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Ryan Sandes, Cristofer Clemente and Kristin Berglund top favourites going into 2nd STUBAI ULTRATRAIL

The runners will set off at 1:00am from the Olympic city of Innsbruck and complete at total of 63.1 kilometres and 5,075 vertical metres through the Stubai Valley before reaching the finishing line at 3,150 metres above sea level on the Stubai Glacier, where fabulous views and a breathtaking sunset await. The favourites at the second edition of the STUBAI ULTRATRAIL taking place on 30 June include South African trailrunning superstar Ryan Sandes, who in 2017 won the Western States® 100-Mile Endurance Run, the world's oldest ultra-marathon.

This man is the start of the trailrunning scene – and he will be on the start line in Innsbruck at the 2nd STUBAI ULTRATRAIL on 30 June. South Africa's Ryan Sandes, who just six months ago celebrated the biggest win of his career, will lead a field of world-class athletes looking to be first to the finish line at 3,150 metres above sea level. Starting in the centre of Innsbruck and finishing high up on the Stubai Glacier, this race truly lives up to its tagline "urban2glacier". Joining Ryan Sandes at the second edition of the STUBAI ULTRATRAIL will be further international stars such as Cristofer Clemente, Thomas Farbmacher, David Wallmann, Hans-Peter Innerhofer, Sandra Koblmüller, Kathrin Angerer and Kristin Berglund. For runners completing the full STUBAI ULTRATRAIL at 63.1 kilometres and 5,075 vertical metres the gun goes at 1:00am on Saturday, 30 June in Innsbruck. The STUBAI BASICTRAIL over 28.7 kilometres and 2,528 vertical metres starts on the same day at 10:00 in the village of Neustift in the Stubai Valley, while competitors taking on the brand new STUBAI GLACIERTRAIL will head off an hour later at 11:00am. From Mutterberg at the foot of the glacier they will race a short but sharp course just 8 kilometres in length but with a thigh-punishing 1,395 vertical metres of ascent from start to finish.

Ryan Sandes (Team SALOMON/Red Bull) knows the challenges that await. "I am really looking forward to the Stubai Ultratrail – the experience, the competitors and the fabulous landscape," comments Sandes ahead of the event. "I have been to the region a few times before and have always found it incredibly impressive, almost magical." For the 36 year-old the second edition of the STUBAI ULTRATRAIL powered by SALOMON will serve as a chance to test his form ahead of the UTMB®.

The South African's main competitor is likely to be Cristofer Clemente of Spain, who looked impressive as he claimed a strong second place at the 8th SALOMON Zugspitz Ultratrail powered by LEDLENSER in mid-June. In the finish area in Grainau the man from Tenerife explained how much he was already looking forward to the new challenge of racing up onto the Stubai Glacier. Those who listened careful could read between the lines that Clemente will be going all out for the win on 30 June.

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The third man in the group of favourites is Austria's David Wallmann. One of the biggest up-and-coming names in the trailrunning scene, the man from Salzburg won the shorter distance at last year's event and will be taking on the ultra-distance this time. However, the 27 year-old is anything but a beginner when it comes to long-distance racing. Only two months ago he successfully completed the "longest ski tour in the world" comprising an incredible 1,721 kilometres and 89,644 vertical metres from Vienna to Nice. Wallmann knows the course well, particularly the punishing climb from Mutterberg up along a series of steep switchback corners past the Dresdner Hütte hut and the Eisgrat mountain station through rocks, snowfields and ice all the way to the finish line at the Jochdohle, Austria's highest mountain restaurant, at 3,150 metres above sea level. "It is important to pace yourself – the final section is really tough," advises Wallmann on his Facebook page.

In the women's ultra-distance race all eyes will be on Sweden's Kristin Berglund, who will be making her first start in Innsbruck. Berglund, who lives in Austria, only recently completed her comeback from injury at the SALOMON Zugspitz Ultratrail powered by LEDLENSER. Despite being out of competition for a whole year due to injury, the 34 year-old was in fine form and finished second in the 101km ultra-distance. "Now I have to give my body a bit of time to recover, but I am already looking forward to the Stubai Ultratrail with the finish line up on the glacier," commented the Swede after her strong showing in Germany. Berglund is known to enjoy long and technical trails, meaning the course of the STUBAI ULTRATRAIL is likely to play to her strengths.

Another strong field is expected to line up in Neustift for the Basictrail over 28.7 kilometres and 2,528 vertical metres. In the men's race it is likely to be a battle between two Austrians: Daniel Jochum, second in the Basetrail at the SALOMON Zugspitz Ultratrail powered by LEDLENSER, and Peter Fankhauser. In the women's race many expect a three-way battle between young Austrian trailrunning star Sandra Koblmüller, second-place finisher in the Supertrail at the Zugspitz Ultratrail Kathrin Angerer, and German athlete Ida-Sophie Hegemann. Hegemann, who is just 20 years old and has been competing in trailrunning events for only a year, won the Basetrail XL at this year's Zugspitz Ultratrail.

Making its debut at this year's STUBAI ULTRATRAIL is a brand new course: the GLACIERTRAIL. Runners head off at 11:00am from the cable car station down in the valley at Mutterberg and must complete 8 kilometres of uphill with a total elevation gain of 1,395 vertical metres from start to finish. Austria's Thomas Farbmacher, who recently finished third at the Zugspitz Ultratrail, has confirmed his participation in this short but extremely tough mountain sprint. It will be interesting how well Farbmacher has managed to recover from the exertions of the Zugspitz Ultratrail and whether he will be able to crown himself the first champion of the STUBAI GLACIERTRAIL.

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