

Olympic Champions and a Red-White-Red World Cup Debutant at the FIS Freeski World Cup Stubai

Exceptional Starting Field at the Freestylers' World Cup Opening
at the Stubai Glacier from 18 to 21 November 2020

When the world's best skiers rock one of the top-class snow parks, that can only mean one thing – the Stubaital once again invites you to the opening of the Freeski World Cup. From 18th to 21st November 2020, the FIS Freeski World Cup will be held at the DC Stubai Zoo snow park for the fourth time, presenting spectacular ski action at its finest. Freeskiers from over 20 nations are expected to attend the World Cup kick-off; among them a strong Austrian team that does not want to miss the chance of winning medals at home. The World Cup will take place without spectators, and the final will be broadcast live on Austrian TV.

Strong Participant Field Expected

The successful events of the last few years, as well as the DC Stubai Zoo snow park, which is very popular among athletes, guarantee a first-class international starting field at the FIS Freeski World Cup Stubai in 2020. In a winter where tickets for the 2022 Olympic Games are already being acquired, the season opening offers athletes the first opportunity to determine their position. Some of the world's best athletes have already registered, including Olympic champion and winner of the first FIS Freeski World Cup Stubai 2017, **Øystein Bråten** (NOR), who is surely returning highly motivated to the site of his first ever World Cup victory.

The 25-year-old Norwegian will not miss the opportunity to defend his title, as will 2018 winner **Henrik Harlaut** (SWE). The appearance of these two favourites guarantees an exciting fight for the podium. However, the competition remains interesting as the first top rider entries have been submitted from Switzerland (**Andri Ragettli**, three-time overall World Cup winner, world slopestyle leader), Norway (**Birk Ruud**, slopestyle World Championship runner-up in 2019 and big air world no. one), Germany (**David Zehentner**) and the USA (**Alex Hall**, X Games winner slopestyle 2019; **Nick Goepper**, Olympic runner-up 2018).

The same is true for the women's event, where the jury awarded the highest score of the day to then 15-year-old Swede **Jennie-Lee Burmansson** in 2017 and to then 17-year-old exceptional talent **Kelly Sildaru** from Estonia in 2018. Thanks to the nomination of some top athletes, we might once again see an extremely close fight for jury points in 2020: among others, Big Air World Champion **Tess Ledeux** (FRA), German **Kea Kühnel**, and the third-place finisher of 2017, **Caroline Claire** from the USA, will be competing. They will have to watch out for the strong ladies from Switzerland though, as both the Olympic silver medallist **Mathilde Gremaud** and her compatriots **Sarah Höfflin** and **Giulia Tanno** must be mentioned among the top competitors.

Austrian Team locates to succeed at its home competition

The launch of the World Cup season promises to be an exciting one, especially for the Austrian team. On their "home turf", the best freeskiers of the host country will compete for the important first World Cup points of this winter season.

The Austrian men's team, featuring Salzburg's **Lukas Müllauer**, Upper Austria's **Samuel Baumgartner**, and Vorarlberg's **Julius Forer**, as well as Tyrol's **Nicolas Biembacher**, **Hannes Rudigier**, **David Wolf**,

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and their young compatriot **Daniel Bacher**, naturally want to be in top form at their home World Cup. For newcomer and local hero **Daniel**, this competition is something extra special. After the weather-related cancellation in 2019, the 15-year-old had to postpone his World Cup debut by a whole year, but he will probably never forget how the entire world elite spent a few hours chipping and relaxing in the self-built "Bacher Zone" of his garden last November. Bacher, who comes from the Stubaital, gets a second chance to celebrate his world cup premiere right outside his door.

"I am extremely looking forward to starting at the FIS World Cup on the Stubai Glacier alongside all the first-class riders. My first World Cup start, and then at home – that, of course, makes it even cooler. Being there and getting a taste of the World Cup atmosphere is more important than any result. Maybe I'll even have another session in my own 'park'. It was a truly unique experience to have some of the world's best performers gathering in my backyard last year".
(15-year old Daniel Bacher about his first World Cup event in his 'home park')

It could also get exciting for Austria because of the women's competition, as the two Tyroleans **Lara Wolf** (Paznauntal) and local hero, **Laura Wallner**, will not miss the chance to fly the Austrian flag at their home World Cup. Wallner in particular wants to put the pedal to the metal again after her forced break caused by a fractured thigh last year.

Exciting Battles for the Season's First Titles

The organisers and athletes are equally delighted that from 18th to 21st November there will be some world-class freeskiing action on offer in the Stubai Glacier's legendary DC Stubai Zoo snow park. With this first stop in an extraordinary World Cup season, the worldwide freeskiing elite will gather for the fourth time at the Gaiskarferner to collect the first points for the World Cup ranking on the pro line. The glacier location at over 3,000 metres offers participants the perfect setup around a unique snow park right at the start of the season.

To ensure compliance with the nationwide Covid-19 safety regulations, the event will take place without spectators, but skiing on the glacier will be possible without restrictions. The general safety measures will apply throughout the skiing resort, up-to-date information can be found at <https://www.stubaier-gletscher.com/stubai-live/news/detail/coronavirus-information/>.

Stubai Prime Park Sessions

Many of the freeski pros take advantage of the perfect conditions on the Stubai Glacier for training prior to the event. Some of the top athletes –including the Olympic champion from Norway – will be putting the finishing touches on their tricks for the coming season during the Stubai Prime Park Sessions at the DC Stubai Zoo from 2 to 15 November. At this training camp for professionals, which lasts more than four weeks in total, the best freeskiers and snowboarders from all over the world will train side by side on the Prime Line which has been specially shaped for them.

Preliminary FIS FREESKI WORLD CUP STUBAI 2020 PROGRAMME*

Wed, 18 Nov. Training Ladies & Men

Thu, 19 Nov. Training Ladies & Men

Fri, 20 Nov. Qualification Ladies & Men

Sat, 21 Nov. Final Ladies & Men | LIVE on Austrian TV (ORF1) from 11.15 am

*Programme subject to change

Final Entry Deadline: 10 Nov. 2020

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FACTS

FIS Freeski World Cup Stubai 2020

Name:	FIS Freeski World Cup Stubai
Format:	Ski Slopestyle (Olympic discipline since 2014)
Location:	DC Stubai Zoo Snow Park, Stubai Glacier, Tyrol, Austria
Athletes:	Around 90 of the world's best freeskiers from over 20 nations
Prize money:	CHF 50,000 (25,000 CHF women / CHF 25,000 men)
Date:	Thu, 18 November (Training), through Sat, 21 November 2020 (Final)
TV:	Live TV broadcast of the final on Saturday, 21 November on ORF1

Snow Park Stubai Zoo

Thanks to its south-facing slope at over 3,000 metres, the fantastic mountain scenery, and its daily freshly shaped lines, the DC Stubai Zoo snow park on the Stubai Glacier has become one of the hotspots of the world's freestyle scene. Whether beginner, amateur, or professional, with its four lines there is something for every taste and ability on offer. Especially in autumn and spring, when the shapers create the XXL set-up with easy, jib, medium, and pro lines, snowboard and freeski pros from all over the world gather here.