



Media Information
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BMW Kart Challenge: Bob stars including Holcomb, Friedrich and Melbardis burn rubber as World Championship opens with a bang.

Olympic gold medallists, world champions and World Cup winners go head to head with BMW DTM driver Timo Glock in Winterberg. Rising star Lochner is top German.

Winterberg. The first title at the “2015 BMW FIBT Bob & Skeleton World Championship” was not decided on ice, but on asphalt: Brian Shimer, Olympic bronze medallist in 2002 and now coach of the US team, won the BMW Kart Challenge in Winterberg. BSD newcomer Johannes Lochner finished an impressive second, ahead of the Olympic silver medallist from Sochi, Beat Hefti (SUI). Under the guidance of BMW DTM driver Timo Glock, the reigning world champion in the two man bob, Francesco Friedrich (GER), and World Cup winner Oskars Melbardis (LAT) were also embroiled in thrilling race action and bumper-to-bumper duels. Also battling for position were Junior world champion Nico Walther and Steven Holcomb (USA), the 2010 Olympic champion in the four-man bob and bronze medallist in the two and four-man bob in Sochi. And there was no shortage of girl power on the kart track. German riders Anja Schneiderheinze, the 2006 Olympic champion, 2011 world champion Cathleen Martini, and Stefanie Szczurek also showed what they are capable of behind the wheel.

The trio of Shimer, Lochner and Hefti celebrated the first success of the World Championship with the traditional champagne shower, before looking forward to their ‘win bonuses’. Shimer’s reward for his victory is a BMW M driver training session. Glock was on hand to explain the rules and offer to demonstrate a few tricks to the top athletes before taking on the bobsleigh riders in qualifying and the race.

BMW is making its first appearance as title sponsor of the “2015 BMW FIBT Bob & Skeleton World Championship”, which takes place from 23rd February to 8th March 2015 in Winterberg, in the German region of Sauerland. In addition, BMW is also the “Official Main Sponsor of the Viessmann FIBT World Cup”, “Official Car and Technology Partner of the FIBT World Cup, World Championships and Federation”, as well as “Title Sponsor of the FIBT World Championships”.



Quotes after the BMW Kart Challenge:

Timo Glock: "That was a great event. I was surprised how quick the bobsleigh riders were in a kart. I will obviously have my fingers crossed for all the teams for the World Championship. My insider's tip for a medal is Johannes Lochner: anyone who is that quick in a kart cannot fail to be right up there with the front-runners in the ice channel too. I am already looking forward to one day experiencing the adrenalin and excitement of being in a bobsleigh. I cannot wait for that!"

Francesco Friedrich: "BMW once again did a superb job of organising the event. I may not be the most talented kart driver, but it was still great fun. Timo gave us some good tips, which was very interesting. When he was in front of me I was able to track him for two or three corners, but you have no chance when he really puts his foot down."

Nico Walther: "Unfortunately I missed out on the podium in the final corner. I didn't know it was the last lap, so I was not expecting an attack from Beat. Thankfully, however, it was the BMW Kart Challenge and not the Bob World Championship. I would be very annoyed with myself then if I let the bronze medal slip out of my hands in the final turn. It was impressive to see Timo in action out on the track. It is crazy how he passes you with such ease – but he does have a weight advantage over us bob athletes."

Johannes Lochner: "That was a super event. It was cool to see Timo Glock here and to race against him. When else do you get an opportunity like that? As a bob rider, I obviously have speed in my blood."

Anja Schneiderheinze: "It is great to be the top lady in the field – especially as it has been a few years since I last sat in a kart. As a bob rider, I am obviously used to high speeds, but karting also has its perils. You really have to concentrate."

Oskars Melbardis: "That was a nice way to start the World Championship and was a lot of fun. Occasions like this are a good opportunity to meet your opponents in a relaxed atmosphere, before you battle it out for the medals in the ice channel."



Beat Hefti: “We often go karting in Switzerland in the summer. It is always hugely enjoyable – and we had more than enough fun again today. The BMW Kart Challenge was a genius idea. We should do that much more often. It is fun to take on the other athletes away from the ice channel every now and again – and events like this are also good for our sport. Furthermore, it is very exciting to meet professionals from other sports.”

Brian Shimer: “For me it is dream. I loved it. I don’t do karting very often. But we came to Winterberg for racing, so a friendly competition between the athletes and the coaches was great. It is a different level, a little more fun, so you get to know everyone a little bit better. A great way to start the World Championship!”

Steven Holcomb: “This was a lot of fun. It is good to have events like this. It has been a long season for us and we’ve been in Europe for ten weeks now. It’s great to come here and have some fun. We are competitive and raced very hard today, but still with a lot of fun. BMW is a great sponsor for the American team and it is fun being part of the BMW family.”

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