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Story Script and Shot log

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STORY HEADLINE: Inspired by watching a ‘mad’ Olympic sport on TV, USA luge pair look forward to competing at Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020.

LOCATION: St Moritz, Switzerland

DATE: January 16, 2020

LANGUAGE: English

Broadcast quality footage available at the IOC Newsroom: <http://iocnewsroom.com>

STORY SCRIPT:

On a typical winter’s morning in upstate New York, a couple of sports mad 11-year-old school kids sat transfixed in front of their televisions, not quite believing what was unfolding before their young eyes.

It was luge at the Olympic Winter Games Sochi 2014 in Russia. From thousands of miles away, Sam Day and Sam Eckert felt inspired. Both decided luge looked such a crazy sport they wanted to try it out.

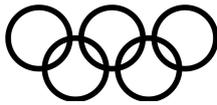
Six years later they are at the Winter Youth Olympic Games (YOG) Lausanne 2020 as partners in the luge men’s double; their Olympic inspired dream of competing in a “mad” sport at the highest level very much alive.

After watching events at Sochi 2014 unfold on television, Day and Eckert both badgered their parents into signing them up with the “USA Luge Slider Search” programme. They happily did so.

Eckert from Wilmington and Day from Wantagh, both in New York, soon became united as luge partners, training at Lake Placid, venue for the Olympic Winter Games 1980.

Crucially for their chosen sporting discipline, Eckert and Day quickly built up a rapport, enjoying a warm chemistry. It is, they explain, because if at any time they’re out of sync while out on the track it can then all go wrong.

As for competing on the historic world famous St Moritz Olympia Bob Run, the American pair offer up nothing but praise. They just can’t agree on whether careering along the oldest and only natural bobsleigh track in the world is like sliding on glass or butter.



For now they're happy to compete at the Winter YOG in Lausanne, but ultimately their ambition is to take part in the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022, or a later edition. The luge men's doubles takes place on Friday (January 17)

What is the attraction of luge? Well, luge riders hurtle down a slippery ice track at great speed, relying on reflexes for steering. Unlike bobsleigh, however, they have no protection should they make an error. Luge is the French word for "sledge" and, like bobsleigh, it was developed as a sport in Switzerland. Its roots go back to the 16th century, but it was not until 300 years later that the first luge tracks were built by Swiss hotel owners to cater for thrill-seeking tourists.

SHOTLIST:

00:05 Sam Day and Sam Eckert introduce themselves

00:10 Shots of the Team USA pair making their way to training

00:28 SOUNDBITE: Sam Eckert, Team USA Sliding (English Language).

"I was watching the 2014 Sochi Olympics and I saw luge and the speed really just drew me into it and thought 'wow that's a crazy sport and I want to try it.'"

00:38 Shots of Sam Day and Sam Eckert at training

00:42 SOUNDBITE: Sam Day, Team USA Sliding (English Language).

"I started out watching the Sochi Olympics and thought it was so cool to try and do it and I begged my mum to do it and she finally signed me up after two weeks of begging. Tried out the White Castle Slider search, and then got invited back and actually the first day Sam Eckert and I met we were roommates at the Slider search. And then we just kept going up from there and getting into every team from year after year together."

01:06 Various shots of the pair at training

01:17 SOUNDBITE: Sam Eckert, Team USA Sliding (English Language).

"Having that sort of chemistry on the doubles side is really nice and very important because you just have to be in tune with each other at all times when on the track because if you are out of sync that's when it all goes wrong."

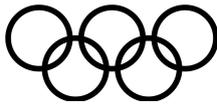
01:28 The pair demonstrate their preparations before their run

01:33 SOUNDBITE: Sam Day, Team USA Sliding (English Language).

"I usually just think about the run before, the problems we had, how to fix them and I'll do a lot of mind runs before my run. I just make sure I know what I'm about to do, how it's going to be and then if I'm going to have a fast run and I just hope for the best."

01:50 The pair demonstrate their preparations before their run

01:54 SOUNDBITE: Sam Eckert, Team USA Sliding (English Language).



"Yeah, I am at the bottom man, so my role is to really nail the rolls and make everything smooth and if Sam happens to make any mistakes I can be there to help - save us or do what I can to get us back on line."

02:09 Close up of Team USA pair in training

02:14 SOUNDBITE: Sam Day, Team USA Sliding (English Language).

"I am the eyes and I have most of the control over the steering and again if I mess up Sam usually saves me all the time and its awesome just to know that someone is going to save us from our good line."

02:26 Close up of Team USA during their mental preparations before their training run

02:33 Team USA at the start line

02:37 SOUNDBITE: Sam Eckert, Team USA Sliding (English Language).

"I love this track at St Moritz it's one of my favourite tracks in the world, there's really no other track like it, its built purely of ice and snow so compared to Lake Placid specifically its a much much smoother track like if you're watching sleds you'll hear a sled go by and it's almost like nothing it's just gliding on glass pretty much."

02:59 Team USA at the start line

03:05 SOUNDBITE Sam Day, Team USA Sliding (English Language)

"It's my favourite track also, it's super smooth compared to Lake Placid, you can always hear the rattles and it sounds like a train going by on Lake Placid, but in St. Moritz it's just as smooth as butter and I love it."

03:17 Shots of Team USA's preparation before racing

03:25 SOUNDBITE: Sam Day, Team USA Sliding (English Language) (on his main goals).

"Definitely the Olympics, definitely trying to do my best in the Youth Olympics also, but overall the Olympics in 2022 or 2026. Just all the hard work that I put in would come out and I would just be so happy."

03:39 Team USA start luge practice run

03:45 SOUNDBITE: Sam Eckert, Team USA Sliding (English Language).

"My hopes and dreams would be to make it to the Olympics and give it my all. It would be awesome to represent my country on such a big stage."

03:52 Team USA mental preparations

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