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Preview BMW IBSF World Cup/European Championships in Sigulda (LAT) 12 Feb. 2020

Four European Championship titles to be awarded at the World Cup finals in Sigulda Oskars Melbārdis to receive Olympic gold and bronze from Sochi

Sigulda (RWH) World Cup finals, European Championships and Olympic honours – the last BMW IBSF World Cup event of the 2019/2020 season will be a weekend full of sporting highlights. The track in Sigulda (LAT), which is a good 50 km to the northeast of the capital city of Riga, will host the proceedings. Covering around 1,200 metres, this artificial track is something of a rarity on the World Cup tour: Because the surrounding land is flat, the starting line is located on the fifth floor of a tower. The first section is held up by tall pillars and the track then runs down to the Gauja River valley. Sigulda itself is located just 100 metres above sea level.

European Championships and World Cup to be decided on all three days in Sigulda

The winners of the gold, silver and bronze medals in the 2020 European Championships and the overall winners of the World Cup in the skeleton, 2-man bobsleigh and 2-woman bobsleigh will be decided on all three World Cup days in Sigulda. Proceedings will kick off on Friday evening (14 February) with the female bobsleigh athletes. The World Cup final for the men's skeleton will follow on Saturday (15 February) and the race will also count as the European Championships. On Sunday (16 February), the 2019/2020 season in the BMW IBSF World Cup will come to a close with two more European Championship races in the women's skeleton and 2-man bobsleigh.

All defending European Championship title holders set to compete in Sigulda

Janine Flock (AUT, women's skeleton), Martins Dukurs (LAT, men's skeleton), Mariama Jamanka/Annika Drazek (GER, 2-woman bobsleigh) and Francesco Friedrich/Martin Grothkopp (GER, 2-man bobsleigh) are the reigning European Champions from 2019. All four of them are set to compete in Sigulda.

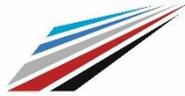
Friedrich, Humphries, Lölling and Dukurs lead the World Cup

In the 2-man bobsleigh, the overall winner in the 4-man event Francesco Friedrich is the clear favourite with a lead of over 250 points, which would give him his third overall win in the 2-man event – however, this is not set in stone just yet with two races scheduled for Sigulda. In the 2-woman bobsleigh, the overall leader Kaillie Humphries (USA) will unfortunately not be competing in the finals in favour of preparing for the World Championships. So, Sigulda is likely to see Stephanie Schneider, the defending title holder Mariama Jamanka (both GER), and Canada's Christine De Bruin battling it out for the top three spots in the overall World Cup. Things are also still up in the air in the skeleton races. Jacqueline Lölling (GER) and local hero Martins Dukurs (LAT) will arrive in Sigulda as current leaders.

Oskars Melbārdis to receive Olympic gold and bronze from Sochi 2014

World Cup Saturday (15 February) in Sigulda will be a very special day for bobsleigh pilot Oskars Melbārdis. The 31-year-old and his team-mates, Daumants Dreiškens in the 2-man bobsleigh and Arvis Vilkaste, Jānis Strenga and Daumants Dreiškens in the 4-man will receive two retrospective Olympic medals from the 2014 Winter Olympic Games: Gold for the 4-man bobsleigh and bronze for the 2-man. Organisers of the event in the winter-sports-mad country of Latvia are expecting several thousand spectators. ©RWH2020





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The schedule for Sigulda

Date	Sigulda time	CET time	Race
Friday, 14 Feb.	6:00 p.m.	5:00 p.m.	2-women bobsleigh + European Championships, run 1
	7:30 p.m.	6:30 p.m.	2-women bobsleigh + European Championships, run 2
Saturday, 15 Feb.	12:00 p.m.	11:00 a.m.	Men's skeleton + European Championships, run 1
	1:45 p.m.	12:45 p.m.	Men's skeleton + European Championships, run 2
Saturday, 15 Feb.	3:00 p.m.	2:00 p.m.	Olympic medals ceremony for Team Melbardis
Saturday, 15 Feb.	4:30 p.m.	3:30 p.m.	2-man bobsleigh World Cup 7, run 1
	6:00 p.m.	5:00 p.m.	2-man bobsleigh World Cup 7, run 2
Sunday, 16 Feb.	10:00 a.m.	9:00 a.m.	Women's skeleton + European Championships, run 1
	11:30 a.m.	10:30 a.m.	Women's skeleton + European Championships, run 2
Sunday, 16 Feb.	1:30 p.m.	12:30 p.m.	2-man bobsleigh + European Championships, run 1
	3:00 p.m.	2:00 p.m.	2-man bobsleigh + European Championships, run 2

On the sidelines

For **Rene Spies (GER)**, the bobsleigh coach for the German national team, the World Cup race in Sigulda at the start of the 2018/2019 season was the World Cup race of the year. The coach came to this conclusion in his end-of-season summary in a discussion with the German Bobsleigh, Luge and Skeleton Federation (BSD) last winter. "The World Cup race of the year was without a doubt Sigulda. You could see that people there live and breathe sliding sports. The event attracted huge crowds, particularly the skeleton races, which were hugely popular thanks to the Dukurs brothers. It was great to see people crossing the road to get to the bobsleigh track. The support was just incredible – this track is full of heart and soul. That's why it was the World Cup race of the year for me." The youth coach **Anja Selbach** (also the 2008 skeleton World Champion) expressed a similar opinion to the BSD: "The races in Sigulda are always amazing, you almost feel at home there." ©RWH2020

Rudy Rinaldi (MON) will be missing the BMW IBSF World Cup final in Sigulda and the 2020 BMW IBSF World Championships in Altenberg due to injuries on his team. Last winter, Rudy Rinaldi and his team were within reach of the World Cup podium on several occasions and started the 2019/2020 season with high hopes. "At the moment, all of us are constantly battling injuries," wrote the Monegasque bobsleigh team on its Facebook page. "We were unable to reach the level we wanted. We have therefore decided to call it a day for this year so we don't make things worse." The team's goals remain to compete in the World Championships in Lake Placid next winter and the 2022 Winter Olympic Games in Beijing. ©RWH2020

Lelde Priedulēna (LAT), the 2016 Junior World Champion in the women's skeleton, has been a member of the International Bobsleigh & Skeleton Federation's (IBSF) coaching team since the start of the season. In North America, the 27-year-old worked as an IBSF coach and looked after a number of countries at the OMEGA qualification races ahead of the 2020 Youth Winter Olympic Games in Lausanne. Lelde Priedulena also worked as a coach at the IBSF North American Cup and IBSF Intercontinental Cup races. The Latvian athlete competed in 45 BMW IBSF World Cup races between 2012 and 2019 and only just missed out on the podium multiple times in fourth place. Lelde Priedulena finished seventh at both the 2017 BMW IBSF World Championships in Königssee and the 2018 Winter Olympic Games in PyeongChang (KOR). ©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)	Jacqueline Lölling (GER)	Martins Dukurs (LAT)
Königssee (GER)	Tina Hermann (GER)	Alexander Tretiakov (RUS)
St Moritz (SUI)	Tina Hermann (GER)	Martins Dukurs (LAT)
Sigulda (LAT)		
World Cup leaders	Jacqueline Lölling (GER, 1472 points)	Martins Dukurs (LAT, 1440 points)

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)	Mariama Jamanka (GER)	Francesco Friedrich (GER)	Francesco Friedrich (GER)
Königssee (GER)	Kaillie Humphries (USA)	Francesco Friedrich (GER)	Francesco Friedrich (GER)
St Moritz (SUI)	Kaillie Humphries (USA)	Johannes Lochner (GER)	Justin Kripps (CAN)
Sigulda (LAT)			-
	-		-
World Cup leaders	Kaillie Humphries (USA, 1484 points)	Francesco Friedrich (GER, 1320 points)	Francesco Friedrich (GER, 1686 points)

>> [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.](#)

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:

