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PRESS RELEASE – Preview for BMW IBSF World Cup 5 Innsbruck (AUT)

15 Jan. 2020

## Second half of the BMW IBSF World Cup season to open in Innsbruck Skeleton suspense, Friedrich leads 2-man and 4-man ranking

Innsbruck (RWH): With the fifth event of the winter, the second half of the BMW IBSF World Cup season is set to open on the Olympic sliding track in the resort of Igls above Innsbruck (AUT). The majority of athletes – even the very youngest – are familiar with the almost 1,500-metre-long artificial track at the foot of Patscherkofel mountain. Many athletes have their first experience in a bobsleigh or on a skeleton sled on this track due its status as a reasonably easy track to drive. However, during a race, this also means that everything can come down to the start. And even though Innsbruck is seen as easy to steer, getting up to a high speed here is tricky.

### **High drama at the half-way point in the skeleton**

After four of eight races, the women's skeleton looks exceptionally exciting: Just seven points separate the leader Jacqueline Lölling (GER) from European Champion Janine Flock (AUT) in second place. The local hero Flock – who has managed to finish on the podium in all four races this season – will be throwing all her experience into her performance on her home track in Innsbruck. The defending World Cup title holder Elena Nikitina (RUS), who is currently third overall and a good 30 points behind the leader, is another of the favourites in Innsbruck: In 2013, the venue saw the 27-year-old celebrate the first of her eight World Cup victories to date. She also won World Championship bronze here in 2016 as well as European Championship gold in 2017 and European Championship silver in 2019.

The field is even tighter in the men's skeleton: World Champion Martins Dukurs' lead currently amounts to a mere four points – even though he has yet to win a race all season! Consistency is the secret to his success: Three second-place finishes and one fourth-place finish have managed to secure him the lead. The winners of this season's races Alexander Tretiakov (RUS), Axel Jungk (GER) and Sungbin Yun (KOR) follow in second, third, and fourth. Coincidentally, the race in La Plagne resulted in the first World Cup podium finish for the next Olympic host: Wenqiang Geng of China finished third.

### **Defending title holder Friedrich leads the 2-man and 4-man bobsleigh**

The Olympic Champion, World Champion and defending World Cup title holder Francesco Friedrich is leading both the 2-man and 4-man bobsleigh ahead of the BMW IBSF World Cup in Innsbruck. And Friedrich is one of the favourites for Innsbruck: he won in both sleds at last winter's race on the Olympic bobsleigh track.

### **Junior champions on the podium, Kaillie Humphries in the lead**

In the 2-woman bobsleigh competition, World Cup debutantes are making positive waves this season: The U23 World Champion Kim Kalicki (GER) and Youth Olympic Champion Laura Nolte (GER) both competed in their first two World Cup races and both managed to finish on the podium in both races. And Laura Nolte even managed to reach the top spot in La Plagne. Margot Boch of France celebrated a sixth-place finish on her World Cup debut in front of home fans in La Plagne. The 2010 and 2014 Olympic Champion Kaillie Humphries (USA) is leading the overall standings at the mid-way point in the season. ©RWH2020





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## Innsbruck timetable

Date/CET time	CET time	Race
Friday, 17 Jan.	10:00 a.m. 11:45 a.m.	Men's skeleton, run 1 Men's skeleton, run 2
Friday, 17 Jan.	2:00 p.m. 3:30 p.m.	Women's skeleton, run 1 Women's skeleton, run 2
Saturday, 18 Jan.	10:00 a.m. 11:30 a.m.	2-woman bobsleigh, run 1 2-woman bobsleigh, run 2
Saturday, 18 Jan.	2:00 p.m. 3:30 p.m.	2-man bobsleigh, run 1 2-man bobsleigh, run 2
Sunday, 19 Jan.	1:30 p.m. 3:00 p.m.	4-man bobsleigh, run 1 4-man bobsleigh, run 2

## On the sidelines

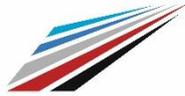
**Annika Drazek (GER)**, who won the 2-woman bobsleigh World Championships in 2019 with pilot Mariama Jamanka, made her BMW IBSF World Cup season debut in Winterberg. "Due to muscular problems, I am unfortunately unable to get my body to do what it really needs to be capable of at this point in time," wrote the 24-year-old on Instagram in early October. However, she went on to say that her ultimate goal would be to compete at the World Championships on her home track in Altenberg. The Olympic Champion and defending World Cup title holder Jamanka began the season with U23 World Champion Kira Lipperheide as her brake athlete. In Lake Placid (USA), the duo finished in fourth and fifth in the first two BMW IBSF World Cup races of the season. Racing with Annika Drazek, Mariama Jamanka finished in second and fifth in Winterberg and La Plagne. ©RWH2020

**Kathrin Beierl (AUT)** went solo in December 2019. At the race in the IBSF women's monobob racing series in Königssee (GER), the Junior World Champion made her first appearance as a pusher, pilot and brake athlete in one. In a record-breaking field of 29 athletes from 17 countries, Kathrin Beierl finished seventh. The women's monobob event will appear at the Olympics for the first time in Beijing (CHN) in 2022.

However, at the BMW IBSF World Cup race on her home track in Innsbruck, Kathrin Beierl will no longer be going solo for Austria: After a two-race break due to injury, her team-mates **Benjamin Maier** and **Markus Treichl** plan to return to the action in the 2-man and 4-man bobsleigh. ©RWH2020

**Giada Andreutti (ITA)** has become the first female Italian pilot to compete in the 2-woman bobsleigh World Cup after a few years without any representatives from the country. The 24-year-old made her BMW IBSF World Cup debut in Winterberg (GER) and finished in 15th. The last two female pilots to compete for Italy were Serena Caponcelli and Carola Milano, who appeared in one World Cup race each in 2013/2014 and 2010/2011 respectively. Giada Andreutti is also competing in the IBSF women's monobob event, which is due to make its Olympic debut in Beijing in 2022. The Italian's best result in the monobob so far is fifth place in Lillehammer in November 2018. ©RWH2020





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### This season's winners in the 2019/2020 BMW IBSF World Cup – Skeleton

	Women's skeleton	Men's skeleton
Lake Placid 1 (USA)	Jacqueline Lölling (GER)	Axel Jungk (GER)
Lake Placid 2 (USA)	Elena Nikitina (RUS)	Alexander Tretiakov (RUS)
Winterberg (GER)	Tina Hermann (GER)	Sungbin Yun (KOR)
La Plagne (FRA)	Elena Nikitina (RUS)	Alexander Tretiakov (RUS)
Innsbruck (AUT)		
Königssee (GER)		
St Moritz (SUI)		
Sigulda (LAT)		
<b>World Cup leaders</b>	<b>Jacqueline Lölling (GER, 827 points)</b>	<b>Martins Dukurs (LAT, 822 points)</b>

### This season's winners in the 2019/2020 BMW IBSF World Cup – Bobsleigh pilots

	2-woman bobsleigh	2-man bobsleigh	4-man bobsleigh
Lake Placid 1 (USA)	Kaillie Humphries (USA)	Johannes Lochner (GER)	-
	Kaillie Humphries (USA)	Francesco Friedrich (GER)	-
Lake Placid 2 (USA)		-	Justin Kripps (CAN)
		-	Justin Kripps (CAN)
Winterberg (GER)	Stephanie Schneider (GER)	-	Francesco Friedrich (GER)
			Johannes Lochner (GER)
La Plagne (FRA)	Laura Nolte (GER)	Francesco Friedrich (GER)	Francesco Friedrich (GER)
Innsbruck (AUT)			
Königssee (GER)			
St Moritz (SUI)			
Sigulda (LAT)			-
<b>World Cup leaders</b>	<b>Kaillie Humphries (USA, 834 points)</b>	<b>Francesco Friedrich (GER, 660 points)</b>	<b>Francesco Friedrich (GER, 1052 points)</b>

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

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

>> [Current rankings](#)

>> [Press accreditation is available from the respective track.](#)

>> **Accreditation for the BMW IBSF Bobsleigh & Skeleton World Championships:**

<https://altenberg2020.de/presse/>

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](#). In Latvia, LTV has the 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:

