



### 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver - medal contenders women's singles

Name	Nation	Results	Further information
<p><b>Clukey, Julia</b> 29.04.1985 175cm – 64kg PoB: Augusta, Maine Residence: Augusta, Maine Engineer, Student</p>	USA	<p>2009 Worlds 5<sup>th</sup>; 2007 Worlds 8<sup>th</sup>; 2008 Worlds 12<sup>th</sup>; 2005 junior Worlds 3<sup>rd</sup>; 2003 junior Worlds 4<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall World Cup 30<sup>th</sup>; 2007-08 overall World Cup 12<sup>th</sup>; 2007-08 overall Challenge Cup 9<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 7<sup>th</sup> in Koenigssee; 10<sup>th</sup> in Winterberg; 11<sup>th</sup> in Calgary; 12<sup>th</sup> in Igls; 14<sup>th</sup> in Oberhof; 17<sup>th</sup>; in Cesana; 19<sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer. <b>Overall World Cup 13<sup>th</sup>.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 12<sup>th</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Number two in the US team</b> The 5<sup>th</sup>-placed at the Worlds was temporarily slowed down this winter by a neck injury. But this did not prevent her from qualifying for the Olympic Games. Right behind World champion Erin Hamlin, she is the number two on the US team. However, she's much faster at the start than her „golden“ compatriot. Earned a fifth place at the 2009 Worlds on her home track in Lake Placid.</p>
<p><b>Gasparini, Sandra</b> 28.11.1990 173cm – 65kg PoB: Sterzing, Bolzano Residence: Sotto di Campo, Bolzano active since: 2004</p>	ITA	<p>2009 Worlds 4<sup>th</sup> relay, didn't finish single race; 2008 Worlds 18<sup>th</sup> singles and 6<sup>th</sup> relay; 2007 Worlds 2<sup>nd</sup> team and 21<sup>st</sup> singles; 2008 Europeans 3<sup>rd</sup> relay and 12<sup>th</sup> single; 2010 junior Worlds 2<sup>nd</sup>; 2008-09 overall World Cup 21<sup>st</sup>; 2007-08 overall World Cup 17<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 9<sup>th</sup> in Winterberg; 11<sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer; 16<sup>th</sup> in Altenberg + Koenigssee; 18<sup>th</sup> in Oberhof; 20<sup>th</sup> in Calgary. <b>Overall World Cup 18<sup>th</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Distinguished youngster</b> Though she is the youngest luger on Italy's team, she already contributed enormously to achieving two medals. At the 2007 Worlds she contributed to a silver medal in the team event and at the 2008 Europeans she helped earning bronze in the team relay. Returned with a silver medal from the 2010 junior Worlds in Igls, Austria. Her Quarter Horse „Colonel“ is her pride and joy, his photos adorn her laptop.</p>
<p><b>Gough, Alex</b> 12.05.1987 171cm – 70kg PoB: Calgary Residence: Calgary Sports professional active since: 1999</p>	CAN	<p>2006 Olympics 20<sup>th</sup>; 2009 Worlds 4<sup>th</sup>; 2007 junior Worlds 6<sup>th</sup>; 2007 junior Worlds 4<sup>th</sup> team; 2008-09 overall World Cup 8<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 7<sup>th</sup></p> <p><b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 4<sup>th</sup> in Igls + Cesana; 6<sup>th</sup> in Calgary + Winterberg; 12<sup>th</sup> in Altenberg, Koenigssee + Oberhof. <b>Overall World Cup 7<sup>th</sup>.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 5<sup>th</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Piercings and tattoos, but quite unusual hobby</b> She loves piercings and tattoos, but with that in mind her hobby seems rather unusual: playing classical guitar. As 4<sup>th</sup>-placed at the 2009 Worlds she narrowly missed the podium. Last summer she trained as hard as never before. Her coach Wolfgang Staudinger – he compares her physical frame with that of Sylke Otto (after all, the most successful luger of all times) – believes her capable of creating a surprise at the Olympic Games.</p>



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<p><b>Geisenberger, Natalie</b> 05.02.1988 183cm – 77kg PoB: Munich Residence: Miesbach Trainee police officer active since: 1998</p>	GER	<p>2009 Worlds 2<sup>nd</sup> singles and World champion relay; 2008 Worlds 2<sup>nd</sup>; 2007 Worlds 4<sup>th</sup>; 2010 Europeans no participation; 2008 European champion and 4<sup>th</sup> relay; 2007 and 2004 junior World champion singles and team; 2006 junior World champion singles; 2005 junior Worlds 2<sup>nd</sup> singles and junior World champion team; 2008-09 overall World Cup 2<sup>nd</sup>; 2007-08 overall World Cup 3<sup>rd</sup>; 2003-04, 2004-05 + 2005-06 overall junior World Cup winner; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 2<sup>nd</sup>.</p> <p><i>altogether <b>six World Cup victories</b> (2008-09: Winterberg, Altenberg, Vancouver. – 2009-10: Igls, Winterberg, Cesana)</i></p> <p><b><u>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</u></b> 1<sup>st</sup> in Igls, Winterberg + Cesana; 2<sup>nd</sup> in Calgary, Altenberg, Lillehammer + Koenigssee; 3<sup>rd</sup> Oberhof. <b>Overall World Cup 2<sup>nd</sup>.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 3<sup>rd</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Lively girl with jaunty sound bites</b> Not only fast driving her sled, she also provides some jaunty sound bites. "We realised that no-one of us is any faster down the track not wishing a 'good morning' to our team-mates" - this is what she says with regard to the harmony within the German team. There is another quote as well regarding her numerous second-place finishes in the Olympic season: „I will save celebrating a victory for a more important race in Canada.“ She is always accompanied by her parents. And by her cat.</p>
<p><b>Halder, Veronika</b> 14.10.1980 165cm – 59kg PoB: Matrei, Tyrol Residence: Muehlbachl, Tyrol Soldier active since: 1994</p>	AUT	<p>2006 Olympics 5<sup>th</sup>; 2003 and 2004 Worlds 5<sup>th</sup>; 2005 Worlds 7<sup>th</sup>; 2009 Worlds 12<sup>th</sup>; 2007 and 2008 Worlds 13<sup>th</sup>; 2010 Europeans 2<sup>nd</sup> relay and 4<sup>th</sup> singles; 2008 Europeans 2<sup>nd</sup> relay and 3<sup>rd</sup> singles; 2004 Europeans 6<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 and 2006-07 overall World Cup 7<sup>th</sup>; 2003-04 overall World Cup 5<sup>th</sup>; 2002-03 and 2005-06 overall World Cup 6<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 4<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b><u>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</u></b> 6<sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer; 7<sup>th</sup> in Cesana; 8<sup>th</sup> in Calgary + Altenberg; 10<sup>th</sup> in Igls; 11<sup>th</sup> in Cesana; 14<sup>th</sup> in Koenigssee; 15<sup>th</sup> in Winterberg. <b>Overall World Cup 8<sup>th</sup>.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 4<sup>th</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Three times a 3<sup>rd</sup> at World Cup and Europeans</b> There is second to none on her sled, she cannot be fooled as far as luge is concerned. And her driving style is a feast for the eyes. If only her starting times were better.... The athlete from South Tyrol loves the mountains, loves music and is close friends with Angelika Neuner (Olympic runner-up in 1992). She earned bronze at the 2008 Europeans. Posted three podium finishes during the Luge World Cup – always on third place.</p>



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<p><b>Hamlin, Erin</b> 19.11.1986 170cm – 65kg PoB: New Hartford, NY Residence: Remsen, NY Photo journalist</p>	USA	<p>2006 Olympics 12<sup>th</sup>; 2009 World champion and 6<sup>th</sup> relay; 2007 Worlds 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> team; 2008 Worlds 8<sup>th</sup> singles and 5<sup>th</sup> relay; 2008-09 overall World Cup 6<sup>th</sup>; 2007-08 overall World Cup 7<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 10<sup>th</sup>; 2004-05 overall junior World Cup 3<sup>rd</sup>.</p> <p><b><u>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</u></b> 3<sup>rd</sup> in Lillehammer, Winterberg + Cesana; 5<sup>th</sup> in Altenberg + Koenigssee; 7<sup>th</sup> in Calgary; 8<sup>th</sup> in Oberhof; 9<sup>th</sup> in Igls. <b>Overall World Cup 4th.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 2<sup>nd</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>First US World champion</b> As the first US World luge champion the photo journalist knew perfectly how to play to the gallery. Her 2009 World gold medal even merited a report on the front page of the renowned New York Times. She confirmed her claims to be among the top Olympic medal contenders with three third places in Lillehammer, Winterberg and Cesana this season. Wants to write another chapter of US luge history in Whistler: Never before a US girl earned a luge medal at Olympic Games. Played successfully soccer, her idol is, among others, US star Mia Hamm.</p>
<p><b>Huefner, Tatjana</b> 30.04.1983 178cm – 76kg PoB: Neuruppin Residence: Blankenburg Soldier active since: 1992</p>	GER	<p>2006 Olympics 3<sup>rd</sup>; 2007 and 2008 World champion singles; 2008 World champion relay; 2004 Worlds 4<sup>th</sup>; 2009 Worlds 6<sup>th</sup>; Europeans 2010 no participation; 2004 and 2006 Europeans 2<sup>nd</sup>; 2008 Europeans 4<sup>th</sup>; 2003 junior Worlds 2<sup>nd</sup>; 2002 junior Worlds 3<sup>rd</sup>; 2009-10, 2008-09, 2007-08 overall World Cup winner; 2006-07 overall World Cup 2<sup>nd</sup>; 2005-06 overall World Cup 3<sup>rd</sup>; 2008-09 + 2009-10 overall Challenge Cup winner.</p> <p><i>altogether 21 World Cup victories (2005-06: Altenberg; 2006-07: Calgary, Winterberg; 2007-08: Calgary, Winterberg, Igls, Koenigssee, Altenberg, Sigulda, Sigulda; 2008-09: Igls, Sigulda, Koenigssee, Cesana, Oberhof, Calgary; 2009-10: Calgary, Altenberg, Lillehammer, Koenigssee, Oberhof)</i></p> <p><b><u>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</u></b> 1<sup>st</sup> in Calgary, Altenberg, Lillehammer, Koenigssee + Oberhof; 2<sup>nd</sup> Igls, Winterberg + Cesana. <b>Overall World Cup winner.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup winner.</b></p>	<p><b>The sky's the limit when it's "downhill"</b> At the 2006 Olympic Games she still lived in the shadow of Sylke Otto and Silke Kraushaar-Pielach. But since that time it seems as if only the sky is the limit whenever it's „downhill“ for Huefner. Two World Championship titles, three overall World Cup victories. In the meantime she has collected a total of 21 individual victories in the Luge World Cup – and this is why Sylke (37 individual victories) and Silke (36) have to start worrying about their top positions. She often trains together with her team-mate David Moeller. Just like the two-time World champion she has a shot at a performance diagnostics based upon measuring the heart rate variability. Loves mountaineering. In summer she climbed the „most famous mountain in Switzerland“, the Matterhorn.</p>



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<b>Ivanova, Tatiana</b> 16.02.1991 Residence: Chusovoi Student active since: 2000	RUS	2010 European champion singles and 4 <sup>th</sup> relay; 2009 junior Worlds 6 <sup>th</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> team; 2008 junior Worlds 9 <sup>th</sup> ; 2008-09 overall World Cup 17 <sup>th</sup> ; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 11 <sup>th</sup> .  <b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 9 <sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer; 10 <sup>th</sup> in Oberhof, 11 <sup>th</sup> in Altenber; 18 <sup>th</sup> in Calgary, 20 <sup>th</sup> in Cesana. <b>Overall World Cup 16<sup>th</sup>.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 13<sup>th</sup>.</b>	<b>European gold medal for „Chocolakova“</b> The youngest luger of the Russian team surprisingly earned the European gold medal in Sigulda. Thus she earned the title as the "first Russian European champion". She calls herself „Chocolakova“, her nickname because of her fondness for sweets. Even her sled is adorned with this nickname.
<b>Kocher, Martina</b> 14.03.1985 171cm – 59kg PoB: Bern Residence: Hinterkappeln Student (sports, english) active since: 1994	SUI	2006 Olympics 9 <sup>th</sup> ; 2009 Worlds 16 <sup>th</sup> ; 2008 Worlds 7 <sup>th</sup> ; 2007 Worlds 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2010 Europeans 8 <sup>th</sup> ; 2004, 2006 + 2008 Europeans 11 <sup>th</sup> ; 2004 junior Worlds 5 <sup>th</sup> 2007-08 and 2008-09 overall World Cup 11 <sup>th</sup> ; 2006-07 overall World Cup 8 <sup>th</sup> ; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 6 <sup>th</sup> .  <b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 7 <sup>th</sup> in Cesana; 9 <sup>th</sup> in Koenigssee; 11 <sup>th</sup> in Oberhof; 13 <sup>th</sup> in Calgary + Winterberg; 15 <sup>th</sup> in Altenberg; 16 <sup>th</sup> in Igls; 18 <sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer. <b>Overall World Cup 11<sup>th</sup>.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 8<sup>th</sup>.</b>	<b>Tears of joy when she qualified for the Olympic Games</b> When she finally accomplished to qualify for the Olympic Games the „lightweight“ (59kg) shed tears of joy. For quite some years now she is best friends with Tatjana Huefner. Profits from the FIL "sponsorship" programme. Similar to all Swiss lugers she has been training together with the German team. Her boyfriend Gregor Baumann is also at home on the ice - he is the 2008 junior World bobsleigh champion in the two-man.
<b>Lauscher, Regan</b> 21.02.1980 174cm – 68kg PoB: Red Deer, Alberta Residence: Calgary, Alberta Freelance journalist, student active since: 1994	CAN	2006 Olympics 10 <sup>th</sup> ; 2002 Olympics 12 <sup>th</sup> ; 2009 Worlds 15 <sup>th</sup> ; 2005 Worlds 9 <sup>th</sup> ; 2008 Worlds 17 <sup>th</sup> ; 2008-09 overall World Cup 23 <sup>rd</sup> ; 2004-05 overall World Cup 8 <sup>th</sup> .  <b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 9 <sup>th</sup> in Oberhof; 10 <sup>th</sup> in Calgary; 11 <sup>th</sup> in Koenigssee; 14 <sup>th</sup> in Altenberg + Winterberg; 15 <sup>th</sup> in Igls. <b>Overall World Cup 15<sup>th</sup>.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 11<sup>th</sup>.</b>	<b>Second place in Lake Placid!</b> After 2002 and 2006 these will be her third Olympic Winter Games. She is dreaming of a repetition in Whistler: a second place in Lake Placid in 2004-05 is still Canada's best ever World Cup result. Record holder with seven national Canadian titles.



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<p><b>Ludan, Liliya</b> 02.06.1969 170cm – 95kg  PoB: Kiev Residence: Kiev  Sports instructor active since: 1984</p>	UKR	<p>2006 and 2002 Olympics 6<sup>th</sup>; 1998 Olympics 16<sup>th</sup>; 2009 Worlds 19<sup>th</sup>; 2003 Worlds 7<sup>th</sup>; 2007 Worlds 10<sup>th</sup>; 2000 Worlds 13<sup>th</sup>; 2008 Worlds 14<sup>th</sup>; 2010 Europeans 5<sup>th</sup> relay and 12<sup>th</sup> singles; 2001 Europeans 5<sup>th</sup>; 2000 and 2008 Europeans 9<sup>th</sup>; 2006 Europeans 10<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall World Cup 15<sup>th</sup>; 2005-06 overall World Cup 8<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 14<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 15<sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer; 18<sup>th</sup> in Igls + Altenberg; 20<sup>th</sup> in Oberhof. <b>Overall World Cup 25<sup>th</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Ukraine's long-running luger</b> She is the senior luger in the women's singles. Will now compete in her fourth Olympic Games. She is married and a mother.</p>
<p><b>Orlova, Anna</b> 23.08.1972 175cm – 89kg  PoB: Riga Residence: Riga  Police officer active since: 1989</p>	LAT	<p>2006 Olympics 7<sup>th</sup>; 2002 Olympics 9<sup>th</sup>; 2009 Worlds 22<sup>nd</sup>; 2003 Worlds 2<sup>nd</sup> team; 2005 Worlds 8<sup>th</sup>; 2004 Worlds 7<sup>th</sup>; 2008 Worlds 10<sup>th</sup>; 2010 Europeans champion relay and 6<sup>th</sup> singles; 2006 and 2008 Europeans 8<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall World Cup 10<sup>th</sup>; 2007-08 overall World Cup 9<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 8<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 12<sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer + Cesana; 15<sup>th</sup> in Calgary; 19<sup>th</sup> in Altenberg; 20<sup>th</sup> in Igls. <b>Overall World Cup 23<sup>nd</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Team duel with Tiruma</b> In the past she was outdone by her compatriot Majia Tiruma. At the Europeans back "home" in Sigulda, however, she posted a sixth place - a better result than Tiruma who finished on seventh position.</p>



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<p><b>Reithmayer, Nina</b> 08.06.1984 170cm – 60kg PoB: Innsbruck Residence: Innsbruck Soldier active since: 1992</p>	AUT	<p>2006 Olympics 8<sup>th</sup>; 2009 Worlds 9<sup>th</sup> singles and 2<sup>nd</sup> relay; 2008 Worlds 6<sup>th</sup> singles and 2<sup>nd</sup> relay; 2007 Worlds 7<sup>th</sup> singles and 3<sup>rd</sup> team; 2010 Europeans 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2004 Europeans 8<sup>th</sup>; 2006 and 2008 Europeans 5<sup>th</sup>; 2002 junior World champion; 2004 junior Worlds 2<sup>nd</sup>; 2002-03 overall junior World Cup winner; 2006-07 + 2008-09 overall World Cup 4<sup>th</sup>; 2007-08 overall World Cup 5<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 3<sup>rd</sup>.</p> <p><b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 5<sup>th</sup> in Calgary; 6<sup>th</sup> in Igls, Altenberg, Koenigssee + Oberhof; 7<sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer + Winterberg; 10<sup>th</sup> in Cesana. <b>Overall World Cup 5<sup>th</sup>.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 8<sup>th</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Wrote a chapter of luge history</b> In the winter of 2007-08 she wrote a chapter of luge history when she won the Challenge Cup in Altenberg. Only Ukraine's Nataliia Yakushenko achieved this feat twice, too - to cut off Germany's winning series in this event. She is confident that the German winning streak in the Luge World Cup will be coming to an end quite soon. Her mother works at the Igls racing office, her father acts there as a "master of ceremonies". Earned her first individual medal at the 2010 Europeans in Sigulda - a bronze medal.</p>
<p><b>Rodionova, Alexandra</b> 02.01.1984 Residence: Bratsk Sports instructor active since: 1996</p>	RUS	<p>2006 Olympic 14<sup>th</sup>; 2009 Worlds 11<sup>th</sup>; 2004, 2007 and 2008 Worlds 15<sup>th</sup>; 2010 Europeans 9<sup>th</sup>; 2008 Europeans 10<sup>th</sup> singles and 5<sup>th</sup> relay; 2008-09 overall World Cup 13<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 13<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 6<sup>th</sup> in Cesana; 7<sup>th</sup> in Altenberg; 8<sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer; 9<sup>th</sup> in Calgary; 10<sup>th</sup> in Koenigssee; 11<sup>th</sup> in Igls; 15<sup>th</sup> in Oberhof; 16<sup>th</sup> in Winterberg. <b>Overall World Cup 9<sup>th</sup>.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 7<sup>th</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Suddenly not the number one any more</b> Used to be the best Russian luger in the past - until she was outdone in January by youngster Tatiana Ivanova, who took the European Championship title in Sigulda.</p>



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<p><b>Simister, Meaghan</b> 10.11.1986 171cm – 68kg</p> <p>PoB: Regina/Saskatchewan Residence: Calgary, Alberta</p> <p>Student (political sciences) active since: 1999</p>	CAN	<p>2006 Olympics: no finish because of a crash; 2008 Worlds 9<sup>th</sup>; 2007 and 2009 Worlds 18<sup>th</sup>; 2005 junior Worlds 2<sup>nd</sup> team and 10<sup>th</sup> singles; 2008-09 overall World Cup 13<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 10<sup>th</sup> in Altenberg; 14<sup>th</sup> in Igls; 17<sup>th</sup> in Calgary + Winterberg; 19<sup>th</sup> in Oberhof. <b>Overall World Cup 20<sup>th</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Modelled Canada's official Olympic clothing</b> Cuts a good figure as a model, presented Canada's official clothing line for the Olympic Games on a runway last summer. At the start she usually cuts a good figure, too. The student of political sciences is already as swift as an arrow and with her fast starting times she bothers the dominating German women lugers. She refers to her final results, however, as "frustrating" – a 10<sup>th</sup> place in Altenberg proved to be her best result this winter. This is why the credo of Canada's head coach Wolfgang Staudinger goes: "Maximise the training and minimise the mistakes."</p>
<p><b>Staszulonek, Ewelina</b> 17.02.1985 168cm – 72kg</p> <p>Residence: Sweradow</p> <p>Student active since: 2000</p>	POL	<p>2006 Olympics 15<sup>th</sup>; 2000 Worlds 13<sup>th</sup>; 2007 Worlds 16<sup>th</sup>; 2010 Europeans 7<sup>th</sup> relay and 14<sup>th</sup> singles; 2004 Europeans 14<sup>th</sup> singles; 2005 junior Worlds 8<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall World Cup 9<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 11<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 8<sup>th</sup> in Koenigssee; 12<sup>th</sup> in Winterberg; 14<sup>th</sup> in Calgary; 17<sup>th</sup> in Igls + Lillehammer; 20<sup>th</sup> in Altenberg. <b>Overall World Cup 17<sup>th</sup>.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 15<sup>th</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Comeback with a big question mark !</b> A metal plate and six screws still remind Ewelina Staszulonek of her dreadful crash in the autumn of 2007 during the International Training Week prior to the 2008 Europeans in Cesana. At that time she suffered a compound fracture of the left leg and underwent several surgeries. It seems to be a medical wonder that the 24-year old is back on the sled again. And with good results, too: 8<sup>th</sup> place in Koenigssee. She owes a lot to the German team physician Dr. Jochen Wagner who received the FIL Fair Play trophy for his "fast and competent first aid". However, she steers clear of the track in Cesana.</p>
<p><b>Sweeney, Megan</b> 17.02.1987</p> <p>Residence: Suffield, CT</p> <p>Sports professional</p>	USA	<p>2008 Worlds 16<sup>th</sup>; 2005 junior Worlds 9<sup>th</sup>; 2007 junior Worlds 4<sup>th</sup> singles and 2<sup>nd</sup> team; 2007-08 overall World Cup 15<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 8<sup>th</sup> in Cesana; 11<sup>th</sup> in Winterberg; 13<sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer; 16<sup>th</sup> in Oberhof; 17<sup>th</sup> in Altenberg + Koenigssee. <b>Overall World Cup 14<sup>th</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Big US surprise</b> Quite surprisingly, she punched the third US ticket in the women's singles for the Olympic luge events. Defeated first Courtney Zablocky (2006 Olympic 4<sup>th</sup>-placed) and Ashley Walden (4<sup>thdc</sup>-placed at the 2005 Worlds). During the US team selection process she prevailed against her younger sister Emily and junior World champion Kate Hansen.</p>



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<p><b>Tiruma, Maija</b> 28.11.1983 173cm – 75kg  PoB: Riga Residence: Ragana  Student active since: 1998</p>	LAT	<p>2006 Olympics 17<sup>th</sup>; 2002 Olympics 18<sup>th</sup>; 2009 Worlds 3<sup>rd</sup> relay and 8<sup>th</sup> singles; 2008 Worlds 3<sup>rd</sup> relay and 11<sup>th</sup> singles; 2007 Worlds 17<sup>th</sup>; 2008 European champion relay and 7<sup>th</sup> singles; 2010 Europeans 7<sup>th</sup>; 2006 Europeans 9<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall World Cup 14<sup>th</sup>; 2007-08 overall World Cup 8<sup>th</sup>; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 9<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 7<sup>th</sup> in Igls; 9<sup>th</sup> in Altenberg; 10<sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer; 12<sup>th</sup> in Calgary; 12<sup>th</sup> in Koenigssee; 14<sup>th</sup> in Cesana; 17<sup>th</sup> in Oberhof.</p> <p><b>Overall World Cup 12<sup>th</sup>.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 10<sup>th</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Already two medals with Latvia's team relay</b> Seems to be something of a guarantor of success for Latvia: 2008 European champion and 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Worlds. However, in the Olympic winter she does not really get going. Her younger sister Eliza is her spitting image and also active in the sport of luge. 2006 Olympic bronze medallist Martins Rubenis seems to give her a hand with regard to the material.</p>
<p><b>Wischnewski, Anke</b> 05.01.1978 178cm – 78kg  PoB: Annaberg-Buchholz Residence: Pockau  Soldier active since: 1988</p>	GER	<p>2009 Worlds 10<sup>th</sup>; 2007 Worlds 2<sup>nd</sup>; 2005 Worlds 3<sup>rd</sup>; 2008 Worlds 5<sup>th</sup>; 2003 Worlds 8<sup>th</sup>; 2010 Europeans no participation; 2002 Europeans 4<sup>th</sup>; 2008 Europeans 6<sup>th</sup>; 1997 and 1998 junior Worlds 3<sup>rd</sup>; 2008-09 and 2006-07 overall World Cup 3<sup>rd</sup>; 2002-03 and 2007-08 overall World Cup 4<sup>th</sup>; 2004-05 overall World Cup 5<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><i>altogether one World Cup victory (Altenberg 2004-05)</i></p> <p><b>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</b> 2<sup>nd</sup> in Oberhof; 3<sup>rd</sup> in Calgary, Igls + Altenberg; 4<sup>th</sup> in Koenigssee + Winterberg; 5<sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer; 9<sup>th</sup> in Cesana.</p> <p><b>Overall World Cup 3<sup>rd</sup>.</b></p>	<p><b>Olympic debut at the age of 32</b> At the age of 32 and at the third attempt after 2002 and 2006 she will finally celebrate her debut at the Olympic Games. But she does not spare a single thought to the end of her active career. She has her sights set on the 2012 Worlds in Altenberg and even the 2014 Olympic Games in Sochi seem to be a possibility. Posted a second place at the World Cup event in Oberhof. Apart from that only third-place finishes. This is why she has grown weary of the word.</p>



### 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver - medal contenders women's singles

Name	Nation	Results	Further information
<b>Yakushenko, Nataliia</b> 02.03.1972 175cm – 72kg PoB: Kiev Residence: Kiev Sports instructor active since: 1986	UKR	1992 and 1994 Olympics 8 <sup>th</sup> ; 2009 Worlds 3 <sup>rd</sup> ; 2008 Worlds 4 <sup>th</sup> ; 2005 Worlds 5 <sup>th</sup> ; 2007 Worlds 6 <sup>th</sup> ; 2010 Europeans 11 <sup>th</sup> ; 2006 Europeans 4 <sup>th</sup> ; 2004 Europeans 10 <sup>th</sup> ; 2008 Europeans 14 <sup>th</sup> ; 2006-07 and 2008-09 overall World Cup 5 <sup>th</sup> . 2004-05 and 2007-08 overall World Cup 6 <sup>th</sup> ; 2004-05 overall Winner Challenge Cup; 2008-09 overall Challenge Cup 5 <sup>th</sup> .  <b><u>best World Cup results / final standings 2009-10</u></b> 4 <sup>th</sup> in Lillehammer + Oberhof; 8 <sup>th</sup> in Igls + Winterberg; 18 <sup>th</sup> in Koenigssee; 20 <sup>th</sup> in Calgary. <b>Overall World Cup 10<sup>th</sup>.</b> <b>Overall Challenge Cup 6<sup>th</sup>.</b>	<b>Two hundredths of a second to cause a sensation</b> Nataliia Yakushenko failed to create a sensation on December 6, 2008 by just a hair's breadth. Tatjana Huefner rescued two hundredths of a second to the finish and thus the continuity of Germany's winning streak that the women lugers started on December 5, 1997 in Innsbruck-Igls and that still holds after 98 Luge World Cup events. At least on November 19, 2004 in Sigulda, Latvia, Nataliia Yakushenko wrote a small chapter of luge history when she ended Germany's winning streak after 20 victories in the Challenge Cup. Her sole medal so far – bronze at the 2009 Worlds. At the 2010 Europeans in Sigulda she showed a rather disappointing performance, posting an eleventh place.