



## MEDIA INFORMATION

28.01.22

# Athletics party with Olympic Champions Jacobs, Duplantis and Mihambo in Berlin

Three Olympic gold medal winners from Tokyo will compete at Friday's ISTAF INDOOR in Berlin: Italy's sprint sensation Marcell Jacobs, Sweden's Pole Vault world record holder Armand Duplantis and Germany's Long Jump crowd favourite Malaika Mihambo. Besides the two field events there will be 60 m sprints and 60 m hurdles races for men and women each on Friday evening.

Usually the world's biggest indoor athletics party attracts a capacity crowd of 12,500 spectators. Due to the current Covid restrictions in Berlin organisers were only allowed to sell 1,500 tickets for the event in the Mercedes-Benz-Arena, which will take place under strict hygiene regulations. However while the number of spectators is severely restricted the event is broadcasted live by German TV SPORT1 from 6 pm. It will also be streamed online at SPORT1.de from 5.15 pm and will be shown in more than 80 countries.

"We are thrilled that we are able to celebrate such an event with outstanding athletes and that it is possible for us to welcome back spectators during these difficult times," said Meeting Director Martin Seeber. "While we will not have 12,500 fans I am sure that the Berlin crowd will still created the special ISTAF INDOOR atmosphere to push the athletes to great performances."

It will be the first time Marcell Jacobs steps back onto a track for competition since he left the Olympic track in Tokyo with two gold medals. The Italian caused a huge upset when he became the successor of Usain Bolt in the 100 m final and then took another surprise gold in the 4x100 m with the Italian team. Now he returns to competition in the 60 m dash at the Mercedes-Benz-Arena. The 27-year-old travels back to Berlin with good memories from last year's ISTAF INDOOR. Although narrowly beaten by Arthur Cissé of the Ivory Coast in the final he clocked a personal best of 6.56 here, which he then improved to 6.47 when winning the European championships' final. Arthur Cissé will be back in Berlin as well so that there is no easy path to victory for Marcell Jacobs. Germany's Kevin Kranz, who has a personal best of 6.59, and Jimmy Vicaut (6.48) of France are also on the start list.

It will be a first start at the ISTAF INDOOR in Berlin for Armand "Mondo" Duplantis. The Swede had great success in the capital's Olympic Stadium during the European Championships 2018 as well as the ISTAF and he took the ISTAF INDOOR in Düsseldorf last year. „I have great memories. So I am really looking forward to competing at the ISTAF INDOOR for the first time," said the 22 year-old, who cleared the current world record height of 6.18 m two years ago in Glasgow. While Berlin's meeting record stands at 6.02 m from Renaud Lavillenie in 2015 the Swede may well aim higher on Friday. „It really is time for a world record in Germany," said Duplantis after winning with a world





lead of 6.02 m in Karlsruhe last week. KC Lightfoot of the USA and Poland's Piotr Lisek, who has been a regular strong performer in Berlin, will be competing. Both have personal bests of 6.00 m.

Malaika Mihambo initially planned to run the 60 m only at the ISTAF INDOOR this time. However the Olympic Long Jump Champion, who became Sports Person of the Year in Germany, made a last minute u-turn and will now go for the field event for the first time this season as well. "My training is going really well. That is why together with my coach I decided to switch to the Long Jump in Berlin," said 28 year-old Malaika Mihambo, who does not plan to go with a shortened run-up. Her strongest rival could be Khaddi Sagnia. The Swede has a PB of 6.92 and was third in last year's European Indoor Championships.

Germany's Gina Lückenkemper will run the 60 m. The European 100 m silver medallist from 2018 returns to indoor racing for the first time in three years. „Usually the 60 metres are a bit short for me, but I really want to run the ISTAF INDOOR,“ said Gina Lückenkemper.

Sharika Nevis of the USA is the fastest entry for the 60 m Hurdles with a PB of 7.70. Finland's Rette Hurske, who clocked 7.96 this season, and Germany's Cindy Rohleder (7.84) are on the start list as well. In the men's race Aurel Manga of France heads the list with a PB of 7.53.

After its introduction last year the ISTAF-Trophy will see its second edition in 2022. Athletes competing at the ISTAF INDOOR events in Berlin and Düsseldorf as well as the ISTAF in Berlin's Olympic Stadium on 4th September will collect points in the sprints, sprint hurdles, men's Pole Vault and women's Long Jump. Each winner collects eight points while the runner-up will get five points and for sixth place there will be one point. The six overall winners will then share a total prize of 30,000 Euros. Two of last year's trophy champions are in the line-ups on Friday: Arthur Cissé and Malaika Mihambo.

„As for many other event organisers the limitation of spectators and the additional effort that has to be put into logistics and organisation due to the pandemic is an enormous challenge for us,“ said Meeting Director Martin Seeber. „Without the outstanding support of our long-term partners and the hard working team in the background the ISTAF INDOOR would not have been possible. I have to thank everyone for their commitment and our spectators for their understanding and support. Safety and health will always be paramount for us.“

**More information is available at: [www.istaf-indoor.de](http://www.istaf-indoor.de)**

+++

If you would like to know more about the ISTAF INDOOR, need any logos or photographic material, or have any queries about this media information, please contact:

**Sven Ibold**

Head of Communications

ISTAF / TOP Sportevents GmbH

Hanns-Braun-Strasse / Friesenhaus 1 / 14053 Berlin / Germany

+49 (0) 30 30 111 86 13

ibald@topsportberlin.de

[www.istaf-indoor.de](http://www.istaf-indoor.de)





Already accredited for the ISTAF INDOOR? [www.istaf-indoor.de](http://www.istaf-indoor.de)

**Would you like to report on the ISTAF INDOOR on the day of the event?**

Due to the pandemic, a limited number of press seats are available in the Mercedes-Benz Arena. In addition, a "digital mixed zone" is planned. Alternatively, accredited journalists can use our press portal on the day of the event, which supplements the live stream with entry lists, live results, athlete quotes, background information and live interviews.

The accreditation form can be found here:

**ISTAF INDOOR Berlin** - <https://www.istaf-indoor.de/akkreditierung/>

