

## PREVIEW Men's events Ruka (27-29 Nov 2020)

### Ruka

- Ruka has been on the Nordic combined World Cup calendar in every season since 2002/03, with the exception of 2015/16.
- This is the 18th season in which Ruka will host the opening individual World Cup, and the fifth season in a row. The last time it was not the host of the opening World Cup event was in 2015/16, when the season started in Lillehammer due to heavy winds which made competing impossible in Ruka for an entire weekend.
- Ronny Ackermann (5) has won most individual World Cup events in Ruka, ahead of Hannu Manninen (4), Johannes Rydzek (4) and Jason Lamy Chappuis (4).
- Hannu Manninen has finished on the podium a record 10 times in Ruka, ahead of Ackermann (7), Eric Frenzel (6) and Rydzek (6). Jarl Magnus Riiber is on four podium finishes here.
- German Nordic combined skiers have won 12 individual World Cup events in Ruka. Norway (5) and Finland (5) are next on the list of most wins here.
- In 2019/20, Norway became the first country to sweep the podium in an individual World Cup event in Ruka, claiming first, second and third place in both Gundersen large hill/10km events on 29 November and on 1 December.

### Contenders

#### Jarl Magnus Riiber

- Jarl Magnus Riiber started the 2019/20 season by winning the first five individual World Cup events, including the opening three last season in Ruka.
- Riiber went on to win 14 of the 17 individual World Cup events last season, a record.
- Riiber (3) needs two more wins to equal Ronny Ackermann's record five victories in individual World Cup events in Ruka. Hannu Manninen (4), Johannes Rydzek (4) and Jason Lamy Chappuis (4) all won four times in Ruka.
- Riiber has won 27 individual World Cup events, one fewer than Ackermann (28) in third place all-time. Manninen (48) and Eric Frenzel (43) are the only Nordic combined skiers on more wins.
- Riiber wore the yellow bib as leader in the overall World Cup standings after the first individual World Cup event until the last World Cup event in 2019/20. He was the first to lead the standings throughout an entire season since Hannu Manninen in 2005/06.
- Riiber won the first first individual World Cup event in 2019/20 and went on to win the overall World Cup last season. Only Kenji Ogiwara (1992/93 and 1993/94), Ronny Ackermann (2001/02 and 2007/08) and Jason Lamy Chappuis (2009/10 and 2010/11) managed to do this in more than one season.
- Riiber can become the first Nordic combined skier to win the opening individual World Cup event in successive seasons, after Jason Lamy Chappuis in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

- In each of Riiber's last six individual World Cup victories he led the competitions after the ski jumping event. The last time he won a World Cup after not finishing first in the ski jumping event was in Oberstdorf on 26 January 2020.
- Riiber has won every individual World Cup when he finished first in the ski jumping competition.

### **Vinzenz Geiger**

- Vinzenz Geiger has won three individual World Cup events, including two in 2019/20, when he was the only Nordic combined skier besides Riiber (14) to win multiple World Cup events.
- Geiger is the last German winner of an individual World Cup event, following Johannes Rydzek's victory in Val di Fiemme on 11 January 2019.
- In 2016, Eric Frenzel was the last German skier to win at least four World Cup events in a row for Germany without any of his compatriots claiming a win in between.
- Geiger claimed one podium finish in his nine starts in individual World Cup events in Ruka, a second-place finish on 30 November 2019.

### **Jørgen Graabak**

- Jørgen Graabak has won six individual World Cup events, but none in 2019/20. His last victory was in Lahti on 10 February 2019.
- In 2019/20, Graabak recorded 11 podium finishes: eight times a 2nd place and three times a 3rd place.
- He just fell short of equalling Akito Watabe's record of claiming 12 podium finishes in a single season without winning once: 12 in 2015/16.
- Graabak finished second in Ruka on 1 December 2019 to equal his best result there, after finishing runner-up in November 2013.

### **Akito Watabe**

- Akito Watabe (1) was one of two Nordic combined skiers besides Jarl Magnus Riiber (14) to win an individual World Cup in 2019/20. Vinzenz Geiger (2) was the other athlete.
- Watabe's win in Lahti on 1 March 2020 was his only podium finish in the 2019/20 season.
- Watabe has won 18 individual World Cup events, only one fewer than Japan's record holder Kenji Ogiwara (19).
- Watabe is the only Japanese nordic combined skier to have won an individual World Cup in Ruka, on 25 November 2017.

### **Eric Frenzel**

- Eric Frenzel has won 43 individual World Cup events, only fewer than Hannu Manninen. His last victory was in Trondheim on 13 March 2018.

- Frenzel has claimed six podium finishes in individual World Cup events in Ruka, including a victory in November 2013. Manninen (10) and Ronny Ackermann (7) are the only athletes with more podium finishes in Ruka.
- Frenzel has finished on the podium in 76 individual World Cup events. He needs one more to equal Ackermann on 77 in second place all-time. Manninen leads the list on 90 podium finishes.

### Other contenders

- **Jens Lurås Oftebro** finished third in all three individual World Cup events in Ruka in 2019/20. The only other athlete to claim three podium finishes there in 2019/20 was Jarl Magnus Riiber (3 wins).
- Oftebro has yet to claim his first individual World Cup win. Of his five podium finishes, three came in Ruka (all in 2019/20).
- Jens Lurås Oftebro has finished ahead of his brother **Einar Lurås Oftebro** in each of the last 16 World Cups they both started in, since 2 December 2018, when Einar finished 15th in Lillehammer and Jens 27th.
- **Johannes Rydzek** has won 17 individual World Cup events, tied with Björn Kircheisen in third place among German Nordic combined skiers (including East & West Germany), behind Eric Frenzel (43) and Ronny Ackermann (28).
- Rydzek won four individual World Cup events in Ruka, one fewer than Ronny Ackermann's record five victories here. Hannu Manninen (4) and Jason Lamy Chappuis (4) also won four World Cups in Ruka.
- Rydzek could win the opening individual World Cup event of the season for the third time, after 2014/15 (Ruka) and 2016/17 (Ruka). Only Ronny Ackerman (6) won the opening event more often. Jason Lamy Chappuis and Hannu Manninen also won the first World Cup event of the season on three occasions.
- **Fabian Rießle** has won nine individual World Cup events and has claimed 48 podium finishes. Only Ronny Ackermann (77) and Eric Frenzel (76) have finished on the podium more often among German Nordic combined skiers (including East and West Germany).
- Rießle's has yet to claim a podium finish in Ruka (11 starts).
- **Ilkka Herola** hopes to become the first to win an individual World Cup event for Finland since Hannu Manninen won in Lahti on 6 March 2010.
- Finnish Nordic combined skiers have won five individual World Cup events in Ruka: Manninen (4, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2009) and Anssi Koivuranti (2008).
- The last Finnish Nordic combined skier to claim a podium spot on home snow in Ruka was **Eero Hirvonen**: second and third in November 2017.
- **Mario Seidl** could make his return in the World Cup after missing the 2019/20 season due to a knee injury. He won the individual World Cup event in Ruka on 24 November 2018, his first of two World Cup wins.
- No Austrian has won twice in Ruka - Mario Seidl, Felix Gottwald and Mario Stecher all won here once. Stecher is the only Austrian to claim two podium finishes in Ruka: first in a sprint World Cup in 2005 and third in 2010.