



MEDIA INFORMATION

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Swoboda, Mihambo, Kendricks ready for Düsseldorf

Ewa Swoboda, Malaika Mihambo and Sam Kendricks are the top names competing at the ISTAF INDOOR Düsseldorf on Sunday. Still a newcomer among the international meetings the event will see its second edition and organisers, who also stage the indoor and outdoor ISTAF events in Berlin, expect some thrilling races and duels with plenty of emotions.

The ISTAF INDOOR Düsseldorf, which is a World Athletics Indoor Tour Silver Meeting, will take place at the PSD Bank Dome. While Covid 19 regulations are remaining a limited number of spectators are allowed back. Strict hygiene regulations will be in place for all those attending or directly involved in the event. German TV SPORT1 will broadcast the ISTAF INDOOR Düsseldorf live from 3 pm (online streaming already starts at 2.15 pm). It will be shown in more than 80 countries.

“We will present spectacular sport once again. The fans can look forward to six top-class disciplines and the athletes to the unique atmosphere of an ISTAF INDOOR,” said Meeting Director Martin Seeber. “Without the great support of our partners as well as our committed team in the background the ISTAF INDOOR would not be possible.”

It is no coincidence that organisers chose the women’s 60 m sprint to be the final event of the programme as it could very well produce the highlight of the ISTAF INDOOR Düsseldorf. This season’s world leader will be in action: Poland’s Ewa Swoboda clocked 7.00 last week in Lodz, which is the fastest indoor time in the world for almost four years. The ISTAF INDOOR will be only Swoboda’s second competition this season and among her rivals are Pia Skrzyszowska and Gina Lückenkemper. The Pole has a season’s best of 7.28 while the German has recently improved her season’s mark to 7.22. Gina Lückenkemper looks forward to a home meeting: „It is great to have fans back. Together we will celebrate athletics. I am really looking forward to the race, although the challenge is a very tough one.“

Olympic Champion Malaika Mihambo will be eager to bounce back after opening her long jump campaign with a third place at the ISTAF INDOOR Berlin a fortnight ago. The German crowd favourite had problems with her run-up and had to settle for a modest 6.66 m. Fellow-German Merle Homeier, who was second in Berlin, will also compete in Düsseldorf.

In the 60 m Hurdles the reigning European Indoor Champion Nadine Visser of the Netherlands will open her season at the ISTAF INDOOR Düsseldorf. She will be challenged by Finland’s Reetta Hurske, who produced a series of fine results this winter. Hurske was the winner of the ISTAF INDOOR Berlin with 7.99 and then improved her personal best to 7.93 when she won in Lodz last week. Denmark’s Mette Graversgaard and Helena Jiranova of the Czech Republic could also be in the mix as they have improved to 8.02 and 8.03 respectively.

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Last year's winner Arthur Cissé of the Ivory Coast returns to Düsseldorf for the 60 m. He has shown very good form recently, when he tied his national record of 6.53, winning in Metz. France's Jimmy Vicaut is also on the start list and Germany's Kevin Kranz, who has a PB of 6.52, hopes to do well.

The 60 m Hurdles will likely be a very tight race. Germany's Gregor Traber came close to his PB of 7.56 when he clocked 7.62 this season. He will be challenged by Petr Svoboda (Czech Republic/Season's best: 7.66), Koen Set (Netherlands/7.68) and Milan Trajkovic (Cyprus/7.69).

Reigning World Champion Sam Kendricks is on the start list for the Pole Vault. The American, who defended his world title in Doha in 2019, has only just started his indoor season. He jumped 5.71 in Uppsala, Sweden, last week and will aim higher on Sunday. Poland's Piotr Lisek, another athlete who has already cleared six metres in the past, will be one of Kendrick's rivals in Düsseldorf. He has a season's best of 5.71 as well. After a surprise third place at the ISTAF INDOOR Berlin with a personal best of 5.81 Germany's Oleg Zernikel will hope to confirm this sort of performance.

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