



## **Preview of the 6th EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup and 57th FIL-EM in Oberhof (GER): Battle for European Championship medals and World Cup points in the Thuringian Forest**

Oberhof (FIL) When the luge elite takes to the start line at the LOTTO Thüringen Eisarena Oberhof (GER) this weekend, they will not only be competing for World Cup points. In what is known as race-in-race mode, the 6th EBERSPÄCHER World Cup and the 57th FIL European Championships will be held on January 17 and 18, 2026. Non-European nations will take part in the World Cup but will not be eligible for the European titles. A total of 100 sleds from 22 nations have registered for the World Cup, with 31 women and 39 men competing in the singles and 12 women and 18 men in the doubles. In addition, the fifth of six team relays is scheduled for Sunday as part of the EBERSPÄCHER Team Relay World Cup presented by BMW.

### **Winter Games in Thuringia / Press conference on Tuesday**

The AXA Winter Weeks will reach their climax this weekend in Oberhof. Jumping for distance on the ski jump, heated duels on the cross-country ski trail, and fast-paced races in the ice channel: On January 17 and 18, three exciting winter sports will come together in Oberhof with the COOP FIS Cross-Country Skiing World Cup, the Viessmann FIS Nordic Combined World Cup, and the FIL EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup – a first in the world of winter sports. On Tuesday, January 13, at 11 a.m., a press conference will be held at the press center at the LOTTO Thüringen EISARENA (near the Wiegehaus) to present the overall concept.

“All three sports venues are within walking distance. The finals in luge, cross-country skiing, and Nordic combined are scheduled so that spectators can experience them all in one day,” explains Andreas Schlütter, former world-class cross-country skier and managing director of DSV-GmbH. In addition to combination tickets for all competitions, individual tickets for the respective World Cups are of course also available. The organizers expect 15,000 spectators for the World Cups. The highlights are sure to be the joint opening ceremony on Oberhof's town square at 7:00 p.m. on Friday evening (January 16) with the parade of nations, and the award ceremonies on Saturday evening (January 17) at 7:30 p.m. Detailed information and the complete schedule can be found here: [AXA Winterwochen Thüringen](#)

### **European Championships in race-in-race mode**

In addition to World Cup points, the European Championship titles will also be up for grabs this weekend. At last year's European Championships in Winterberg (GER), Germany and Austria fought it out for the titles. In the women's event, Julia Taubitz won ahead of the two Austrians Madeleine Egle and Lisa Schulte. In the men's event, Jonas Müller defended his title ahead of Max Langenhan (GER) and his teammates Nico Gleirscher and Wolfgang Kindl. In the men's doubles, Tobias





Wendl/Tobias Arlt (GER) won the race ahead of the Austrians Juri Gatt/Riccardo Schöpf, Yannick Müller/Armin Frauscher, and Thomas Steu/Wolfgang Kindl. In the women's doubles, Selina Egle/Lara Kipp (AUT) won by a narrow margin ahead of Jessica Degenhardt/Cheyenne Rosenthal (GER) and Andrea Vötter/Marion Oberhofer (AUT). Finally, Austria also won the prestigious team relay ahead of Germany and Italy.

Hannah Prock (AUT), Felix Loch (GER), Selina Egle/Lara Kipp and Tobias Wendl/Tobias Arlt (GER) travel to Oberhof as leaders in the overall World Cup standings.

### **Geisenberger, Pavlichenko, Wendl/Arlt and Vötter/Oberhofer as well as Degenhardt/Rosenthal lead the European Championships**

Six-time Olympic champion Natalie Geisenberger (GER), who ended her long career in 2023, leads the all-time European Championship statistics with five European Championship titles and three silver medals, ahead of Tatyana Ivanova (RUS), who is once again ineligible to compete this season, with five European Championship titles and two silver and bronze medals each. Of the athletes currently active in the singles, defending champion Julia Taubitz follows in 11th place with one title and two silver medals.

In the men's event, the European Championship leader is Semen Pavlichenko from Russia. The former world champion has won four times and taken one silver medal at the European Championships. Felix Loch (GER) has won three times, taking two silver and two bronze medals, and Jonas Müller (AUT) has two European Championship titles to his name so far.

In the European Championship rankings for men's doubles, Wendl/Arlt (GER) lead with five gold, six silver, and two bronze medals, ahead of their former teammates Eggert/Benecken with four titles, two silver medals, and one bronze medal. Toni Eggert has been chasing medals with Florian Müller since last season. In the women's doubles, Andrea Vötter/Marion Oberhofer (ITA) and Jessica Degenhardt/Cheyenne Rosenthal (GER) lead the way with one gold, silver, and bronze medal each.

The complete ECh statistics can be found here: [Statistiken des internationalen Rodelverbandes FIL \(fil-luge.org\)](https://www.fil-luge.org/statistik)

### **World Luge Day 2026 on January 18: Global celebration of the sport of luge**

On January 18, 2026, the International Luge Family will once again celebrate World Luge Day. Events, taster sessions, and local celebrations will take place in numerous countries around this weekend. The aim is to get people of all ages excited about luge – from leisurely family tobogganing to a first taste of competitive luge. Participation is easy and open to everyone. From January 12 to 20, 2026, the FIL is calling on the global luge community to share photos, videos, and stories about the sport of luge using the official hashtags #WorldLugeDay and #SlidingIntoTheWeekend <https://www.fil-luge.org/en/news/world-luge-day-2026-on-january-18>





## Road to Milano-Cortina:

### **Sylke Otto (GER): The oldest Olympic Champion in Luge**

Sylke Otto made sporting history at the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin: at the age of 36, she became the oldest Olympic champion in luge – crowning an extraordinary career full of patience, setbacks, and moments of triumph. After her Olympic debut in Albertville in 1992, the German had to wait a long time, narrowly missing out on two Games and demonstrating remarkable mental strength over the years. The late reward was impressive: Olympic gold in Salt Lake City in 2002 and a successful title defense in Turin in 2006 made her one of the greatest athletes in her sport. With numerous world championship titles, World Cup victories, and a lasting legacy, Sylke Otto continues to stand for perseverance, perfection, and the power to never give up. [Sylke Otto – The Oldest Olympic Luge Champion in History](#)

### **FIL announces Olympic starting places**

106 athletes from 19 nations will compete in luge at the XXV Winter Olympics in Milan Cortina 2026 (February 7 to 12). Olympic Winter Games Milan Cortina 2026 (February 7 to 12).

There are 15 medals to be won in five disciplines in Olympic luge. In the singles, there will be one competition each for women and men. There will be four races over two days. The men's singles will start on February 7, the day after the official opening ceremony for Milan Cortina 2026, with the first two races. The two final races for the men will then take place on February 8, followed by the women's Olympic singles competitions on February 9 and 10, 2026.

Twenty-five women and 25 men are eligible to compete in the singles. Eleven women's doubles teams (22 athletes) and 17 men's doubles teams (34 athletes) can participate in the Olympic competitions.

On February 11, the Olympic doubles competition for women and men will be held in two races each, and on February 12, 2026, the team relay will take place.

Based on the Olympic qualification system for Milan Cortina 2026, the International Luge Federation (FIL) has published the allocated quota places per country. The National Olympic Committees (NOCs) can accept or return these quota places until January 19, 2026. Unaccepted quota places will then be offered to the NOCs with the next eligible athletes or pairs of athletes.

Quota places for the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026, as of January 12, 2026 -> <https://www.fil-luge.org/en/news/fil-announces-olympic-starting-places>





#### **FIL Portraits of the week:**

**Julia Taubitz (GER): Between adrenaline, mindfulness, and the dream of Cortina**  
Julia Taubitz lives between two worlds: high speed on the ice track and freedom by the sea. The 29-year-old five-time overall World Cup winner has been one of the world's top luge athletes for years – yet she is driven by one goal above all else: the 2026 Winter Olympics in Cortina d'Ampezzo. After her painful crash in Beijing in 2022, she has embarked on a new path, not only in terms of her sport, but above all mentally – with mindfulness, mental training, and a clear view of the future. Away from the ice, Taubitz loves risk as much as she loves peace and quiet: surfing, van life, motorcycles, and genuine friendships despite the competition. It is precisely this balance of adrenaline and serenity that makes her so strong. Cortina 2026 is more than just a goal for her—it is a chance to turn experience, passion, and mental strength into Olympic precious metal.

[Julia Taubitz – Between adrenaline, mindfulness, and Olympic Dream](#)

**Rieder/Kainzwaldner (ITA): Home advantage in sight – the Olympic dream is alive**  
After a season full of challenges, Emanuel Rieder and Simon Kainzwaldner have regained their strength – and have their sights firmly set on the 2026 Winter Olympics in their own country. Setbacks such as 14th place at the World Championships in Whistler became motivation, and their strong performance at the World Cup finals in Yanqing was a turning point. With new ideas, more personal responsibility in sled construction, and a fresh mental focus, the experienced duo is working consistently on their comeback. Two decades after Italy's last Olympic medal in the men's doubles, Rieder/Kainzwaldner are dreaming of precious metal on their home track in Cortina. They should not be underestimated – because those who have learned to get back up after difficult phases can surpass themselves, especially at the Olympics.

[Home advantage in sight: Rieder and Kainzwaldner revive their Olympic](#)

#### **Quotes:**

**Armin Zöggeler (Sports Director, ITA):** “Since only the second race weekend in Oberhof counts toward the seeding list and thus also for the starting order at the Winter Olympics, we have decided not to participate in the European Championships and the World Cup this week. Instead, we will use the time to train again on the new Olympic track in Cortina. Since the Christmas break was very short this time, it was our only chance, and we want to make the most of it. The Olympic Games in front of a home crowd are the most important event for the Italian team this year. We are incredibly excited to hopefully be in top form and win a medal or two.”

**Norbert Hubert (Head Coach CHN):** “Even though our young team needs every race, we are withdrawing from the World Cup and will only compete again at the Olympic Games in Cortina. The reason for this is the strict visa regulations that apply to non-Europeans in the European Schengen area. My athletes are only allowed to stay in Europe for a maximum of 90 days within a six-month period. Since we







arrived early to prepare for the season, to take part in the international training week in Cortina and trained in Sigulda over Christmas, we are now running out of days. In order to have enough days left to stay for the Olympic Games, the team has traveled back to China from Winterberg and will continue their preparations there.”

**Hannah Prock (AUT):** “Winterberg is really my track. I feel very comfortable there, I can let the sled go and I'm just fast. I've never had two best times before, so I'm totally happy. When you see that you're heading in the right direction and your speed is right, it motivates me a lot for the Olympic Games. I'm really looking forward to Cortina.”

**Verena Hofer (ITA):** “I'm totally happy. We had great preparation, both physically and mentally we've made a lot of progress. The new home track in Cortina is also a boost, of course, and gives me a lot of confidence. There are still a few weeks to go, but I'm really looking forward to competing at the Olympics. We're now doing another week of training to get the setup right and find the right lines. I like the track, it's really fun to race there. I was in Beijing, but the Olympics at home with family and friends will be very different emotionally and I'm really looking forward to it.”

**Julia Taubitz (GER):** “I'm really looking forward to the two World Cups in Oberhof, especially not having to live out of a suitcase for once. I can put everything away in my closet at home. I think it will give us a bit of a break before Cortina. I've grown to really enjoy racing in Oberhof. I hope the track is in good condition and the snow stays around a little longer. Then it will definitely be two great race weekends.”

**Felix Loch (GER):** “I'm really looking forward to Oberhof. I really enjoy racing there and was there for two days of training shortly after Christmas. The track suits me and I hope the weather will be good over the next two weeks. And then it's on to the Olympics...”

**Jonas Müller (AUT):** “The Olympics are obviously my number one priority this year, but first of all I'm happy that I've performed so consistently in the World Cups and qualified for the Olympic Games. Now it's time to keep working hard. We still have two World Cups in Oberhof, and I like the track there. So I want to take my momentum with me there and then hopefully travel to Cortina on a high.”

**Max Langenhan (GER):** “Oberhof will be great. Finally, a full house again! It's really cool when you have lots of fans and support from the stands at the track. It's incredibly motivating. On the first weekend, it's not just us, but also the cross-country skiers and Nordic combined athletes. This is a great opportunity for Oberhof to show itself off and a great event for all the volunteers who make it possible in the first place. Otherwise, I hope for great weather and two wonderful weeks at home.”

**Jessica Degenhardt (GER):** “We had good runs all week in Winterberg. Since we've already competed in a World Cup here, we knew what equipment we needed. We





both feel comfortable here, we were well positioned on the sled and were able to race from top to bottom. It's great that it worked out so well. Now we're off to Oberhof, where we became world champions for the first time. It's a beautiful track, but it's a bit more hard work than in Winterberg, where you can enjoy it more. But we can also race well there and will continue to take it week by week, as we always do.”

**Tobias Wendl (GER):** “Winterberg was the perfect day for us with victories in the doubles and the relay. It was tremendous fun. Blue skies, sunshine—we wouldn't mind if it were always like that. We performed very well and want to carry this momentum forward.”

**Tobias Arlt (GER):** “Oberhof is always a highlight for us. The atmosphere there is fantastic, the track is always in good condition, the track crew has everything under control, and that's why we're looking forward to the next races there.”

**Thomas Steu (AUT):** “We've been tinkering around a lot lately and fighting really hard, and that has finally paid off in Winterberg. We've taken a step forward and are super happy. Thanks to the entire coaching team!”

**Wolfgang Kindl (AUT):** “We made some changes to the equipment, used a different runner and finally delivered a good race again. The podium in Winterberg was long overdue, we worked hard for it and are completely satisfied.”

#### **Schedule & TV coverage**

**6th EBERSPÄCHER Luge World Cup, Oberhof (GER) & 57. FIL European Championships**

Local start time (=CET)

#### **Friday, 16 January 2026**

09:00 Nations Cup

14:30 Seeded Training

#### **Saturday, 17 January 2026**

12:20 Men's Singles, 1st run

13:45 Women's Singles, 1st run

15:10 Men's Singles, 2nd run

16:15 Women's Singles, 2nd run

#### **Sunday, 18 January 2026**

10:25 Men's Doubles, 1st run

11:40 Men's Doubles, 2nd run

13:00 Women's Doubles, 1st run

14:05 Women's Doubles, 2nd run

15:30 Team Relay





*All times are subject to change!*

Live TV-Broadcast: [fil-luge.org/en/media/eberspaecher-world-cup-48](http://fil-luge.org/en/media/eberspaecher-world-cup-48)

Link to ECH-results: [fil-luge.org/en/media/57th-fil-european-championships](http://fil-luge.org/en/media/57th-fil-european-championships)

Link to athletes' biographies: [Athletes Overview & Achievements - Int. Luge Federation FIL \(fil-luge.org\)](http://fil-luge.org/en/media/57th-fil-european-championships)

#### **Contacts:**

##### **Press officer**

Michael Panse

Phone: +49 172 3645939

Mail: [presse@tsbv.de](mailto:presse@tsbv.de)

##### **International Luge Federation**

Margit Dengler-Paar

Communications Manager

Phone: +49 179 459 66 30

Mail: [press@fil-luge.org](mailto:press@fil-luge.org)

##### **Press Accreditation**

Oberhof 1 & 2. <https://axa-winterwochen.de/presseakkreditierung.html>;  
[Rodelweltcup Medien](#)

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

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

FIL press photos are available free of charge to the media for editorial reporting on luge and when the photo credit is mentioned: FIL / Photographer at the following link: <https://lugelove.smugmug.com/>





**Zeitplan & TV-Übertragungen**  
**6. EBERSPÄCHER Rodel Weltcup, Oberhof (GER) &**  
**57. FIL-Europameisterschaften**  
Lokale Startzeit (=CET/MEZ)

**Samstag, 17. Januar 2026**

12:20 Uhr Herren Einzel, 1. Lauf  
13:45 Uhr Damen Einzel, 1. Lauf  
15:10 Uhr Herren Einzel, 2. Lauf  
16:15 Uhr Damen Einzel, 2. Lauf

**Sonntag, 18. Januar 2026**

10:25 Uhr Herren Doppel, 1. Lauf  
11:40 Uhr Herren Doppel, 2. Lauf  
13:00 Uhr Damen Doppel, 1. Lauf  
14:05 Uhr Damen Doppel, 2. Lauf  
15:30 Uhr Team-Staffel

*Alle Angaben sind ohne Gewähr!*

**Link zu den EM-Ergebnissen:** [fil-luge.org/de/ergebnisse/57-fil-europameisterschaften](https://fil-luge.org/de/ergebnisse/57-fil-europameisterschaften)

**Link zu den Biografien der Athleten:innen:** [Athletenübersicht & Erfolge - Int. Rennrodelverband FIL \(fil-luge.org\)](https://www.fil-luge.org/de/athletenuebersicht)

**Kontakte:**

**Pressechef**

Michael Panse

Mobil: +49 172 3645939

E-Mail: [presse@tsbv.de](mailto:presse@tsbv.de)

**International Luge Federation**

Margit Dengler-Paar

Communications Manager

Mobil +49 179 459 66 30

E-Mail: [press@fil-luge.org](mailto:press@fil-luge.org)

**Presseakkreditierungen:**

Oberhof 2: <https://axa-winterwochen.de/presseakkreditierung.html>; [Rodelweltcup Medien](#)

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

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

