended her career by taking tenth place at her second Winter Olympics in PyeongChang in 2018. ©RWH2019

Junior World Champion Anna Fernstädt will not compete at European Championships
Innsbruck (RWH) Skeleton athlete and 2018 Junior World Champion Anna Fernstädt (CZE) will not appear at the starting line for the postponed European Championship races at the BMW IBSF World Cup in Innsbruck. The 22-year-old was scheduled to compete in the original European Championship races at the World Cup in Königssee (11th January). Unfortunately, the planned skeleton races fell victim to the snow and were postponed: they will now take place in Innsbruck. However, Anna Fernstädt will instead compete in two races at the IBSF Intercontinental Cup in Park City (USA), where she is currently third in the overall standings.

As part of the German national team, the German-born athlete with Czech roots secured first place in the overall rankings of the 2013/2014 IBSF Europe Cup. Following on from this success, she placed in the top ten in eleven out of her 13 races at the BMW IBSF World Cup between 2016 and 2018.

Anna Fernstädt came in fourth at the 2017 World Championships and won bronze with the international team. Having missed out on qualifying for the German World Cup team for the 2017-2018 Olympic winter, she racked up an impressive four victories in the Intercontinental Cup and made the leap into the World Cup for the second half of the season as well as qualifying for the Winter Games. As the newly crowned Junior World Champion, Anna Fernstädt travelled to PyeongChang for her first Winter Olympics, where she placed sixth. In summer 2018, she announced her move to the Czech national team. ©RWH2019





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Youth Olympic Champions Laura Nolte and Ashleigh Pittaway score first victories Nolte takes gold in the Europe Cup, Pittaway secures the lead at North American Cup

Winterberg (RWH) German bobsleigh pilot Laura Nolte and skeleton athlete Ashleigh Pittaway from Great Britain celebrated their first victories in an IBSF race series.

2016 Youth Olympic Games Champion Nolte came out on top at the IBSF Europe Cup: In Winterberg (GER), the 20-year-old and pusher Deborah Levi succeeded in forcing the Junior World Champion, Romanian Andreea Grecu, and her partner Teodora Vlad into second place. Third place was awarded to the Australian duo Breeana Walker and Jamie Scroop.

Laura Nolte had already taken home the gold medal at the second Youth Olympic Winter Games (YOG) in Lillehammer, Norway. The young bobsleigh athletes first competed in the monobob. Following the Youth Winter Olympics, Laura Nolte switched to 2-woman Bobsleigh and has been competing in the IBSF Europe Cup since 2017: She achieved ten podium positions in 15 races and held the top spot in the race series for the first time in Winterberg. Ahead of the final and the Junior World Championships in Sigulda, she has secured an almost unbeatable lead. The young bobsleigh pilot has already celebrated another title last season: U23 World Champion 2018.

Ashleigh Pittaway achieved her first victory at the IBSF North American Cup: The competition in Calgary saw the 18-year-old finish in first place upon her very first start in the race series. The German-born athlete, competing for her British father's home country, pushed US athlete Kelly Curtis into second and Canadian Madison Charney into third in the race, held at the Canada Olympic Park.

Having also won gold at the Youth Olympic Games in Lillehammer, her teammate Jonas Jannusch (GER) has also put in several successful performances in the bobsleigh. The 20-year-old was awarded bronze in the 2-man bobsleigh at both the 2017 and 2018 U23 World Championships and made it onto the podium several times at the IBSF Europe Cup. At the 2018/2019 4-man Bobsleigh Europe Cup he finished second overall. ©RWH2019

The last World Cup winners from Innsbruck in December 2017

	1.		2.		3.	
Women's Skeleton Frauen-Skeleton	NIKITINA, Elena	RUS	VATHJE, Elisabeth	CAN	RAHNEVA, Mirela	CAN
Men's Skeleton Männer-Skeleton	DUKURS, Martins	LAT	YUN, Sungbin	KOR	TREGUBOV, Nikita	RUS
2-woman Bobsleigh Frauen-Zweierbob	SCHNEIDER, Stephanie DRAZEK, Annika	GER	MEYERS TAYLOR, Elana JONES, Kehri	USA	JAMANKA, Mariama BUCKWITZ, Lisa Marie	GER
2-man Bobsleigh Männer-Zweierbob	FRIEDRICH, Francesco MARGIS, Thorsten	GER	KRIPPS, Justin LUMSDEN, Jesse	CAN	BRACHER, Clemens KUONEN, Michael	SUI
4-man Bobsleigh Viererbob	LOCHNER, Johannes RADEMACHER, Marc BLUHM, Joshua RASP, Christian	GER	KRIPPS, Justin KOPACZ, Alexander LUMSDEN, Jesse SMITH, Oluseyi	CAN	FRIEDRICH, Francesco BAUER, Candy GROTHKOPP, Martin MARGIS, Thorsten	GER





On the sidelines

Michael Grünberger and Manfred Maier (AUT) have been working with the International Bobsleigh & Skeleton Federation since summer 2018. Former Austrian skeleton coach Michael Grünberger is now Skeleton Delegate. Manfred Maier, the former Austrian chief bobsleigh trainer, has taken on the role of coordinator of the development arm of the IBSF. ©RWH2019

Janine Flock (AUT) has the chance to score her seventh European Championship medal on her home track in Innsbruck. Austria's best female skeleton athlete already has six European Championship medals to her name, two of which are gold. The 29-year-old celebrated her first European Championship title in 2014 on the artificial ice track in Königssee; her second followed in 2016 in St. Moritz. She also has two silver medals (2015 and 2017) and two bronze (2013 and 2018). ©RWH2019

At **Ivo Ferriani (ITA)**, President of the International Bobsleigh & Skeleton Federation IBSF, the European Championship bronze medal from Romain Heinrich / Dorian Hauterville (FRA) on Königssee aroused special memories. Seventeen years earlier, in the winter of 2001/2002, pilot Bruno Mingeon had won the last medal in France in 2-man Bobsleigh. His coach at that time: Ivo Ferriani! ©RWH2019

Tennis player **Venus Williams (USA)**, 2000 Olympic champion in singles and 2000, 2008 and 2012 in doubles, toying with bobsleigh. In a report on teamusa.org, the 38-year-old reported her desire to compete at the 2020 and 2024 Olympic tennis tournaments. "And in the Bob Team in 2022," continues Venus Williams in the report. The active US athletes instantly reacted in social media: "Hey @Venuseswilliams - I'll take on a first trip !!! Would love to take you out!" tweeted, for example, the World Champion and Olympic silver medalist Elana Meyers Taylor. ©RWH2019





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Season winners 2018/2019 – Skeleton

Track/Bahn	Women's Skeleton Frauen-Skeleton	Men's Skeleton Männer-Skeleton
1. Sigulda (LAT) December 7-9, 2018	Elena Nikitina (RUS)	Nikita Tregubov (RUS)
2. Winterberg (GER) December 14-16, 2018	Jacqueline Lölling (GER)	Alexander Tretiakov (RUS)
3. Altenberg (GER) January 4-6, 2019	Elena Nikitina (RUS)	Alexander Tretiakov (RUS)
4. Königssee (GER) + ECh/EM January 11-13, 2019	- (cancelled / abgesagt)	- (cancelled / abgesagt)
5. Innsbruck (AUT) + ECh/EM January 18-20, 2019		
6. St. Moritz (SUI) January 25-27, 2019		
7. Lake Placid (USA) February 15-16, 2019		
8. Calgary (CAN) February 23-24, 2019		
Overall Leaders World Cup/ Führende Gesamt-Weltcup	Elena Nikitina (RUS) 642 Points / Punkte	Alexander Tretiakov (RUS) 642 Points / Punkte

Season winners 2018/2019 – Bobsleigh

Track / Bahn	2-woman Bobsleigh Frauen-Zweierbob	2-man Bobsleigh Männer-Zweierbob	4-man Bobsleigh Viererbob
1. Sigulda (LAT) December 7-9, 2018	Mariama Jamanka (GER) Annika Drazek	Francesco Friedrich (GER) Alexander Schüller Francesco Friedrich (GER) Martin Grothkopp	- no 4-man race - - kein Viererbob-Rennen -
2. Winterberg (GER) December 14-16, 2018	Stephanie Schneider (GER) Ann-Christin Strack	- no 2-man race - - kein Zweierbob-Rennen -	Nico Walther (GER) Paul Krenz Alexander Rödiger Eric Franke Francesco Friedrich (GER) Thorsten Margis Candy Bauer Martin Grothkopp
3. Altenberg (GER) January 4-6, 2019	Mariama Jamanka (GER) Annika Drazek	Francesco Friedrich (GER) Thorsten Margis	Francesco Friedrich (GER) Candy Bauer Martin Grothkopp Thorsten Margis
4. Königssee (GER) + ECh/EM January 11-13, 2019	Mariama Jamanka (GER) Annika Drazek	Francesco Friedrich (GER) Martin Grothkopp	Johannes Lochner (GER) Florian Bauer Marc Rademacher Christian Rasp
5. Innsbruck (AUT) January 18-20, 2019			
6. St. Moritz (SUI) January 25-27, 2019			
7. Lake Placid (USA) February 15-16, 2019			
8. Calgary (CAN) February 23-24, 2019			
Overall Leaders World Cup/ Führende Gesamt-Weltcup	Mariama Jamanka (GER) 885 Points / Punkte	Francesco Friedrich (GER) 900 points/Punkte	Francesco Friedrich (GER) 860 points/Punkte



Redaktionsbüro
Wolfgang Harder (RWH)

E-mail: wolfgang.harder@t-online.de

IBSF International Bobsleigh & Skeleton Federation

Avenue de Rhodanie 54 — CH-1007 Lausanne

Tel: +41/216015101

E-mail : press@ibsf.org; office@ibsf.org