



PRESS RELEASE – Preview 2 BMW IBSF Bobsleigh + Skeleton World Championships

Overall World Cup winner, Olympic and World Champion favourites for men’s skeleton
Whistler (RWH): The overall World Cup winner versus the Olympic Champion versus the World Champion in the battle to win gold in the men’s skeleton at the 2019 BMW IBSF World Championships. Alexander Tretiakov of Russia – who has just won his second overall World Cup (after first winning in 2009) – has been the most successful and consistent athlete of the 2018/2019 season. He has notched up four World Cup wins, plus two second-place finishes and two fourth-place finishes. And the 2013 World Champion has enjoyed positive results at Whistler Sliding Center in the past. He won Olympic bronze there in 2010 and has also finished on the podium three times out of his last four World Cup appearances.

The Olympic Champion Sungbin Yun (KOR) is also a firm favourite for a World Championship medal. The Korean athlete has finished in the top three at all eight World Cup races this season and has also celebrated two victories. The 2016 World Championship silver medallist has also won the last two World cup races in Whistler.

And last but not least, there is the defending World Champion Martins Dukurs of Latvia who has previously won Olympic silver in Whistler along with two of his 51 World Cup race wins. A win for him would spell World Championship title number six.

The top three favourites are then followed by a long list of potential candidates for a World Championship medal. Local hero Dave Greszczyszyn of Canada – who most recently achieved two sixth-place finishes at the World Cup in Calgary and won World Championships bronze with the Team – will be bringing the full force of his extensive experience on his home track. With the 2017 World Championship silver medallist Axel Jungk and the Junior World Champion and overall winner of the Intercontinental Cup Felix Keisinger, the German team has at least two potential medallists in its midst, while Olympic silver medallist Nikita Tregubov of Russia is sure to have his sights set on a medal, too. Marcus Wyatt could also be a bit of a dark horse when it comes to the medals: the British athlete is known for his fast starts. He celebrated his best World Cup result to date in Calgary, where he finished fifth, and brought his first full season to a close in sixth place overall. ©RWH2019

The timetable for the second World Championship week in Whistler

Date/Time Whistler		Date/Time CET		Race
Thu, 7 March	9 am	Thu, 7 March	6 pm	Men's Skeleton, run 1
	10.45 am		7.45 pm	Men's Skeleton, run 2
Thu, 7 March	12.30 pm	Thu, 7 March	9.30 pm	Women's Skeleton, run 1
	2 pm		11 pm	Women's Skeleton, run 2
Fri, 8 March	9 am	Fri, 8 March	6 pm	Men's Skeleton, run 3
	10.45 am		7.45 pm	Men's Skeleton, run 4
Fri, 8 March	12.30 pm	Fri, 8 March	9.30 pm	Women's Skeleton, run 3
	2 pm		11 pm	Women's Skeleton, run 4
Fri, 8 March	5 pm	Sat, 9 March	2 am	4-man Bobsleigh, run 1
	6.30 pm		3.30 am	4-man Bobsleigh, run 2
Sat, 9 March	5 pm	Sun, 10 March	2 am	4-man Bobsleigh, run 3
	6.30 pm		3.30 am	4-man Bobsleigh, run 4





Plenty of potential candidates for a medal in women's skeleton World Championships

Whistler (RWH): The list of potential medal winners in the women's skeleton at the 2019 BMW IBSF World Championships in Whistler is remarkably long. Be it the overall World Cup winner Elena Nikitina of Russia, Canada's home team and its experienced starters Mirela Rahneva and Elisabeth Maier, or the three German skeleton athletes, especially Tina Hermann, who came second in the overall World Cup and won the 2016 World Championships, it would be no surprise to see any of these athletes take home gold, silver or bronze. The defending World Champion Jacqueline Lölling (GER) and European Champion Janine Flock of Austria will also be returning to the scene at Whistler Sliding Center. Lölling, who won silver at the PyeongChang Olympics, missed out on the final World Cup races in Calgary (CAN) for family reasons. Janine Flock was forced to miss the last three World Cup races due to illness but is once again fighting fit in time for the World Championships.

And, last but not least, the three members of Team GB will be aiming high for the major title event of the post-Olympic season, even without Olympic Champion Lizzy Yarnold, who is expecting her first baby. The Olympic bronze medallist Laura Deas celebrated her first podium finish of the season at the World Cup finale in Calgary (CAN), while Madelaine Smith was the highest-ranking Brit in the overall World Cup in 11th place. And Youth Olympic Champion Ashleigh Pittaway is celebrating her first ever selection for the British World Championship squad.

Speaking of young athletes: Anna Fernstädtová (CZE) will be stepping up to the World Championship starting line as the current Junior World Champion. And the 22-year-old knows all too well how to secure a win at Whistler Sliding Center: She won the Intercontinental Cup race on the World Championship track back in November 2017. ©RWH2019

2017 BMW IBSF World Championships in Königssee: Champions and medal winners

	Gold		Silver/Silber		Bronze	
Women's Skeleton Frauen-Skeleton	LÖLLING, Jacqueline	GER	HERMANN, Tina	GER	YARNOLD, Lizzy	GBR
Men's Skeleton Männer-Skeleton	DUKURS, Martins	LAT	JUNGK, Axel	GER	TREGUBOV, Nikita	RUS
4-man Bobsleigh Viererbob	FRIEDRICH, Francesco BAUER, Candy GROTHKOPP, Martin MARGIS, Thorsten	GER	-	-	WALTHER, Nico KUSKE, Kevin KORONA, Kevin FRANKE, Eric	GER
	LOCHNER, Johannes KAGERHUBER, Matthias BLUHM, Joshua RASP, Christian	GER				





Path to 4-man bobsleigh gold leads past Olympic and defending World Champions

Whistler (RWH): At the 2019 BMW IBSF World Championships, athletes in the 4-man bobsleigh will have to conquer the Olympic Champion and defending World Champions on the path to win gold. Francesco Friedrich (GER) won gold at the 2018 Olympics and will arrive in Whistler (CAN) as the defending title holder alongside his team mate Johannes Lochner. Both pilots and their teams tied in first place to take home the 4-man bobsleigh title at the 2017 World Championships. The 2018 Olympics in PyeongChang also saw two more athletes tie: Nico Walther (GER) and Yunjong Won (KOR). Both teams won Olympic silver at the Winter Games and will certainly be aiming to take home the title and a medal at the World Championships in Whistler.

However, they aren't the only teams with this goal: There is Oskars Kibermanis of Latvia, for example, who was second overall in the World Cup. And then there's the three Canadian teams, of course. The pilots Justin Kripps, Chris Spring and Nick Poloniato will be showing off their wealth of experience at Whistler Sliding Center during their home World Championships and will be keen to win a medal for their fans in Canada.

Maxim Andrianov of Russia has also enjoyed a great deal of success in the 4-man bobsleigh this winter. He finished no lower than sixth in any of the World Cup races and also achieved the first podium finish of his career in Lake Placid (USA), making the Russian another potential favourite in Whistler.

The team from Monaco will also have their sights set on a podium finish once again this season. Pilot Rudy Rinaldi only just missed out on a top-three finish at the BMW IBSF World Cup race in St. Moritz in January, ending up in fourth place. And the 2012 Youth Olympic Championships bronze medallist was even on course to make history in Lake Placid (USA). After leading the first heat, the Monegasque crew crashed in the final heat, missing out on a historic bobsleigh victory for the sovereign city state. ©RWH2019

The 2019 World Champions in the 2-man and 2-woman bobsleigh and the team event

	Gold		Silver/Silber		Bronze	
Women's Skeleton Frauen-Skeleton	LÖLLING, Jacqueline	GER	HERMANN, Tina	GER	YARNOLD, Lizzy	GBR
Men's Skeleton Männer-Skeleton	DUKURS, Martins	LAT	JUNGK, Axel	GER	TREGUBOV, Nikita	RUS
4-man Bobsleigh Viererbob	FRIEDRICH, Francesco BAUER, Candy GROTHKOPP, Martin MARGIS, Thorsten LOCHNER, Johannes KAGERHUBER, Matthias BLUHM, Joshua RASP, Christian	GER GER	-	-	WALTHER, Nico KUSKE, Kevin KORONA, Kevin FRANKE, Eric	GER





On the sidelines

Akwasi Frimpong (GHA), who became his country's first ever skeleton athlete to compete in the Olympics at PyeongChang 2018, will not be competing at the BMW IBSF World Championships. The 33-year-old, who is 67th in the IBSF rankings, announced the decision on Facebook and Twitter, explaining that he will be preparing for next season instead. ©RWH2019

Georgina Cohen (ISR) is the first female skeleton athlete from Israel. Albeit with a few interruptions, the country has been competing in IBSF races in bobsleigh and men's skeleton for the past 15 years. However, its first ever female skeleton athlete has only been competing since the start of this season. Georgina Cohen (29) was born in the UK and works as an Online Communications Officer at a college in her home town of Cambridge. The athlete underwent an intensive training session in Whistler in January, allowing her to familiarise herself with the World Championship track. And Georgina Cohen was pretty enthusiastic about Whistler Sliding Center in a post on her Facebook page back in January: "What a track, it's so cool and fast. I've enjoyed every moment here." Her team mate Joel Seligstein will also be representing Israel in the men's skeleton in Whistler. ©RWH2019

Neville Wright (CAN) will be taking the last runs of his career at the 2019 BMW IBSF World Championships. The 38-year-old has been a bobsleigh brakeman for the Canadian national team since 2009 and competed in the last three Olympic Games. At the 2010 Games in Whistler, he finished fifth in the 4-man bobsleigh with pilot Pierre Lueders. In bobsleigh World Cup races, Neville Wright raced with Canadian pilots in a total of 85 races, including 54 in the 4-man event. He finished on the podium on ten occasions. Coincidentally, Neville Wright's only victory came in Whistler when he and pilot Chris Spring won the 2-man bobsleigh at the opening World Cup race in November 2017. ©RWH2019





This season's winners in the BMW IBSF World Cup – Skeleton and 4-man Bobsleigh

Track/Bahn	Women's Skeleton Frauen-Skeleton	Men's Skeleton Männer-Skeleton	Track / Bahn	4-man Bobsleigh Viererbob
1. Sigulda (LAT) December 7-9, 2018	Elena Nikitina (RUS)	Nikita Tregubov (RUS)	1. Sigulda (LAT) December 7-9, 2018	- no 4-man race - - kein Viererbob-Rennen -
2. Winterberg (GER) December 14-16, 2018	Jacqueline Lölling (GER)	Alexander Tretiakov (RUS)	2. Winterberg (GER) December 14-16, 2018	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	Elena Nikitina (RUS)	Alexander Tretiakov (RUS)	3. Altenberg (GER) January 4-6, 2019	Francesco Friedrich (GER) Candy Bauer Martin Grothkopp Thorsten Margis
4. Königssee (GER) + Ech/EM January 11-13, 2019	- (cancelled / snow)	- (cancelled / snow)	4. Königssee (GER) + Ech/EM January 11-13, 2019	Johannes Lochner (GER) Florian Bauer Marc Rademacher Christian Rasp
4. Innsbruck (AUT) - Ech/EM January 18-20, 2019	Janine Flock (AUT)	Martins Dukurs (LAT)	5. Innsbruck (AUT) January 18-20, 2019	Francesco Friedrich (GER) Martin Grothkopp Alexander Schüller Thorsten Margis
5. St. Moritz (SUI) January 25-27, 2019	Mirela Rahneva (CAN)	Sungbin Yun (KOR)	6. St. Moritz (SUI) January 25-27, 2019	Francesco Friedrich (GER) Candy Bauer Martin Grothkopp Alexander Schüller
6. Lake Placid (USA) February 15-16, 2019	Elena Nikitina (RUS)	Alexander Tretiakov (RUS)	7. Lake Placid (USA) February 15-16, 2019	Justin Kripps (CAN) Ryan Sommer Cameron Stones Benjamin Coakwell
7. Calgary (CAN) February 22, 2019	Mirela Rahneva (CAN)	Alexander Tretiakov (RUS)		
8. Calgary (CAN) February 23-24, 2019	Tina Hermann (GER)	Sungbin Yun (KOR)	8. Calgary (CAN) February 23-24, 2019	Francesco Friedrich (GER) Candy Bauer Martin Grothkopp Thorsten Margis
Overall winner BMW IBSF World Cup/ Gesamtsieger BMW IBSF Weltcup	Elena Nikitina (RUS) 1663 Points / Punkte	Alexander Tretiakov (RUS) 1704 Points / Punkte		Francesco Friedrich (GER) 1727 points/Punkte

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