



MEDIA INFORMATION

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ISTAF INDOOR 2024: Heading into the Olympic summer with strong tailwinds from Berlin

BERLIN - It's finally time! Olympic, World and European Champions will be coming to Berlin's Mercedes-Benz Arena tomorrow, Friday, February 23, for the ISTAF INDOOR. 12,000 fans are expected to attend the world's biggest indoor athletics meeting. They will experience an evening full of highlights with numerous crowd favorites, exciting duels, fast premieres - and as a spectacular encore, the unique discus duel. Remaining tickets for the ISTAF INDOOR are available by telephone on 030 30 111 86 30 and online at www.tickets.istaf.de. The ISTAF INDOOR will also be broadcasted in more than 80 countries.

For some athletes, the ISTAF INDOOR is the dress rehearsal for the eagerly awaited **World Athletics Indoor Championships Glasgow 2024** (March 1 to 3, 2024), but for many top athletes, the start in Berlin is the last stop of their indoor season before the intensive preparation for the "super summer" begins with the European Championships in Rome and the Olympic Games in Paris. It is also the "indoor final" for world-class long jumper **Malaika Mihambo**, who won the German Indoor Championships last weekend with 6.93 meters. "I'm getting better and better at the competitions. Now it's time to start the preparations for this summer with another positive experience," says Malaika Mihambo. The Olympic Champion can definitely rely on the support of the more than 12,000 fans expected tomorrow. "The ISTAF INDOOR can't be compared to any other meeting, the atmosphere is unique. The atmosphere is like a tailwind." The 30-year-old exceptional athlete has jumped further at the ISTAF INDOOR than at any other indoor event and has already won four times in Berlin. Malaika Mihambo jumped her personal indoor record of 7.07 meters in the Mercedes-Benz Arena in 2020. Her competitors include **Mikaelle Assani** (Germany), currently ranked number four in the world, and **Larissa Iapichino** (Italy), silver medalist at the 2023 European Indoor Championships.

World-class in eight disciplines

Eight exciting disciplines are on the program at the ISTAF INDOOR (60 meters F/M, 60 meters Paralympics M, 60 meters hurdles F/M, long jump F, pole vault M, discus duel M-F). In the men's 60 meters, European Indoor Champion **Samuele Ceccarelli** (Italy) will race against **Omar McLeod** (Jamaica), the 2016 Olympic hurdles Champion from Rio, who wants to kick off the Olympic season in Berlin with the 60 meters "flat". **Ronnie Baker** is in very strong condition. The US star ran a super-fast 6.51 seconds a few days ago. **Zaynab Dosso** (Italy), currently the third-fastest 60-meter sprinter in the world, the British European Champion and last year's winner **Daryll Neita** and the Jamaican hurdles record holder **Britany Anderson** will be competing in the women's race. The hurdles will also be extremely fast. The favorite in the men's race is **Daniel Roberts** (USA). With 7.93 seconds, the bronze medallist at the World Championships is one of the absolute world-class athletes and is one of only 14 hurdlers in the world to have ever run under 7.40 seconds. In the pole vault, Philippine six-meter jumper and World Championship silver medallist **Ernest John Obiena** will be trying to repeat





his triumph from 2021. His star rose in Berlin back then. Ernest Obiena is competing in only his second competition this year at the ISTAF INDOOR. But he can also deliver top performances without much competition experience. This is shown by his victory with a meeting record of 5.83 meters on Tuesday evening in Osijek (Croatia) as well as a total of 47 competitions with jumps over at least 5.80 meters.

The international stars will be challenged by Germany's best. Seven newly crowned German Champions alone will be competing in Berlin: in addition to **Malaika Mihambo** (long jump), **Rebekka Haase** (60 m), local hero **Skadi Schier** (4x200 m German Indoor Champion, competing in the 60 m), **Rosina Schneider** (60 m hurdles) **Robin Ganter** (200 m German Indoor Champion, competing in the 60 m), **Tim Eikermann** (60 m hurdles) and **Oleg Zernikel** (pole vault) will be taking part in the world's biggest indoor athletics meeting. World-class Paralympic sprinters such as Paralympic Champion **Johannes Floors** (Germany) and double World champion **Maxcel Amo Manu** (Italy) will also be competing in the Mercedes-Benz Arena for the first time.

Discus duel with world champion Kristjan Čeh and local hero Kristin Pudenz

As a spectacular encore, fans will experience the fourth edition of the unique discus duel. Discus throwing indoors in front of so many fans is unique worldwide at the ISTAF INDOOR in the Mercedes-Benz Arena. Four female discus throwers will compete in direct duels against four male discus throwers in "all against all" mode. Each duel victory in the four rounds is rewarded with two points (defeat: one point). The team with the most points wins. In the three discus duels held so far, the women have triumphed twice and the men's team has won once. Discus World Champion **Kristjan Čeh** (24) will celebrate his premiere at the ISTAF INDOOR Berlin tomorrow in the Mercedes-Benz Arena. In a spectacular discus duel, the 2.06 meter tall giant from Slovenia will compete together with Olympic Champion **Christoph Harting**, **Daniel Jasinski** and German Champion **Henrik Janssen** against a women's quartet consisting of Olympic silver medallist **Kristin Pudenz**, **Shanice Craft**, **Julia Harting** and **Jorinde van Klinken** from the Netherlands.

Kristjan Čeh (24) is an athlete of superlatives: the 2.06-metre muscle man with a wingspan of 2.16 meters celebrated the World Championship title in 2022 with a world record (71.13 m), he holds the Slovenian record (71.86 m), six of the ten longest throws in 2023 are to his credit and only three athletes in athletics history have ever thrown further - including his current coach Gerd Kanter from Estonia. Kanter also achieved the greatest distance ever under an indoor roof - 69.51 meters on 22 January 2009 in Växjö (Sweden). As indoor discus competitions can only be held in a few places, Gerd Kanter's world record is listed as the indoor world best. "I'm delighted that I can compete in my discipline indoors for the first time in my life," says Kristjan Čeh, who also has his eye on his coach's unofficial world record at his premiere. "That will be interesting. My preparation is going well, I want to throw far in Berlin. And I know that my coach holds the record. Let's see what I can do."

Information, results, votes on www.istaf-indoor.de

The ISTAF INDOOR social media team will keep all fans up to date on social networks and at www.istaf-indoor.de with a live ticker, live results service, clips and photos.





All information on www.istaf-indoor.de.

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If you want to find out more about the ISTAF INDOOR, require logos and image material or have any questions about this media information, please contact:

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