



USA LUGE MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the USLA, in the Spirit of the Olympic Movement, is to provide for the Achievement of Athletic Excellence in the Sport of Luge, with the Highest Degrees of Sportsmanship, Honor, Dedication and Victory as the Standard.



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LUGE TRACKS AROUND THE WORLD



Member, United States Olympic Committee



U.S. Representative, Fédération Internationale de Luge de Course



Tracks Around the World

At this moment, there are 15 luge tracks around the world. Six of them have hosted the Olympic Games, with Torino, Italy hosting the most recent Games in February 2006. The track in Whistler, British Columbia, Canada will be the next track to host Olympic luge competition at the Vancouver Games in February, 2010.

Q: Are all tracks the same?

A: No, every track has a different layout requiring athletes to have very versatile skills in order to excel on all of them. Length, curve layout, start height, speed and curve profiles differ on all tracks giving each its own "personality".

Q: What's the difference between an artificial track and a natural track?

A: Basically, an artificial track is refrigerated, like an indoor ice rink, with refrigeration pipes running through the concrete track. They also have the characteristic high-banked curves of different sizes and radii. Artificial tracks are used in the Olympic Games to host the luge, bobsled and skeleton events.

Natural track luge is not an Olympic sport but is regularly considered for inclusion on the Olympic program. Natural tracks are characterized as being unrefrigerated and having relatively flat unbanked turns, vertical wood walls on the outside of turns and wide sliding surfaces. If you picture a sliding course on a tree lined logging trail in the woods, you're not far off from a true natural luge course.

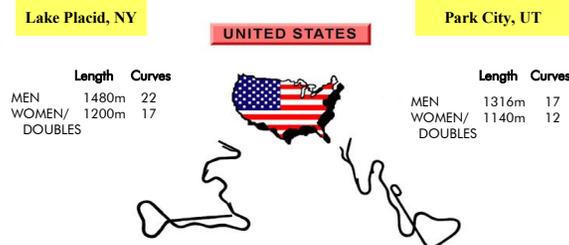
The term "artificial track" can also be applied to those tracks that have the characteristic high-banked curves but are not refrigerated. An example of this is the track in St. Moritz, Switzerland. These can be known as natural, artificial tracks.

Q: Where are the 13 artificially refrigerated tracks in the world located?

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| A: <u>North America</u> | <u>Europe</u> |
| Lake Placid, NY | LaPlagne, France |
| Park City, UT | Igls, Austria |
| Calgary, Canada | Sigulda, Latvia |
| Whistler, Canada | Lillehammer, Norway |
| | Winterberg, Germany |
| <u>Asia</u> | Konigssee, Germany |
| Nagano, Japan | Altenberg, Germany |
| | Oberhof, Germany |
| | Torino, Italy |
| | Paramonova, Russia |

Q: What's the difference between a "gliding" vs. a "driving" track?

A: As mentioned earlier, all tracks have their own "personality" based on their curve layout, speed, start height, etc. One of these variables is how much the track has to be "driven". A driving track is one which requires the athlete to steer the sled a great deal and often quite strongly, in order to drive the correct "line" down the track. Generally, the curve radii tend to be tighter and aerodynamics are less important on these tracks compared to driving the correct line. Examples of driving tracks include: Konigssee, Altenberg, Oberhof and Lake Placid .



A "gliding" track is one that puts an emphasis on athlete position and aerodynamics rather than steering. While driving the correct line is still critical to a fast time, remaining relaxed and having good aerodynamic form is more important. These tracks are also known for having more "open" or larger radius curves. Gliding tracks tend to favor larger athletes who benefit from the ability to hit higher speeds because of their weight. Examples of gliding tracks include: Calgary, Park City, LaPlagne and Winterberg.

Q: Where was the first refrigerated track built?

A: Konigssee, Germany in 1969.

Q: Where is the newest refrigerated track?

A: Paramonova, Russia - 2009.

Q: What does the term "combination track" mean?

A: Every refrigerated track in the world is a combination track. That means that luge, bobsled and skeleton all use the same track, though from different start locations. All tracks also host international races such as World Cup and World Championship competitions in each sliding sport

Q: Which is the fastest refrigerated track in the world?

A: Whistler, BC Canada where sleds from the men's start hit more than 96 mph.