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## SNOW AUSTRALIA ANNOUNCES 2021 NORDIC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS TEAM

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Snow Australia have today announced the five cross-country skiers selected as part of the national team which will compete at the 2021 FIS Nordic Ski World Championships in Oberstdorf, Germany, February 23 - March 7.

Led by two-time Olympian Phillip Bellingham, who represented Australia at the 2014 and 2018 Winter Games, the team will feature three men and two women in a balanced mix of experience and fresh talent.

Bellingham will celebrate his 30th birthday on the first day of competition and is the most experienced of the Australian athletes in Oberstdorf, participating in the Nordic Ski World Championships for the fifth time. He will have to navigate a demanding schedule as he competes in five different events between sprint and distance, including the closing 50km mass start.

The men's team also includes 22-year-old Seve de Campo and 28-year-old Mark Pollock, at their second and third participation respectively. Like Bellingham, de Campo is qualified for all events. To earn a spot in the skiathlon and 15km Freestyle events, Pollock will have to go through a qualification round and finish in the top-ten.

In the women's team, Katerina Paul is at her third participation in the World Championships and will race alongside emerging 19-year old Tuva Bygrave, who is making her debut representing Australia at major international competitions. Paul will target the Classic Sprint, while Bygrave will race both sprint and distance events.

"This has been a difficult season for everybody involved in snow sports, with many athletes not having a chance to travel and compete at the highest level," said National Team Head Coach Valerio Leccardi, who has remained in Australia this summer due to the pandemic.

"We've been fortunate that our top three men have been able to compete regularly on the World Cup circuit this season without any incidents. They are ready for the championships, where they will be joined by Kat Paul who has been racing mostly on the marathon circuit and Tuva Bygrave, who only just recently qualified for the championship racing in the USA."

Bygrave qualified for Oberstdorf while racing for the University of Anchorage on the NCAA circuit. She will follow on the family tracks as her father Lee represented Australia at the 1989 World Championships, in Finland.

"The four senior athletes all have experience at World Championships, and we've been able to put together a good event team from coaches based in Europe. I am confident everybody goes into the event well-prepared and ready to race at their best against a fierce competition," Leccardi said.

The Australian Team at the World Championships will be led by German coach Fabian Mauz, backed-up by Swiss-based Australian coach Alasdair Tutt, who together with Mauz supported the team at the early World Cup races this season. They are joined by three wax technicians from Switzerland, Germany and Austria.

This season Bellingham, de Campo and Pollock have raced five World Cups in Switzerland, Germany and Sweden, with the best results coming from Bellingham and De Campo in the Team Sprint events in Dresden and Ulricehamn. The duo will race together again in the World Championships Men's Team Sprint on the 28 February, with Pollock as team reserve. An outstanding result would be to qualify through to the final of ten teams, which no Australian team has ever done at a major championship. Australia's best result in the event is still Jessica Yeaton and Barbara Jezersek's 12th place at the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang.

Notably missing from the team competing in Oberstdorf will be 2018 Winter Olympians Jessica Yeaton, Casey Wright and Aimee Watson. All three athletes qualified for the Championships, but opted not to travel to Europe this winter due to the global pandemic, travel restrictions and quarantine requirements.

Competition kicks off on Wednesday, February 24 with the Women's 5km and Men's 10 km Freestyle qualification events. The men's 50km Classic will draw the curtain on the event on March 7.

With fundraising events cancelled in 2020 Snow Australia welcomes donations to the World Championship team via the Australian Sports Foundation. Covid-19 tests alone during the championship are expected to cost athletes over \$500 each. Donations can be made via: <https://asf.org.au/projects/snow-australia/ausxc-2021-world-championship/>

For more event-specific information and results visit the [2021 FIS Nordic World Ski Championships website](#) or follow the Australian Cross-Country Team on social media, @ausxc

### Women

- Katerina Paul, 24 (Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club)
- Tuva Bygrave, 19 (University of Alaska Anchorage)

### Men

- Phillip Bellingham, 30 (Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club)
- Seve de Campo, 22 (ACT Academy of Sport)
- Mark Pollock, 28 (Wangaratta Ski Club)

### Full Competition Calendar

Date	Time (all times CET)	Event	Australians competing
24 Feb	12:30	Women's 5 km freestyle qualification	
	14:30	Men's 10 km freestyle qualification	Mark Pollock
25 Feb	15:15	Women's sprint	Katerina Paul, Tuva Bygrave
	15:15	Men's sprint	Phillip Bellingham, Seve de Campo, Mark Pollock
27 Feb	11:45	Women's 2 x 7.5 km skiathlon	Tuva Bygrave
	13:30	Men's 2 x 15 km skiathlon	Phillip Bellingham, Seve de Campo, Mark Pollock (if qualified)
28 Feb	13:00	Women's team sprint	
	13:00	Men's team sprint	Phillip Bellingham / Seve de Campo
2 Mar	13:15	Women's 10 km freestyle	Tuva Bygrave
3 Mar	13:15	Men's 15 km freestyle	Phillip Bellingham, Seve de Campo, Mark Pollock (if qualified)
4 Mar	13:15	Women's 4 x 5 km relay	
5 Mar	13:15	Men's 4 x 10 km relay	
6 Mar	12:30	Women's 30 km classic	
7 Mar	13:00	Men's 50 km classic	Phillip Bellingham

### GALLERY

