

## PREVIEW MEN'S 15KM CLASSIC STYLE RUKA – Saturday 27 Nov 2021

### Alexander Bolshunov

- Alexander Bolshunov has won the distance World Cup in each of the last three seasons. He is one of three male skiers to have won this World Cup at least three times, alongside Dario Cologna (4) and Martin Johnsrud Sundby (3).
- Bolshunov is the only male skier to win the distance World Cup in three successive seasons.
- Bolshunov has equalled Petter Northug (both 23) in fourth place on the men's all-time list for most World Cup wins in distance events. Only Bjørn Dæhlie (45), Vladimir Smirnov (30) and Gunde Svan (30) have won more.
- Bolshunov has won each of the last five World Cup distance events in the classic style, a men's all-time record run.

### Norwegians

- Norwegian skiers have won the men's distance World Cup a record five times, most recently by Martin Johnsrud Sundby in 2016/17.
- **Johannes Høsflot Klæbo** won the distance season opener in Ruka in both 2017/18 and 2020/21. His win in Ruka last season is his most recent World Cup distance win.
- Coming into Ruka, Klæbo had collected 42 World Cup victories in all events, ranking him in fourth place all-time on the men's list behind Petter Northug (47), Bjørn Dæhlie (46) and Martin Johnsrud Sundby (44).
- **Emil Iversen** is the only male skier to have won at least one World Cup distance event in each of the past six seasons. The Norwegian claimed exactly one distance victory in those campaigns.
- All of **Simen Hegstad Krüger** (4) and **Hans Christer Holund's** (2) World Cup distance wins came in the freestyle. Holund won the 15km freestyle world title in 2021.

### Other contenders

- **Dario Cologna** has announced his retirement from the sport after the conclusion of this season. The Swiss has an impressive trophy cabinet, including four overall World Cups, four distance World Cups (a men's record), four Olympic gold medals (of which a record three in the 15km individual), and 27 World Cup event wins.
- Cologna's most recent World Cup win came in the 50km freestyle in Oslo on 10 March 2018. Last season, he finished second in the 15km classic in Val Müstair (Tour de Ski) on 2 January.
- **Iivo Niskanen** has collected five World Cup wins (all 15km classic), of which four on home snow in Finland: three in Ruka (2014, 2016, 2019) and one in Lahti (2020).

- Niskanen is one of three male skiers to have won at least three 15km classic style World Cup events at a single ski resort, alongside Lukáš Bauer (3 in Otepää).
- Of Niskanen's 16 World Cup podiums, nine were collected in Finland: five in Ruka and four in Lahti.
- The most recent **Russian** man, other than Alexander Bolshunov, to win a World Cup distance event in the classic style was Sergey Ustiugov, who won the 10km classic in Val Müstair (Tour de Ski) on New Year's Day 2017.

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