

PREVIEW Men's INDIVIDUAL LARGE HILL – Friday 22 Feb 2019

Kobayashi sets out to follow in Harada's footsteps

- Ryoyu Kobayashi could become the second Japanese ski jumper to win the men's individual large hill world title. Masahiko Harada won the gold medal in this event in 1997 in Trondheim.
- Four Japanese athletes have previously claimed a world championship medal in this event. Apart from Harada, these are: Takashi Fujisawa (silver in 1966), Hideharu Miyahira (bronze in 1999) and Noriaki Kasai (bronze in 2003).
- Since Kasai won the bronze medal in 2003, only one Japanese ski jumper managed to finish in the top-10 in this event at the world championships. Daiki Ito finished in 10th place in 2013.
- Kobayashi is the reigning Four Hills Tournament champion, completing the 'grand slam' of winning all four hills in the same tournament.
- Only two ski jumpers have managed to win the Four Hills title and the men's large hill world title in the same year: Hans-Georg Aschenbach in 1974 and Janne Ahonen in 2005.

Kraft aims to defend world title

- Stefan Kraft is the reigning world champion in the men's individual large hill event.
- Kraft could become the fourth ski jumper to successfully defend his world title in this event, after Birger Ruud (1931-1932 & three in a row from 1935-1937), Helmuth Recknagel (1960-1962) and Martin Schmitt (1999-2001). Note: Ruud's victories in 1932 and 1936 came at the Olympic Games, but are also counted as world titles. The same goes for Recknagel's victory in 1960.
- Kraft could become the fifth ski jumper to win multiple world titles in the men's individual large hill event, after Ruud (5), Recknagel (2), Schmitt (2) and Jacob Tullin Thams (2). Note: Ruud's victories in 1932 and 1936 came at the Olympic Games, but are also counted as world titles. The same goes for Recknagel's victory in 1960 and Thams his win in 1924.
- Kraft could become the first Austrian to claim multiple world titles in the men's individual large hill event. Karl Schnabl (1976, Olympic title but also counted as world title), Andreas Felder (1987) and Gregor Schlierenzauer (2011) are the other Austrians to have won a world championship gold medal in this event.

Stoch seeks to win world title as reigning Olympic champion

- Kamil Stoch is the two-time reigning Olympic champion in the men's individual large hill event, winning the gold medal in Sochi in 2014 and in Pyeongchang in 2018.
- The only ski jumpers to have won the men's large hill world title as reigning Olympic champion are Jacob Tullin Thams (1926), Birger Ruud (1935,

1936 and 1937) and Helmuth Recknagel (1962). Note: Ruud's victory in 1936 came at the Olympic Games, but is also counted as a world title. As he was also the Olympic Champion of 1932, we have included this world title as well.

- Stoch could become the fifth ski jumper to win multiple world titles in the men's individual large hill event, after Ruud (5), Recknagel (2), Thams (2) and Martin Schmitt (2). Note: Ruud's victories in 1932 and 1936 came at the Olympic Games, but are also counted as world titles. The same goes for Recknagel's victory in 1962 and Thams his win in 1924.
- Stoch will be 31 years and 274 days old on the final day of the individual large hill event and could become the second-oldest ski jumper to win the world title, after Gunnar Andersen who was 39 years and 350 days old when he won at the world championship in 1930.

Norway hoping to end world title drought

- Norway has won a record 20 world titles in the men's individual large hill, at least 12 more than any other country (Finland next, 8). However, Norwegian ski jumpers have failed to win any of the last 11 world titles in this event.
- It is already Norway's longest streak without a victory in the men's large hill event at the world championships. From 1968 to 1982, Norwegians failed to win the world title at eight consecutive editions.
- The last Norwegian ski jumper to win the men's large hill world title was then 17-year-old Tommy Ingebrigtsen who won in Thunder Bay in 1995.

Other contenders

- **Piotr Zyla** and **Dawid Kubacki** are both aiming to become the fourth Polish world champion in the men's individual large hill event, after Wojciech Fortuna (1972, Olympic title but also counted as world title), Adam Malysz (2003) and Kamil Stoch (2013).
- Zyla won the bronze medal in this event at the world championships in Lahti in 2017. Kubacki's best result in the individual large hill event at the world championships was an eight-place finish in 2017.
- Zyla will be 32 years and 38 days old on the final day of the individual large hill event and could become the second-oldest ski jumper to win the world title, after Gunnar Andersen who was 39 years and 350 days old when he won at the world championship in 1930.
- **Markus Eisenbichler** is in search of his first individual world title. He previously won a bronze medal in the men's normal hill event as well as the gold medal in the mixed normal hill event in Lahti in 2017.
- Eisenbichler, **Stephan Leyhe**, **Karl Geiger** and **Andreas Wellinger** could all become the sixth world champion representing Germany in the individual large hill event (East Germany, West Germany, Unified Team of Germany and Germany), after Sepp Bradl, Helmuth Recknagel, Hans-Georg Aschenbach, Martin Schmitt and Severin Freund.



- **Evgeni Klimov** could become the third ski jumper to win the individual large hill world title while representing Russia (including Soviet Union), after Vladimir Belusov and Gari Napalkov.

International Ski Federation www.fis-ski.com
Gracenote Sports on Twitter [@GracenoteGold](https://twitter.com/GracenoteGold)