



**PRESS RELEASE – Preview for BMW IBSF World Cup +
2019 European Championships in Königssee/GER**

9 Jan. 2019

Königssee celebrates double jubilee this January

60 years as an artificial track with natural ice and 50 years as an artificial sliding track

Königssee (RWH): Königssee will be celebrating not one but two major anniversaries in early 2019. The venue near Lake Königssee in Bavaria has been home to an artificial track with natural ice for 60 years and home to an artificial sliding track for half a century. This makes the bobsleigh, skeleton and luge track on Germany's southern-most border the world's oldest artificially refrigerated track.

Königssee artificial sliding track's history dates back to 1959. According to a press release issued by the German Bobsleigh, Luge and Skeleton Federation (BSD), the track's corners and curves were built out of deposits of soil and brickwork. In the winter, tens of thousands of ice blocks would be transported from Lake Hintersee or carved from slushy snow to create a track made from natural ice. Königssee hosted its first ever race in January 1960, providing the backdrop for the International South German Luge Championships. The next few years saw the track expanded on an ongoing basis, including continuous improvements to athlete safety, upgraded ice preparation technology and updates to the entire track's logistical infrastructure. Nevertheless, competitions were often cancelled at short notice as the track was prone to melting in spells of warmer weather. In the mid-1960s, authorities in the then-capital of West Germany Bonn began to call for an artificial track, which would also act as the first national training centre for sliding sports. And so, construction on the world's first ever artificial sliding track got underway in the summer of 1968. The revolutionary sports venue opened its doors in January/February 1969 in time to host the 12th Luge World Championships.

The special brochure "1969–2019: Die Kunsteisbahn feiert Geburtstag" (1969–2019: The artificial sliding track celebrates a milestone anniversary) follows the track's history from its early roots to present day. Further information is available on the [BSD website](#) (only available in German).

The artificial sliding track has been a firm fixture in the International Bobsleigh and Skeleton Federation's (IBSF) calendar right from the outset – not a winter season has gone by without at least one international contest in Königssee. Up-and-coming athletes have long been travelling to the track for Europe Cup and Intercontinental Cup races. The track has even hosted a women's monobob event, the latest discipline to be added to the IBSF programme. December saw 18 pilots from ten countries – including both complete newcomers to the sport and experienced Olympic athletes from the 2-woman bobsleigh – travel to Königssee to compete in the monobob, which will feature in the Olympics for the first time when the Games are held in Beijing in 2022. The BMW IBSF World Cup tour also stops at the sliding track at the foot of Watzmann Mountain every year. >> *read more on the next page*





The track at Lake Königssee has hosted IBSF European Championships on eight separate occasions: It held its first 2-man bobsleigh European Championships all the way back in 1971, repeating the honour in 1992, 1997 and 2001 when it also hosted races in the 4-man event. In 1982, Königssee held the European Championships for men's skeleton athletes and repeated the honour in 2007, when female athletes also battled it out for medals, too. Königssee artificial sliding track finally hosted the European Championships for all IBSF disciplines in 2014. Back then, the titles were awarded to Martins Dukurs (LAT, men's skeleton), Janine Flock (AUT, women's skeleton), Fabienne Meyer (SUI, 2-woman bobsleigh) and Beat Hefti (SUI, 2-man and 4-man bobsleigh). ©RWH2019

Olympic Champion Lisa Buckwitz en route to a career as a bobsleigh pilot – Forerunner for the BMW IBSF World Cup at Königssee

Königssee (RWH): Lisa Buckwitz has already reached the pinnacle of sporting success as a brakewoman in the 2-woman bobsleigh after winning Olympic gold in Mariama Jamanka's sled at the 2018 Games in PyeongChang. In the post-Olympic season, the 24-year-old (who will still be classed as a junior athlete for two more years according to the IBSF's rules and regulations) is now forging a new role for herself.

"To be honest, I actually wanted to start training as a pilot before the 2014 Olympics in Sochi but, seeing as there were only two years left before the Games, I didn't really have enough time," said Lisa Buckwitz in an interview with the German Bobsleigh, Luge and Skeleton Federation (BSD). "Back then, I had already tried out monobob at La Plagne in France and loved it. After achieving the ultimate feat as a brakewoman when we won the gold in South Korea, I was keen to try out something new: not just sitting in the back of the sled and pushing, but leading and managing my own team as a pilot." Buckwitz went on to explain that your adrenaline levels are much higher as a pilot as you are the one in control of everything.

The new pilot won't be competing on the international stage this winter, instead dedicating all her training time to her new role over the long term. "I reckon it will take me two to four years to gain full control over the bobsleigh and really get to grips with the equipment. I'm doing pretty well so far. I've already started right from the top of the tracks in Königssee and Winterberg. It's coming along."

Gold-medal-winning pilot Mariama Jamanka – who celebrated her first ever victory in the BMW IBSF World Cup at the start of the season and currently leads the overall standings – is without doubt one of the favourites to win the World Cup race and European Championships in Königssee. However, the second member of the gold-winning team from PyeongChang will also be part of the action in Königssee: Lisa Buckwitz will be in charge of one of the forerunners, the sleds that put the track to the test prior to the races. ©RWH2019





BMW | IBSF
WORLD CUP
BOB + SKELETON
2018/19



Anja Selbach trains up-and-coming skeleton stars in Germany as national junior coach
Königssee (RWH): When Königssee hosted the European Championships in winter 2007, she won the title, but now skeleton athlete Anja Selbach (nee Huber) of Germany has stepped behind the scenes. The German Bobsleigh, Luge and Skeleton Federation (BSD) appointed the 35-year-old as its national junior coach this winter, a role that puts Selbach in charge of training young skeleton athletes. The 2010 Olympic bronze medallist is now on the road achieving success as a coach. “I thought that I wouldn’t have to travel as much as a coach but in fact it’s quite the opposite. After all, I now have to make sure that everyone gets here and then home again,” said Anja Selbach, describing her role as a coach. “I’m also way more nervous ahead of each and every race; much more nervous than I was at the Olympic Games. It’s brutal. But it’s also an amazing feeling when the young athletes come over to me with huge smiles on their faces after a successful race.”

Speaking of success... Her protégées are currently filling the top spots. Janine Becker is leading the women’s field in the Europe Cup, while Fabian Kuchler is leading the men’s event. Anja Selbach and her skeleton team are also using their hard work in the other tours as a stepping stone to elite international events. For instance, Felix Keisinger – the overall winner of last year’s Intercontinental Cup – celebrated his début in the BMW IBSF World Cup in Sigulda at the start of the season, when he finished fifth. After securing three podium finishes from four races in the 2018/2019 Intercontinental Cup, Kilian von Schleinitz has also made the switch to the World Cup team and finished sixth in Altenberg.

“Obviously, the Junior World Championships in Königssee will be the highlight of the season for my athletes,” says Anja Selbach, referring to her goals for the winter. “I prefer to play things down – there is so much pressure. When I see which athletes from other countries will be competing, then things will definitely step up a gear. Nevertheless, at least one win would be pretty cool.” Ahead of the Junior World Championships in Königssee (2 to 3 February), there is still the season finale of the Europe Cup and Junior European Championships (Sigulda/LAT, 26 January), which will take the form of a race-in-race event, just like in the World Cup.

And it seems as though Anja Selbach has found it hard to step away from the active side of the sport completely: “I still complete about eight to twelve runs a year,” she explains. For instance, she will be appearing at the Bavarian Open Championships in the spring, where she will even be competing against her own athletes. “I don’t bother competing against the boys any more – I don’t stand a chance. And this year, there are two or three young female athletes who could put me in my place, too.”

Anja Selbach actively competed in the skeleton between 2003 and 2015. During this period, she won World Championship gold in 2008 (including in the team event), four European Championships (2007, 2008, 2010 and 2012) and the overall World Cup standings in the 2010/2011 season. At the Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver in 2010, she won the bronze medal behind Olympic Champion Amy Williams (GBR) and her German team mate Kerstin Szymkowiak. ©RWH2019





The Königssee timetable

Date/Time CET		Race
Friday, 11 January	10 am	Men's Skeleton, run 1
	11.45 am	Men's Skeleton, run 2
Friday, 11 January	1.30 pm	Women's Skeleton, run 1
	3 pm	Women's Skeleton, run 2
Saturday, 12 January	1.30 pm	Women's Bobsleigh, run 1
	3 pm	Women's Bobsleigh, run 2
Saturday, 12 January	4.30 pm	2-Man Bob, run 1
	6 pm	2-Man Bob, run 2
Sunday, 13 January	1.30 pm	4-Man Bob, run 1
	3 pm	4- Man Bob, run 2

The last World Cup winners in Königssee in January 2018

	1.		2.		3.	
Women's Skeleton Frauen-Skeleton	LÖLLING, Jacqueline	GER	HERMANN, Tina	GER	FLOCK, Janine	AUT
Men's Skeleton Männer-Skeleton	JUNGK, Axel	GER	DUKURS, Martins	LAT	DUKURS, Tomass	LAT
2-woman Bobsleigh Frauen-Zweierbob	SCHNEIDER, Stephanie DRAZEK, Annika	GER	HUMPHRIES, Kaillie GEORGE, Phylcia	CAN	MEYERS TAYLOR, Elana GIBBS, Lauren	USA
2-man Bobsleigh Männer-Zweierbob	FRIEDRICH, Francesco MARGIS, Thorsten	GER	LOCHNER, Johannes WEBER, Christopher	GER	KRIPPS, Justin KOPACZ, Alexander	CAN
4-man Bobsleigh Viererbob	WALTHER, Nico KUSKE, Kevin RÖDIGER, Alexander FRANKE, Eric	GER	MAIER, Benjamin WALCH, Kilian SAMMER, Markus MOLDOVAN, Danut MELBARDIS, Oskars DREISKENS, Daumants VILKASTE, Arvis STRENGA, Janis	AUT LAT	-	-

The 2018 European Championships

	1.		2.		3.	
Women's Skeleton Frauen-Skeleton	NIKITINA, Elena	RUS	LÖLLING, Jacqueline	GER	FLOCK, Janine	AUT
Men's Skeleton Männer-Skeleton	DUKURS, Martins	LAT	TREGUBOV, Nikita	RUS	JUNGK, Axel	GER
2-woman Bobsleigh Frauen-Zweierbob	SCHNEIDER, Stephanie DRAZEK, Annika	GER	JAMANKA, Mariama BUCKWITZ, Lisa	GER	KÖHLER, Anna STRACK, Ann-Christin	GER
2-man Bobsleigh Männer-Zweierbob	FRIEDRICH, Francesco MARGIS, Thorsten	GER	BRACHER, Clemens KUONEN, Michael	SUI	LOCHNER, Johannes BLUHM, Joshua	GER
4-man Bobsleigh Viererbob	LOCHNER, Johannes RADEMACHER, Marc BLUHM, Joshua RASP, Christian	GER	FRIEDRICH, Francesco BAUER, Candy GROTHKOPP, Martin MARGIS, Thorsten	GER	MELBARDIS, Oskars DREISKENS, Daumants LUSIS, Helvijs STRENGA, Janis	LAT





BMW | IBSF
WORLD CUP
BOB + SKELETON
2018/19



New European Champions set to be decided at mid-way point of the World Cup season

Königssee (RWH): Königssee will host both the half-way race of the World Cup season and the European Championships. At the fourth of the eight stops in the 2018/2019 BMW IBSF World Cup tour, European athletes will also be battling it out for medals in the 2019 IBSF Bobsleigh and Skeleton European Championships.

Russia's skeleton athletes Elena Nikitina and Alexander Tretiakov will arrive in Königssee as the overall leaders in the World Cup standings. In the bobsleigh events, the Olympic Champions Mariama Jamanka (GER, 2-woman bobsleigh) and Francesco Friedrich (GER, 2-man and 4-man bobsleigh) are currently leading the BMW IBSF World Cup after three of eight races.

The reigning European Champions from 2018 will all be competing in Königssee in an effort to retain their titles: Elena Nikitina (RUS, women's skeleton), Martins Dukurs (LAT, men's skeleton), Stephanie Schneider (GER, 2-woman bobsleigh), Francesco Friedrich (GER, 2-man bobsleigh) and Johannes Lochner (GER, 4-man bobsleigh).

A total of 51 skeleton athletes from 20 countries are registered to compete in Königssee. Overall, 62 teams from 17 countries are expected to compete in the three bobsleigh events. ©RWH2019

On the sidelines

John Napier (USA) – who placed tenth in the 2-man bobsleigh at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver – has been appointed as the track director for the artificial sliding track in Lake Placid, replacing Tony Carlino. The 2009 US 2-Man Bobsleigh Champion (who won with his brakeman Charles Berkeley) is already working closely with Carlino. Before serving six months on the front line with the US army in Afghanistan in 2010, Napier (now 32) had already attracted his fair share of attention the year before when he was the surprise winner of the 2-man bobsleigh race in the IBSF World Cup on his home track on Mount Van Hoevenberg. However, this remained the only World Cup victory for Napier, whose father William was also a bobsleigh pilot and President of the US Bobsled and Skeleton Federation. ©RWH2019

Florian Bauer (GER), the 2018 Junior World Champion in the 4-man bobsleigh, is reinforcing World Champion Johannes Lochner's team for the 2018/2019 season. On his BMW IBSF World Cup début in Winterberg, the 24-year-old joined pilot Lochner's sled with Christopher Weber and Christian Rasp, achieving a podium finish in third place. In Altenberg, Lochner's team with Florian Bauer finished fourth.

Racing with pilot Pablo Nolte (GER), Florian Bauer won gold in the 4-man bobsleigh at the 2018 Junior World Championships in St. Moritz (SUI). Bauer was also part of Nolte's team when he finished second in the overall standings for the 2-man bobsleigh in the 2018 IBSF Europe Cup, which also saw them win silver in the standings for the Junior European Championships. ©RWH2019





BMW | IBSF
WORLD CUP
BOB + SKELETON
2018/19



2018/2019 season winners – 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		
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	Elena Nikitina (RUS) 642 Points / Punkte	Alexander Tretiakov (RUS) 642 Points / Punkte





2018/2019 season winners – 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			
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) 660 Points / Punkte	Francesco Friedrich (GER) 675 points/Punkte	Francesco Friedrich (GER) 660 points/Punkte

