



Preview 1st EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup Winterberg (GER): Season kick-off in the Sauerland region and all disciplines on one race weekend for the first time

Winterberg (FIL) Following the successful Olympic test event and the first official qualifying race for the Olympic luge competitions, the international luge elite will kick off the Olympic season in Winterberg (GER) from December 5 to 7, 2025. The mixed event competitions are scheduled for Friday afternoon, followed by the Women's Singles as well as the Men's and Women's Doubles on Saturday, with the Men's Singles and Team Relay concluding on Sunday.

26 women, 34 men, 14 women's doubles and 20 men's doubles, as well as eight team relays from 19 nations have registered for the 1st EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup of the 2025/26 season. A total of nine EBERSPÄCHER World Cup events in four countries and on two continents are on the FIL's artificial track calendar. In addition, six EBERSPÄCHER Team Relay World Cups presented by BMW and three EBERSPÄCHER Mixed Events presented by SKECHERS will be held. The highlight of the season will be the Winter Olympics, which will take place from February 6 to 22, 2026, in Milan-Cortina (ITA).

We are starting the World Cup season in Winterberg with a triple World Cup, which means that for the first time ever, there will be three consecutive days of competition and races in all disciplines on the program. We'll kick things off on Friday with the mixed events, which we introduced last year. They were a huge success because, theoretically, all nations can take part in a final run. So even if a team doesn't have two athletes, they can put together an international team, as we've already seen with Switzerland/Australia, Slovakia/Argentina, and Ireland/Japan. And they were successful too! The feedback from the athletes and teams and the enthusiasm of the spectators were so positive that we decided to take the next step and introduce a continental championship with the Mixed Event European Championships," explains FIL Sports Director Matthias Böhmer.

As in the previous year, the Mixed Event World Cup features one man and one woman competing individually in the mixed singles, and one men's and one women's doubles in the mixed doubles. Each discipline will use its usual starting height. Two mixed teams per nation are allowed to participate in the competition. Thirteen mixed doubles and 18 mixed singles have registered for Winterberg. After the opening event, there will be two more EBERSPÄCHER Mixed Events presented by SKECHERS in Lake Placid (USA) and Oberhof (GER).

FIL Season Calendar 2025/26:

Contrary to plans, the starting signal for this year's FIL EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup will be given in Winterberg (GER), before heading to Park City and Lake Placid in the United States for two race weekends. The highlight of the season will be the 2026 Olympic Winter Games Milano-Cortina on the newly built „Eugenio





Monti“ Olympic bobsleigh, luge, and skeleton track in Cortina d'Ampezzo (ITA). For the first time in la long time, two World Cups will be held after the Olympic Games, namely at the end of February in St. Moritz (SUI) and the World Cup finals at the beginning of March in Altenberg (GER). The FIL season calendar is as follows:

- 05. – 07.12.2025: EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup Winterberg (GER)
- 11. – 13.12.2025: EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup Park City (USA)
- 18. – 20.12.2025: EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup Lake Placid (USA)
- 02. – 04.01.2026: EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup Sigulda (LAT)
- 09. – 11.01.2026: EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup Winterberg (GER)
- 16. – 18.01.2026: EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup & 57. FIL European Championships Oberhof (GER)
- 22. – 24.01.2026: EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup & 1. Mixed-Event ECH presented by SKECHERS Oberhof (GER)
- 07. – 12.02.2026: 2026 Olympic Winter Games Milano-Cortina (ITA)**
- 27.02.– 01.03.2026: EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup St. Moritz (SUI)
- 06. – 08.03.2026: EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup Altenberg (GER)

Defending champions are back

Julia Taubitz, Max Langenhan, Tobias Wendl/Tobias Arlt (all GER), and Selina Egle/Lara Kipp (AUT) – all winners of last season's overall World Cup – are back at the start. While the Austrian women's doubles team Egle/Kipp and Team Austria in the team relay won the big crystal globe for the first time, Julia Taubitz celebrated her fifth overall World Cup victory, her fourth in a row. Max Langenhan successfully defended his title and stood at the top of the podium for the second time. His teammates Wendl/Arlt celebrated their sixth overall World Cup victory. Click here for the all-time World Cup statistics: [Statistics of the International Luge Federation FIL](#)

Surprises at the dress rehearsal at the Cortina Sliding Center

At last weekend's FIL Olympic test event, the new ice track at the Cortina Sliding Center passed its first test with flying colors. In the women's event, Merle Fräbel (GER) already dominated the new track with confidence during the dress rehearsal. The German set the fastest time in both runs and won ahead of her teammate Julia Taubitz and Lisa Schulte (AUT).

In the men's doubles, world champions Hannes Orlamünder/Paul Gubitz (GER) showed their ambitions and prevailed over Americans Marcus Mueller/Ansel Haugsjaa and six-time Olympic champions Tobias Wendl/Tobias Arlt (GER).

The women's doubles was much closer. Here, the two Germans Dajana Eitberger/Magdalena won ahead of the Italians Andrea Vötter/Marion Oberhofer and the world champions Selina Egle/Lara Kipp (AUT). The men's test race was won by Austria's Jonas Müller ahead of Kristers Aparjods (LAT) and his teammate Wolfgang Kindl. Austria also won the final team relay ahead of Germany and host nation Italy. Detailed results can be found here: <https://www.fil-luge.org/en/media/itp-test-event-cortina>





Teams from the USA, China, Australia, Japan, and Ireland skip Winterberg After last weekend's Olympic test event in Cortina d'Ampezzo was considered the first official qualifying race for the Olympic luge competitions in Milan-Cortina, some teams will not be competing in the World Cup kick-off in Winterberg. The teams from the USA, Australia, Japan, China, and Ireland are instead preparing in Lake Placid (USA), where the third of a total of five qualifying races for Milan Cortina 2026 will be held.

FIL announces media partnership with Warner Bros. Discovery

The International Luge Federation (FIL) has entered into a new, comprehensive media partnership with Warner Bros. Discovery (WBD). During the 2025/2026 Olympic season, the EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cups will be broadcast on Eurosport and on the Discovery+ and HBO Max streaming platforms.

With this agreement, the FIL is increasing the visibility of luge in the crucial phase leading up to the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milano-Cortina. The races will be broadcast live on Eurosport across Europe and on TNT Sports in the UK and Ireland. Comprehensive streaming coverage will also be available to HBO Max and discovery+ subscribers (digital coverage excludes Austria, Germany, and Latvia). "With this cooperation, we are reaching our loyal fans in Europe's traditional luge markets. The combination of the well-established Eurosport brand and the global reach of the streaming platforms discovery+ and HBO Max represents an important step toward greater visibility, professionalism, and attractiveness for our sport", FIL President Einars Fogelis states. [FIL announces media partnership with Warner Bros. Discovery](#)

Road to Milano-Cortina 2026:

Natalie Geisenberger becomes Eurosport Olympic expert

Germany's most successful luger Natalie Geisenberger is becoming a TV expert and will be supporting Eurosport's winter sports team this season. The six-time Olympic champion is joining the prominent team of experts alongside Olympic champions Martin Schmitt (ski jumping), Viktoria Rebensburg (alpine skiing), and Anni Friesinger-Postma (speed skating), and will use her experience and expertise to cover the Luge World Cup and the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milan-Cortina for the international sports channel. Eurosport is part of Warner Bros. Discovery Sports Europe, which will broadcast the Winter Olympics not only live on TV, but also on its streaming platforms discovery+ and HBO Max (launching in January 2026 in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, and Italy).

After competing in four Olympic Games as an athlete, the nine-time world champion is looking forward to her new role as an expert: „It's great to join a team that includes such winter sports legends. I'm sure one or two of them will be able to give me some advice. My aim is to convey the fascination of our sport, to take viewers with me onto the ice track, so to speak, and to show them the precision required in





luge. And, of course, I hope for a successful luge festival from a German perspective, even though the other nations have certainly caught up," said Natalie Geisenberger. [Natalie Geisenberger Becomes Eurosport Olympic Expert](#)

FIL Portraits of the Week:

Leo Felderer (ITA): The road back to his best

Luge athlete Leon Felderer looks back on his best World Cup season to date with mixed feelings – between top form, self-doubt, and the pursuit of perfection. With new momentum from head coach Klaus Kofler, the 25-year-old is now focusing on the Olympic Games in his own country. As chairman of the FIL Athletes' Commission, he is also committed to improving conditions in the sport. His goal for the coming season: not the podium at any cost, but a return to his best self.

<https://www.fil-luge.org/en/news/leon-felderer-the-road-back-to-his-best-self>

Andrea Vötter/Marion Oberhofer (ITA): Speeding towards the home Olympics

With impressive consistency and strong successes in women's doubles, Andrea Vötter and Marion Oberhofer are among Italy's biggest medal hopes for the 2026 Winter Olympics in Cortina. As two-time overall World Cup winners, they have shaped the young discipline – yet the World Championship title is still missing. After intensive testing on the new Olympic track, they are looking ahead with optimism. Their goal: to perfect their technique, improve their starts, and make history on home ice. They already came in second place at the test event.

<https://www.fil-luge.org/en/news/heading-for-olympic-glory-on-home-turf-the-story-of-luge-duo-andrea-voetter-and-marion-oberhofer>

Comments on the World Cup kick-off

Julia Taubitz (GER): „All the back and forth with Innsbruck did get on our nerves a little. I'm a spontaneous person, but during the season I like to have a fixed schedule, because I want to know where I'll be spending the next few weeks. However, we are also very well prepared for Winterberg. We were able to do three more training sessions there spontaneously, which was very good. I still think it's a pity because I really like Innsbruck. I enjoy racing there, our hotel is top class, and the scenery is beautiful. I'm now looking forward to Winterberg because I really like racing on that track. I became European champion there last year and set a new track record. The key points for us women are definitely the start, where we first have to get around the starting corner, and then of course the entrance to the circle, you have to hit the labyrinth well, just lie neatly and be fast.

Despite the Olympics, the overall World Cup has the same significance for me as in any other season. Now that the World Cup is starting, the races are the main focus every week. Naturally, Cortina is in the back of my mind, and we will be testing a little more than usual during the World Cup weeks and competitions to get the best possible setup for the Olympic Games, but I would like to perform at my best every weekend and defend the overall World Cup title again.“





Natalie Maag (SUI): „I had a very good summer and, for the first time, I didn't suffer any injuries. In recent years, I've always had some kind of injury. This was my first summer without injury. Apart from spring, I wasn't ill at all and was able to train all through, which is great and is also reflected in my athletic performance. My motivation was also very high because last season went so well. The summer training went by really quickly, and I'm really looking forward to the new Olympic season.

I think it's a real pity that the World Cup opening event isn't taking place in Innsbruck and that the track has been altered so much. Last year, the new women's start made it really enjoyable to race in Innsbruck for the first time. With more pressure and more speed, I really enjoyed it and was looking forward to it this year. I'm glad that the World Cup is still going ahead. Winterberg isn't my favorite, but I've had good results there in recent years, such as bronze at the U23 World Championships. It didn't go so well last year, but we've been back there to train and it was fun to race there. I'm just happy that the World Cup is starting now and that I'm taking part.

After the last mixed event World Cup in Pyeongchang, Alex and I knew that we would compete together again this season and try to make it onto the podium. South Korea was very close, and we also narrowly missed out at the World Championships, due to me hitting the wall at the finish line and him at the start. When I heard that there would be a Mixed European Championships, it was still clear to me that I would race with him and forego the European Championships ranking. It doesn't help me in terms of squad selection, so changing partners for the European Championships was out of the question. As far as Olympic qualification is concerned, Swiss Olympics has been very nice to me. They want me to compete in the Olympic Games and haven't put any additional hurdles in my way. I have to fulfill the quota place, which currently looks very good, and then I can go to Cortina. I really appreciate that the federation is so supportive of me.“

Max Langenhan (GER): „It's a shame that the World Cup opening is taking place in Winterberg. I was really looking forward to the training week we were finally going to have in Innsbruck, because we've had far too few training runs there in recent years. It's also a shame for the sport that we now have two double World Cups in the season, especially since Innsbruck is always a great place to start. I hope they'll be ready in time for next year's World Championships. Winterberg has its pitfalls from top to bottom. There are one or two spots at the top where it's important not to make any mistakes because of the uphill section. In the high-speed section at the bottom, it's very important to stay on the line.





I take each race as it comes and want to treat every single one as seriously as if it were the Olympic race. After all, the overall World Cup is much more meaningful, as the Olympic race is only one race, but you want to be the best throughout the season, which is why the overall World Cup is also important to me this season.“

Hannes Orlamünder (GER): „Winning the world championship last year was great fun, but every year is a new year. The other doubles teams aren't sleeping, especially when I look at the Tobis. They start again from the beginning as if they were still 20. It's very difficult to match their start times, even though we're almost 10 years younger. We have to start from scratch every year, work our way up a new track like in Cortina, or ride a new sled. You can't rest on your laurels, which is another reason why qualifying for the German Olympic team will be very difficult for us.“

Tobias Wendl (GER): „We've had a very good start to the season. In Lillehammer and Oberhof, we immediately felt that our summer training was paying off. We're very fast at the start, even faster than in previous years, we're having a lot of fun and riding the flow. We hope to stay healthy, avoid injuries, and just have fun and perform well this winter. We used last season to introduce new equipment and have only made minor changes. We know from past experience that we don't try out anything new during the Olympic season because it only causes confusion. On the first trip to Cortina, we said it would be nice to get on a track where we could get along and have fun right from the start. And that's how it was: it's incredibly fun to race there. The butterflies in your stomach, the fun—that's the most important thing you can have in sports. If that's no longer there, you don't really need the sport anymore.“

Tobias Arlt (GER): „We are now 38 years old, and our routine helped us when we were getting to grips with the new Olympic track. Unlike the women's doubles, we started right at the top. We got off to a good start, paddled four times, and hit a barrier in the first run, but otherwise our experience and routine helped us a lot. Even though the Olympics are the main focus, the overall World Cup is one of the biggest things you can win for us. It shows how consistent you are throughout the season. We take it race by race and approach each one with the highest possible motivation. If we end up winning the overall World Cup, that will be great.“

Patric Leitner, head coach of Team Germany: „We have planned our Olympic qualification process in a way that it will be completed by Christmas. This also brings some calm to the team. We can then focus specifically on preparing for the Olympic Games. We have a clear points list. If there is less than a 10-point difference in a discipline, we will hold two more qualifying races – then Sigulda and Winterberg will be added – but the team should definitely be finalized by Christmas. It never gets boring in our team, and that's a good thing. Just imagine: almost all of our athletes have already won medals at world championships or Olympic Games.





So we are a very successful team, and the athletes know how it works, how to assert themselves. They have a lot of competition experience and now have to face the tough Olympic qualification process again.“

Wolfgang Kindl (AUT): „My goal is definitely to compete in both the singles and doubles again this season. Last season showed me that it really works in both disciplines and that I am still very competitive in the singles. I know that the Olympic qualification will be very tough because we have an extremely strong team and one of the world or European champions will have to stay at home. My primary goal is to qualify for the Olympic team. We also have three world-class doubles teams, and one of them will stay at home. I believe that whoever qualifies internally will compete for a medal in Cortina.

I have, of course, considered whether it would be better to concentrate on one discipline, especially because it is quite stressful when you have to compete in both disciplines in training. It takes a lot of discipline on my part, but my doubles partner Thomas also has to be flexible if, for example, I need another run in the singles. We've gotten used to working together well now, and after last season went really well in the singles again, I know why I'm taking on the double burden. It was very good for my confidence and my ego to see that it works.

Olympics or overall World Cup? We've already won the overall World Cup. That was a big goal of mine, which I haven't achieved in the singles yet, but I did it in my first season in the doubles. We had a good season last year, but there were also some races where we could have placed better. In the end, we were happy to finish third in the overall World Cup. At the World Championships, however, we just missed out on the podium. So there is room for improvement. We will take it race by race to make sure we can compete at the top and qualify for the Olympics. Then it's all about the Olympic medals. We'll see if we can still win the overall World Cup at the end of the season.“

Jessica Degenhardt (GER): „Qualifying for the Olympics will be really difficult for us because there is only one spot available. Nevertheless, it is clear to us that we are all a team and will continue to work together off the track. The decision will be made on the track, and whoever is better in the end is simply better. Everyone is fighting for themselves and will see where they end up.“

Schedule & TV coverage

1st EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup, Winterberg (GER)

Local start time (=CET)

Friday, 5 December 2025

10:00 Nations Cup

16:15 Mixed Doubles





17:30 Mixed Singles

Saturday, 6 December 2025

10:25 Men's Singles, 1st run
11:55 Men's Singles, 2nd run
13:10 Men's Doubles, 1st run
14:00 Women's Doubles, 1st run
15:05 Men's Doubles, 2nd run
15:45 Women's Doubles, 2nd run

Sunday, 7 December 2025

10:35 Women's Singles, 1st run
12:15 Women's Singles, 2nd run
13:50 Team Relay

All times are subject to change!

Press conference in Winterberg

On Friday, December 5, 2025, at 1:45 p.m. in the VELTINS-EisArena Lounge, a press conference will be held with athletes and coaches from the German and Austrian national teams (in German Language).

You can participate on site or dial in online at the following link:

https://youtube.com/live/aPSNrmPRi_Q?feature=share

If you are participating on site, please park in the parking lot at the town hall (Rathaus in Winterberg, Fichtenweg 10, 59955 Winterberg) and use the shuttle.

Live TV-Broadcast fil-luge.org/en/media/eberspaecher-world-cup-43

Link to athletes' biographies: [Athletes Overview & Achievements - Int. Luge Federation FIL \(fil-luge.org\)](#)

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Media Accreditations:

2nd EBERSPÄECHER Luge World Cup in Park City (USA):

<https://forms.monday.com/forms/ab18be94ab38d73258c1407eacb889b6?r=use1>

Winterberg (2): <https://www.veltins-eisarena.de/presse/akkreditierungen>

St. Moritz: <https://olympia-bobrun.ch/medien/>

Altenberg: <https://wia-altenberg.de/spitzensport/weltcup-rennrodeln/presse-weltcup-rennrodeln/>

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