

BOBSLED

Fast start

Quick start is key to winning a bobsled race, where victory is measured in hundredths of a second.

Shoe



Hundreds of tiny, brush-like spikes under ball of foot for traction

4-person sled

Fiberglass body or pod with blunt, steel runners

Brakeman

Stops sled at end of run

Pushers

Provide ballast; shift weight to gain speed

Driver

Steers, gives orders

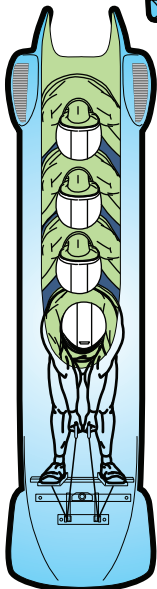
Weight

1,386 lb. (630 kg) with crew

Length

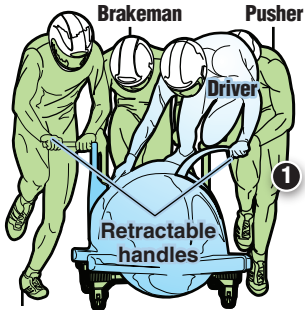
11 ft. (3.8 m)

NOTE: Races also run with two-person sleds; all measures are maximums



27 in. (67 cm)

between runners



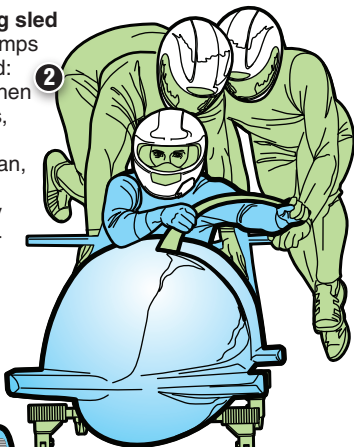
Pusher

Gravity, plus speed and muscle

Running start
Crew pushes sled about 165 ft. (50 m) to a speed of about 25 mph (40 kph) in about 5 seconds

Loading sled

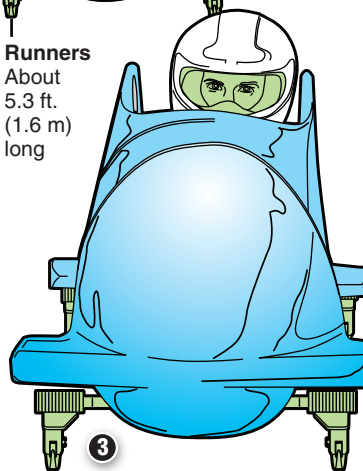
Crew jumps into sled: driver, then pushers, then brakeman, who is typically a world-class sprinter



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Runners

About 5.3 ft. (1.6 m) long



Poised for run After tucking away arms and legs, all crew except driver ride head down to cut wind resistance