PRESS RELEASE – Preview 2 BMW IBSF World Championships 25. Feb 2020

Second week with premiere of the mixed skeleton World Championships on Sunday
Four more days of World Championship action with skeleton and 4-man bobsleigh races

Altenberg (RWH) The 4-man bobsleigh World Championships and as many as three skeleton title races are scheduled for the second weekend of the 2020 BMW IBSF World Championships in Altenberg (GER). Women’s skeleton athletes will be battling it out for titles and medals for the 16th time, while it is the 27th championships for the men’s skeleton. The 4-man bobsleigh World Championships have been around since 1924, so the 2020 World Champion will receive the 79th gold medal in bobsleigh history. A total of 62 skeleton athletes and 27 4-man bobsleigh teams from 28 countries are registered for the second World Championship weekend in Altenberg.

Women’s skeleton
One athlete who loves the World Championship track in Altenberg is the European Champion Elena Nikitina of Russia. The overall winner of the 2019 World Cup won her second title at the end of the 2019/2020 BMW IBSF World Cup season in Sigulda (LAT). The Latvian track is regarded to be on a similar difficulty level as Altenberg. Anticipation levels are equally high for athletes from the home team Germany, primarily the overall winner of the World Cup Jacqueline Lölling and defending World Champion Tina Hermann, who, if she wins in Altenberg, will have three titles and become the most successful female skeleton athlete. Anna Fernštädtová (CZE) will arrive in Altenberg as the current Junior World Champion. This winter saw the 23-year-old become the first female skeleton athlete to win three Junior World Championship titles. At the end of the season, Marina Gilarperi delivered some very impressive performances. The Swiss athlete won her first European Championship silver in Sigulda.

Men’s skeleton
The athlete of the season in the men’s skeleton is Martins Dukurs (LAT), who will arrive in Altenberg as the overall winner of the World Cup and also European Champion. The silver medallist from the 2010 and 2014 Olympics won the World Cup title for the ninth time and also won the European Championship title for the eleventh time. The Latvian athlete also holds the record for the World Championships, having won gold six times. However, Alexander Tretiakov of Russia, the overall winner of the 2019 World Cup and the runner-up this year, and the Olympic Champion Sungbin Yun are also among the favourites. From the World Championship host team, Axel Jungk could garner the most support on his home track. The members of his fan club, who dress in an eye-catching orange, are known for their loud support and create an incredible atmosphere for all of the athletes. Felix Keisinger (GER) has also attracted some attention this season: The 22-year-old ended his first full World Cup season with three podium finishes and a fourth-place finish overall, and also came away with the Junior World Championship title.

Premiere of the mixed skeleton team World Championships
The 2020 BMW IBSF World Championships in Altenberg will host the inaugural mixed skeleton race. The new race format will take place on the day expected to receive the most visitors: on the morning before the final 4-man bobsleigh race (Sunday, 1 March, 10:00 a.m.). > Continued >
Each team is made up of one female athlete and one male athlete and each country is able to register up to two teams. Teams from different countries are not permitted. The starting order will be based on the current IBSF rankings for the women’s and men’s skeleton. Both team members’ points will be added together and the team with the lowest number of points will start first, while the team with the most points will start last. The female skeleton athlete will start the race. Once she has reached the finish line, her team-mate must then start within 30 seconds. The two run times will be added together; the team with the lowest overall time will win the mixed skeleton World Championships.

4-man bobsleigh
Francesco Friedrich will arrive in Altenberg as the overall winner of the World Cup and the defending World Champion. The Olympic Champion is certainly high up the list of favourites for the race on his home track, although it must be said that the World Cup season was exceptionally tense: Friedrich collected three wins, as did Justin Kripps of Canada, who finished third in the overall BMW IBSF World Cup standings. Between them was the European Champion Johannes Lochner (GER), who secured one win and six podium finishes out of eight races. Other potential medal winners include Oskars Kibermanis (LAT) or even Hunter Church, who won a surprise third place in La Plagne in his first full World Cup season. ©RWH2020

The timetable for the second World Championship weekend in Altenberg

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>CET time</th>
<th>Race</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 27 Feb.</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Men’s skeleton, run 1</td>
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<td>12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Men’s skeleton, run 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, 28 Feb.</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Women’s skeleton, run 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Women’s skeleton, run 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, 28 Feb.</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Men’s skeleton, run 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Men’s skeleton, World Championship final</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, 29 Feb.</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Women’s skeleton, run 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Women’s skeleton, World Championship final</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, 29 Feb.</td>
<td>11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>4-man bobsleigh, run 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>4-man bobsleigh, run 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, 1 March</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Mixed skeleton team World Championships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, 1 March</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>4-man bobsleigh, run 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>4-man bobsleigh, World Championship final</td>
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On the sidelines
Kateryna Kuts (UKR) is by far the youngest athlete to have competed in an IBSF race. In November 2019, the skeleton athlete from the Ukraine turned 13, the minimum age for an IBSF racing licence. While Kateryna Kuts was too young to qualify for the 2020 Youth Winter Olympic Games in Lausanne, she competed in her first race in the IBSF European Cup in January. The young Ukrainian finished in 25th and 24th place. ©RWH2020
World Championship statistics for the women’s skeleton

IBSF World Championships women’s skeleton 2000–2019
Most successful athletes

World Championship statistics for the men’s skeleton

IBSF World Championships men’s skeleton 1982–2019
Most successful athletes
World Championships statistics for the 4-man bobsleigh

André Lange (GER) is the most successful bobsleigh pilot in the 4-man bobsleigh World Championships. As an athlete, the 46-year-old won five titles in the 4-man event, the last of which was in Altenberg in 2008. André Lange also attended the 2020 BMW IBSF World Championships – as a coach for the bobsleigh team from China, the host of the 2022 Olympics in Beijing. His 2-woman bobsleigh team of pilot Qing Ying finished tenth. ©RWH2020

>> Athlete profiles on 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 2019/2020 BMW IBSF Bobsleigh & Skeleton World Cup will be available on our live stream and the live results ticker ibsf.org as usual. In Latvia, LTV has exclusive broadcasting rights for all events, which will appear either on TV or on its own live stream. NBC/Olympic Channel (USA), CBC (Canada) and SRG (Switzerland) will be showing some races live. In Germany, ARD or ZDF will be broadcasting some races live or with a slight delay. In these countries, the live stream on ibsf.org and Youtube will be blocked.

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