



## PRESS RELEASE – Preview for BMW IBSF World Cup in St. Moritz / SUI

23 Jan. 2019

### **Nikitina, Tretiakov, Jamanka and Friedrich lead the overall standings**

St. Moritz (RWH) Skeleton athletes Elena Nikitina and Alexander Tretiakov from Russia come to St. Moritz in the World Cup leaders' yellow jersey. European Championship runner-up Elena Nikitina is currently enjoying a 33-point lead in women's skeleton ahead of Olympic runner-up and World Cup title defender, Germany's Jacqueline Lölling. In the men's competition, Alexander Tretiakov currently has a 14-point lead over 2018 Olympic Champion Sungbin Yun (KOR).

After placing second in Innsbruck in the 2-woman bobsleigh, Olympic Champion Mariama Jamanka defended her lead in the overall rankings of the World Cup. Three victories and two finishes in second place have given the European Champion a very comfortable 109-point lead ahead of the last three races of the winter. Maintaining his year-long streak of wins, Francesco Friedrich (GER) is a full 121 points in front of his closest rival in the 2-man bobsleigh. The Olympic Champion's last defeat in the 2-man bobsleigh was back in January 2018 at the BMW IBSF World Cup in St. Moritz, where he lost to teammate Nico Walther. Events in Innsbruck saw Friedrich celebrate his third win of the season in 4-man bobsleigh, giving him a 58-point lead over second place. ©RWH2019

### **Dukurs and Flock start as new Skeleton European Champions at St. Moritz World Cup**

St. Moritz (RWH) Latvia's Martins Dukurs and Janine Flock from Austria arrive at the BMW IBSF World Cup in St. Moritz as newly crowned European Champions in skeleton. Following the cancellation of the skeleton races in Königssee, where heavy snowfall had damaged the track buildings, the BMW IBSF World Cup in Innsbruck also hosted the skeleton European Championships.

With his first victory of the season, World Champion Martins Dukurs secured his tenth consecutive European Championship title. Germany's Axel Jungk took home silver in the European Championships in Innsbruck ahead of Alexander Tretiakov (RUS) who was awarded bronze.

In the women's skeleton, Janine Flock achieved her first World Cup victory on her home track in Innsbruck, also giving her her third European Championship title following her success in 2014 and 2016. Currently in the lead at the BMW IBSF World Cup, Elena Nikitina from Russia won silver at the European Championships ahead of World Cup title defender Jacqueline Lölling (GER), who took bronze. ©RWH2019





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## St. Moritz timetable

Datum/Uhrzeit MEZ		Rennen
Freitag, 25. Januar	09.30 Uhr	Männer-Skeleton, Lauf 1
	11.15 Uhr	Männer-Skeleton, Lauf 2
Freitag, 25. Januar	13.00 Uhr	Frauen-Skeleton, Lauf 1
	14.30 Uhr	Frauen-Skeleton, Lauf 2
Samstag, 26. Januar	09.30 Uhr	Männer-Zweierbob, Lauf 1
	11.00 Uhr	Männer-Zweierbob, Lauf 2
Samstag, 26. Januar	13.00 Uhr	Frauen-Zweierbob, Lauf 1
	14.30 Uhr	Frauen-Zweierbob, Lauf 2
Sonntag, 27. Januar	10.30 Uhr	Viererbob, Lauf 1
	12.00 Uhr	Viererbob, Lauf 2

### Swiss bobsleigh pilot Timo Rohner follows in father Marcel's footsteps

St. Moritz (RWH) For the first time in almost 20 years, a familiar name in the world of bobsleigh returns to the starting list of the World Cup: The youngest son of the former Swiss bobsleigh pilot Marcel Rohner, Timo Rohner, made his début in the 2-man bobsleigh at the BMW IBSF World Cup in Königssee (GER), where he placed 17<sup>th</sup>. His score translated to 14<sup>th</sup> place in the European Championships.

In the 1990s, father Marcel Rohner was one of the most successful Swiss 4-man bobsleigh pilots. Now 54 years old, he took silver back in 1998 at the Winter Games in Nagano (JPN), was crowned overall winner at the World Cup in 1997 and 2000, and overall runner-up at the 1998 and 1999 World Cup. The 1996 and 1999 World Championships and 1997 and 1999 European Championships spelled silver medal success for Marcel Rohner and his 4-man bobsleigh team.

Now, Rohner junior hopes to continue his father's success with his team, the "Rohner Bulls". The 21-year-old bobsleigh pilot has published a five-year plan on the team's website, complete with interim goals, as he disclosed in a report on zentralplus.ch. Highlights of the plan include a top-5 position at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games in Beijing as well as a World Championship title in 2024. "You have to set yourself goals, otherwise you don't progress", says Timo Rohner on his ambitious milestones. "You should also be able to show that you mean business. Otherwise you won't get any sponsors."

When it comes to bobsleigh, Timo Rohner has meant business for a long time – with his father Marcel to guide them, both he and older brother Lukas practically grew up on the track. His first solo run in a monobob aged 15 sealed the deal and confirmed his love of the sport, explains the professional carpenter in the press release. The Rohner Bulls' main focus this year was originally on the European Cup and the Junior World Championships: However, January saw Timo Rohner score a surprising victory over Pius Meyehans and his team at the Swiss selection rounds in 2-man bobsleigh. The reward? A starting position at the BMW IBSF World Cup. ©RWH2019





## **Ander Mirambell makes the most of injury break to recruit new athletes**

Innsbruck (RWH) Fresh from competing in the first race of the winter, a back injury forced Spanish skeleton athlete Ander Mirambell to take a break from the sport - and brought a couple of promising new skeleton talents to the attention of the national federation, the Real Federación Española de Deportes de Hielo.

"When I was injured, we used the time constructively and started a recruitment process", explains the 2016 North American Cup overall winner. "So, with a bit of help from social media, we sought out athletes between the ages of 18 and 28 who showed real talent in sprinting and jumping, and requested a couple of times and distances." The feedback was overwhelming: We received more than 110 e-mails from athletes from the fields of athletics, rugby, football, field hockey, judo, softball, cycling and many more.

The eleven most promising candidates were then invited by the Spanish federation and Ander Mirambell to travel to Barcelona to participate in a test camp at the high-performance centre. In addition to sprints, jumps and weightlifting, mental strength and teamwork skills were tested in a programme that lasted a total of 30 hours. The three top male athletes and three top female athletes then headed straight for Innsbruck to have their first skeleton experience on the Igls Olympia Ice Track.

The current up-and-coming women's team is made up of Paula Raul (holder of various titles including 2018 Spanish 100-metre hurdles champion), Claudia Camacho (ballet, athletics) and Marta Ferrer (judo, softball) Training hard for men's skeleton are Oriol Roca (runner-up in the 2014 Junior World Championships in Bike Trials, amongst other successes), Mark Louis Venemans (200m sprinter) and Luis Izquierdo (track and field). Following the BMW IBSF World Cup, the athletes will make their way to a further training camp in St. Moritz. The group will then be joined by another two talented sprinters, Javier Sanz and Adrian Rodriguez.

While Ander Mirambell himself plays an active role in the programme, his brother Antonio also lends a helping hand as coach for the skeleton newcomers. Additional help comes in the form of sprint trainers Bernat Buscà and Irna Rodriguez, who took home silver at the 2008 Winter Olympics as part of the Spanish synchronised swimming team. Their role is to support the team by way of movement analyses, physiotherapy and team-building exercises.

"Our aim is to put together a team for the 2019/2020 season - who knows, maybe a few of them will make it to the official IBSF competitions", says Ander Mirambell. "And if I was able to share the Olympic dream in Beijing in 2022 with a few of them, that would be fantastic!

For 35-years-old Ander Mirambell, the next Winter Games will herald the end of his athletic career. However, he wants his name to live on in his beloved sport: "At some point, medals start to gather dust. The most important thing is to pass on your experience", explains Ander Mirambell. "When life is coming to an end, you sort out what you're leaving behind. So when my life as an athlete comes to an end, I want to leave behind a legacy of experience to the next generation." ©RWH2019





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## The last World Cup winners from St. Moritz in January 2018

	1.		2.		3.	
Women's Skeleton Frauen-Skeleton	FLOCK, Janine	AUT	HERMANN, Tina	GER	VATHJE, Elisabeth	CAN
Men's Skeleton Männer-Skeleton	YUN, Sungbin	KOR	JUNGK, Axel	GER	GASSNER, Alexander	GER
2-woman Bobsleigh Frauen-Zweierbob	MEYERS TAYLOR, Elana JONES, Lolo	USA	JAMANKA, Mariama DRAZEK, Annika	GER	SCHNEIDER, Stephanie BUCKWITZ, Lisa Marie	GER
2-man Bobsleigh Männer-Zweierbob	WALTHER, Nico POSER, Christian	GER	FRIEDRICH, Francesco MARGIS, Thorsten	GER	LOCHNER, Johannes WEBER, Christopher	GER
4-man Bobsleigh Viererbob	LOCHNER, Johannes MROWKA, Sebastian BLUHM, Joshua RASP, Christian	GER	FRIEDRICH, Francesco BAUER, Candy GROTHKOPP, Martin MARGIS, Thorsten	GER	SPRING, Chris BARNETT, Bryan BROWN, Lascelles WRIGHT, Neville	CAN

### On the sidelines

**Ashleigh Werner and Breeana Walker (AUS)** are already able to look back on considerable success over the 2018/2019 winter season. Bobsleigh pilot Ashleigh Werner finished second in the overall standings at the IBSF North American Cup. Her teammate Breeana Walker made sports history in the women's monobob: In Lillehammer (NOR) the 26-year-old won the first two races in the sport, soon to be an Olympic discipline. After seven of eight races at the IBSF European Cup, she currently holds fourth place in the overall rankings for 2-woman bobsleigh. Additional sporting highlights for the bobsleigh pilot include: A first start at the BMW IBSF World Cup, making her the first Australian woman to appear since Astrid Loch-Wilkinson in the 2013/2014 Olympic Winter. Alongside pusher Jamie Scroop, Breeana Walker placed 13<sup>th</sup> at the World Cup in Innsbruck (AUT). ©RWH2019

**Rico Peter (SUI)** is a new addition to the team of trainers for the Korean national federation, Korea Bobsleigh & Skeleton Federation. The former Swiss bobsleigh pilot announced the end of his athletic career after the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang (KOR). At the start of the season he began mentoring the Korean bobsleigh team, along with Olympic runner-up in 4-man bobsleigh, Yunjong Won. Rico Peter was one of the most successful Swiss pilots of the last few years, scoring a bronze medal in 4-man bobsleigh at the 2016 World Championships in Innsbruck and two medals in 2-man bobsleigh at the European Championships (silver in 2014 and bronze in 2015). Rico Peter celebrated three victories at the BMW IBSF World Cup (2015 in Sochi (RUS) and 2016 in Whistler (CAN) in 2-man bobsleigh and 2016 in Lake Placid (USA) in 4-man bobsleigh). He narrowly missed out on achieving his last big goal, namely an Olympic medal: At the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang (KOR), the Swiss competitor was 21 hundredths of a second off taking the bronze in 4-man bobsleigh, eventually placing fourth. ©RWH2019





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**Patrick Baumgartner (ITA)**, 2012 Youth Olympic Champion in 2-man bobsleigh, is the 2019 Junior European Champion in 4-man bobsleigh. Together with teammates Mattia Variola, Lorenzo Bilotti and Alex Verginer, the 24-year-old won the final of the 2018/2019 IBSF European Cup in Innsbruck, simultaneously taking the title in the standings for the Junior European Championships. Silver went to Rostislav Gaitiukevich's team from Russia ahead of U23 World Champion Richard Oelsner (GER), who took bronze. The top spot in the overall standings for 4-man bobsleigh at the 2018/2019 European Cup was also occupied by Patrick Baumgartner for the first time. Thanks to a double victory in the final two races of the season at the Olympic Ice Track in Innsbruck, the Italian overtook leader Jonas Jannusch (GER), 2016 Youth Olympic Champion, by two points. Richard Oelsner finished the European Cup season in 4-man bobsleigh in third place. ©RWH2019

**Kelly Curtis and Andrew Blaser (both USA), Kori Hol and Chris Spring (both CAN)** are the overall winners of the 2018/2019 IBSF North American Cup. American competitors Kelly Curtis and Andrew Blaser raced to victory in the women's and men's skeleton. Bobsleigh pilot Kori Hol from Canada was named NAC overall winner in 2-woman bobsleigh, while teammate Chris Spring came top in the overall standings for 2-man bobsleigh, 4-man bobsleigh and the combined standings. ©RWH2019

#### 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	-	-
5. Innsbruck (AUT) - Ech/EM January 18-20, 2019	Janine Flock (AUT)	Martins Dukurs (LAT)
6. St. Moritz (SUI) January 25-27, 2019		
7. Lake Placid (USA) February 15-16, 2019		
8. Calgary (CAN) February 23-24, 2019		
<b>Overall Leaders World Cup/ Führende Gesamt-Weltcup</b>	<b>Elena Nikitina (RUS) 852 Points / Punkte</b>	<b>Alexander Tretiakov (RUS) 834 Points / Punkte</b>





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## 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	Stephanie Schneider (GER) Ann-Christin Strack	Francesco Friedrich (GER) Thorsten Margis	Francesco Friedrich (GER) Martin Grothkopp Alexander Schüller Thorsten Margis
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) 1095 Points / Punkte	Francesco Friedrich (GER) 1125 points/Punkte	Francesco Friedrich (GER) 1085 points/Punkte

