



**PRESS RELEASE – Preview for 2020 BMW IBSF World Championships Altenberg (GER) 19 Feb. 2020**

## **BMW IBSF World Championships in Altenberg to start with 2-man and 2-woman bobsleigh A total of 32 countries qualified – Opening ceremony on Thursday**

Altenberg (RWH) The athletes competing in the 2-man and 2-woman bobsleigh at the 2020 BMW IBSF Bobsleigh & Skeleton World Championships in Altenberg presented by IDEAL Versicherung will be looking back over long but very different histories. The men's World Championships have been taking place for the past 89 years, while the women's event will mark exactly 20 years this year. At the opening weekend to Altenberg 2020, 21 female and 32 male duos are competing.

### ***World Championships opening ceremony on Thursday***

The opening ceremony to the 2020 BMW IBSF World Championships and the athletes and teams of 32 qualified nations will take place on Thursday (20 February). Starting at 7:15 p.m. when everybody will be welcomed with an entertaining show at Altenberg train station. Following an official opening speech by the IBSF's Secretary General Heike Grösswang, up-and-coming bobsleigh pilot Alexander Czudaj will light the World Championship flame at precisely 8:20 p.m. The 17-year-old won gold in the monobob at the 2020 Youth Olympic Games in Lausanne.

### ***Victory for a favourite or a surprise win the 2-woman bobsleigh***

Kaillie Humphries of the USA, overall World Cup winner Stephanie Schneider and defending title holder Mariama Jamanka (both GER) are without a doubt the top favourites for the World Championship title in the 2-woman bobsleigh. The US-pilot dominated the 2019/2020 BMW IBSF World Cup with four wins during the season but missed out on the final in Sigulda to prepare for the World Championships. If Kaillie Humphries wins in Altenberg, she will draw level with current record holder Sandra Kiriasis (GER) with three World Championship titles (2005, 2007, 2008).

Some up-and-coming stars may also provide some excitement: Junior World Champion Kim Kalicki (GER) already caused furore in the World Cup by making it onto the podium in her two first races in Lake Placid at the start of the season. Laura Nolte (GER), the 2016 Youth Olympic Champion even managed to win her first World Cup race and made it onto the podium in four out of her five World Cup races. The overall winner of Europe Cup Andreea Grecu (ROU) made it onto the World Cup podium for the first time in Sigulda and won silver in the European Championships, giving Romania its first EC medal for a female bobsleigh pilot.

### ***Friedrich aiming for Montis' World Championship record in the 2-man bobsleigh***

Francesco Friedrich is on the hunt for a very special record at his home track in Altenberg. The Olympic Champion has won five World Championship titles in the 2-man bobsleigh at the last five World Championships (2013, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2019) – a feat that only Eugenio Monti (ITA 1957–1961) has managed to achieve in the past. If Friedrich wins in Altenberg as well, he will become the first bobsleigh pilot to win six back-to-back 2-man bobsleigh titles. However, Monti still has the edge when it comes to total titles: The Italian was 2-man bobsleigh World Champion eight times between 1957 and 1968. Olympic Champion Justin Kripps (CAN) and European Champion Oskars Kibermanis (LAT) are also among the favourites. Representing the young guard, Switzerland's surprising European Championships silver medallist Simon Friedli and the Junior World Champion Richard Oelsner could cause a stir. ©RWH2020





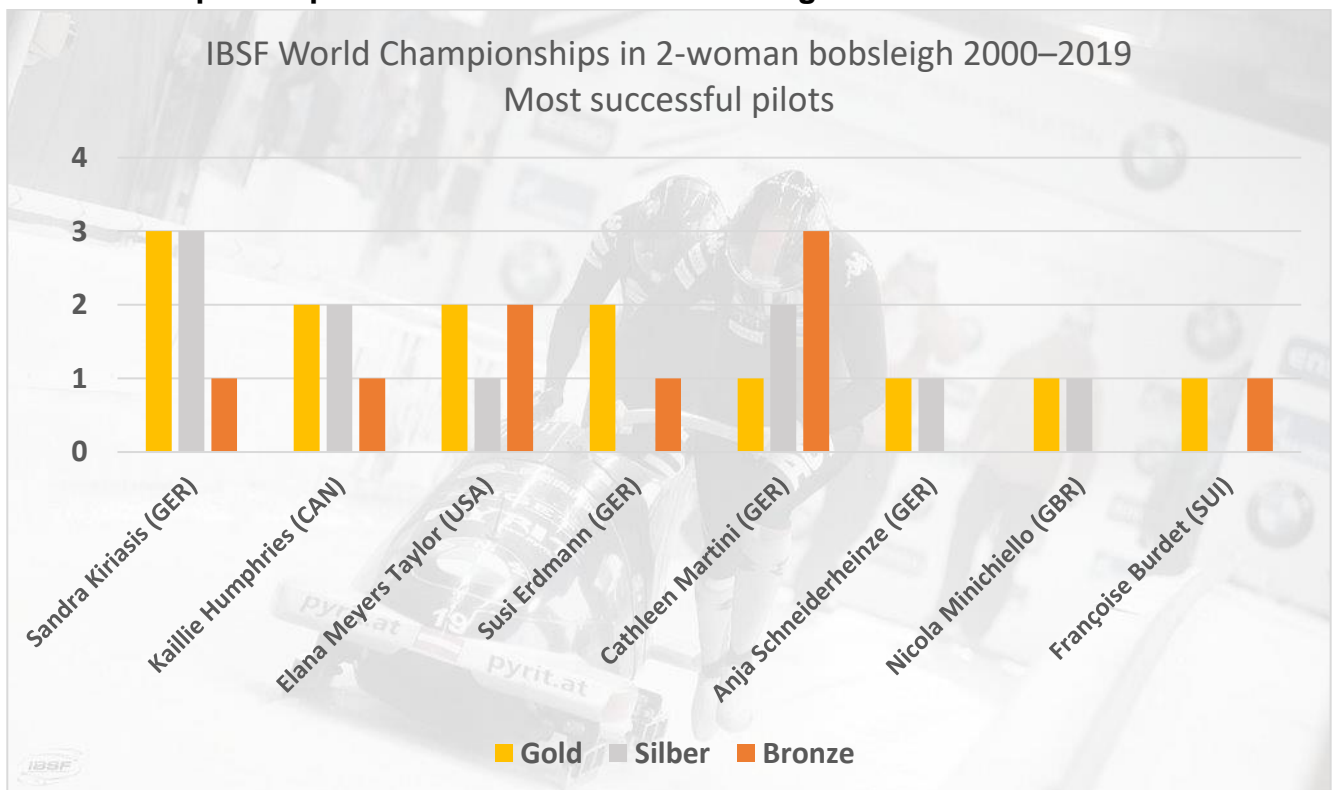
### The timetable for the first World Championship weekend in Altenberg

Date	CET time	Race
Friday, 21 Feb.	2:00 p.m.	2-woman bobsleigh, run 1
	3:30 p.m.	2-woman bobsleigh, run 2
Saturday, 22 Feb.	11:30 a.m.	2-man bobsleigh, run 1
	1:00 p.m.	2-man bobsleigh, run 2
Saturday, 22 Feb.	3:30 p.m.	2-woman bobsleigh, run 1
	<b>5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>2-woman bobsleigh, World Championship final</b>
Sunday, 23 Feb.	2:30 p.m.	2-man bobsleigh, run 1
	<b>4:00 p.m.</b>	<b>2-man bobsleigh, World Championship final</b>

### On the sidelines

**Nadezhda Sergeeva (RUS)** is Russia's first European Champion in the 2-woman bobsleigh. At the final to the 2019/2020 BMW IBSF World Cup in Sigulda (LAT), the silver medallist from the 2017 European Championships and her brakewoman **Elena Mamedova** celebrated the pilot's first win in the racing series. And because the eighth race of the World Cup season also counted as the European Championships, it also gave the Russian athletes their first European Championship gold. ©RWH2020

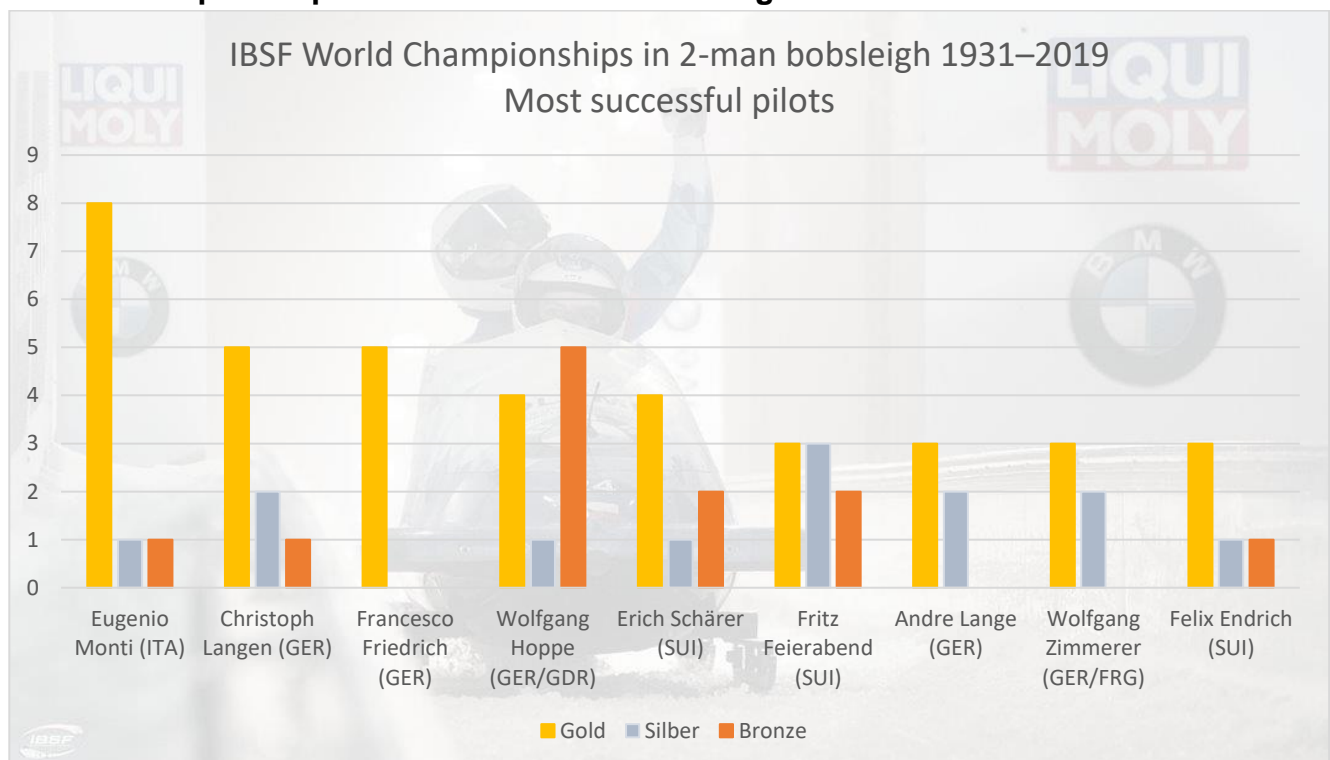
### World Championship statistics for 2-woman bobsleigh





**Kim Kalicki and Richard Oelsner (both GER)** secured their tickets to the BMW IBSF World Championships in Altenberg by winning the 2020 Junior World Championships. Kim Kalicki won the 2-woman bobsleigh with her brakewoman Kira Lipperheide – and also secured a second title at the same time: The 22- and 20-year-old athletes also finished first in the U23 event. At the 2-man bobsleigh event in Winterberg (GER), Richard Oelsner and Malte Schwenzfeier defended the pilot's title from the previous year. However, the 25-year-old kept things exciting – at the end of heat one, Oelsner/Schwenzfeier were in second place, trailing by just 0.01 seconds. ©RWH2020

### World Championship statistics for 2-man bobsleigh



>> [Athlete profiles on ibsf.org](https://www.ibsf.org) with medals tables, news and photos for all athletes

>> [All results from IBSF races and training sessions](#)

>> [The current rankings](#)

The action from all races in the 2020 BMW IBSF Bobsleigh & Skeleton World Championships will be available on our live stream and the live results ticker [ibsf.org](https://www.ibsf.org) as usual. If LTV (Latvia), NBC/Olympic Channel (USA), CBC (Canada), SRG (Switzerland) and ARD/ZDF (Germany) are broadcasting the races live or with a slight delay, the IBSF live stream will be blocked.

Further information, photos and videos are available on our social media channels / IBSFsliding:

