Win-win Situation

Dear Reader,

Formula Student Germany kicked off its twelfth year with a première in 2017: following the introduction of a competition for electrically powered vehicles in 2010, a class for driverless vehicles marked another first in the history of the competition. During this third competition, participating teams developed an autonomous vehicle that was then put through its paces at Hockenheimring by jury members in static and dynamic disciplines in the classic Formula Student style.

The teams rose to the challenge with great commitment and extraordinary creativity. The finished prototypes were then suitably honoured by the jury and the many spectators in the grand finale at Hockenheimring. Unfortunately only four of the fifteen driverless vehicles finally made it onto the track. The organisers had anticipated that not everything would go smoothly during the first season. That's not so bad, as everyone is committed to the project. Things will improve next year – something the Formula Student philosophy reaffirms.

Automotive manufacturers, suppliers and development service providers – who maintain close contacts to the teams – were particularly impressed by the enthusiasm shown by the young engineers. Numerous sponsors have assisted and advised the teams for many years, holding preparatory workshops or providing test tracks and equipment.

Such sponsoring pays off for both sides, as attested by Reiner Friedrich, Vice President of Autonomous Driving at BMW, who spent an inspiring weekend at Hockenheimring as a member of the Formula Student Driverless jury. He informed us in an interview that the Formula Student teams experience on a small scale what car manufacturers experience on a larger one.

This special edition of the ATZ provides a brief insight into the world of Formula Student and the 2017 competition. Of course anyone who has already been there knows that taking part, or at least experiencing it live at Hockenheimring, is a lot better.

Angelina Hofacker, Editor ATZ