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LEISURE

## The Österreichring, Projekt Spielberg and champions

Austrian formula one grand prix in the Styrian Alps

The Austrian formula one grand prix has a rich heritage in Murtal. Zeltweg airfield staged the first world championship grand prix in 1964. The Österreichring became the venue for the event in 1970. Projekt Spielberg has transformed the venue into a leisure paradise in Upper Styria. Luxury hotels, celebrated restaurants and facilities to enjoy athletic and leisure activities surround the automobile racing circuit. Austria has produced world champion drivers, a constructor and some of the finest engineers. Anstalt für Verbrennungskraftmaschinen List GmbH is an Austrian engineering titan with considerable success in formula one. It developed a long term association with Red Bull Racing and provided technical assistance to Ferrari.

Zeltweg is a town located in the Murtal district in the province of Styria. The town has a population of more than 7,300 inhabitants. Schloß Farrach, a palace is an example of the elegant architecture prominent in the town. An automobile racing circuit was created at Fliegerhorst Hinterstoisser also known as Zeltweg airfield in 1959. The circuit consisted of four curves incorporating a distance of 3.2 kilometres. The abrasive surface of the circuit resulted in the formula one world championship abandoning the circuit after the first event in 1964.

Formula one returned to the Styrian Alps in 1970 after the construction of the Österreichring. The Österreichring was completed in 1969 and hosted the Austrian formula one grand prix between 1970 and 1987. The circuit is located in the town of Spielberg between the towns of Zeltweg and Knittelfeld in Murtal. It has a population of 5,200 inhabitants. The circuit was 5.9 kilometres in length consisting of undulating curves. It was one of the fastest venues on the formula one calendar. Many competitors considered the circuit dangerous. Competitors approached the Bosch Kurve at 320 kilometres per hour and the Jochen Rindt Kurve at 310 kilometres per hour in qualifying during the mid-1980s. Competitors travelled at 290 kilometres per hour while navigating the Vöst-Hügel Kurve before it was altered in 1977. The bend became a chicane known as the Hella Licht Kurve.

The A1 Ring became the venue for the Austrian formula one grand prix. The Österreichring was rebuilt to reduce high speeds and remove undulating curves. A1, the largest Austrian mobile telephone corporation financed much of the project and provided the name for the shorter and slower circuit. The length of the circuit was reduced from 5.9 kilometres to 4.326 kilometres. Nine bends comprised the circuit with three very slow right handed bends to

encourage overtaking. The circuit staged seven world championship races between 1997 and 2003.

Dietrich Mateschitz purchased the circuit and transformed the surrounding region to fulfil the objectives of Projekt Spielberg. The CEO and Chairman of Red Bull GmbH acquired the property for EUR 70 million. He also purchased aristocratic estates and transformed them into luxury hotels. The Steirerschlossl and G'Schlossl Murtal are both five star luxury hotels located near the circuit. Both luxury hotels contain distinguished restaurants for connoisseurs to enjoy fine cuisine and wine. Zeltweg Wasserturm became a celebrated coffee house. The Spielberg Musik festival combines traditional and contemporary music for a sophisticated audience. Artistic and cultural events are staged regularly at the luxury hotels and the circuit. It is not solely the domain of automobiles.

The Red Bull Ring was unveiled in 2011 to attract formula one to the Murtal region. The circuit is 4.326 kilometres in length and consists of nine curves. Two curves are left handed and seven are right handed. Red Bull GmbH investigated the possibility of restoring the Österreichring. The idea was abandoned due to the high speeds achieved by contemporary formula one automobiles. World championship formula one returned to Spielberg on 22 June 2014. 77,702 spectators attended the race on Sunday afternoon.

Jochen Rindt became Austria's first formula one world champion in 1970. Rindt was born on 18 April 1942 and lived in the Styrian capital city of Graz. His formula one debut was the 1964 Austrian grand prix. He claimed the first pole position at the Österreichring in 1970. He claimed six grand prix victories and ten pole positions. Rindt won the 1965 24 Hours of Le Mans endurance race. He was a gifted driver with exceptional control and reflexes. He was killed in a qualifying accident on 5 September 1970 for the Italian grand prix in Monza and is the only posthumous formula one world champion.

Andreas Nikolaus 'Niki' Lauda is Austria's most successful formula one driver. He won the world championship in 1975, 1977 and 1984. He was born on 22 February 1949 to a wealthy Viennese family. He entered automobile racing despite his family's disapproval. He is the only Austrian to win the Austrian grand prix. He accomplished the objective in 1984. Lauda survived a horrific accident during the 1976 German grand prix at the Nürburgring. He suffered considerable scarring from burns to his face and head. He lost most of his right ear and hair on the right side of his head. Lauda lost the 1976 world championship by a point despite not competing in three grands prix. He claimed twenty-five grand prix victories and twenty-four pole positions.

Red Bull Racing is the only Austrian team to claim the constructors' world championship. Red Bull GmbH became involved in formula one by sponsoring Austrian drivers Gerhard Berger and Karl Wendlinger. Mateschitz established a formula one team in 2005. The team won the constructors' world championship on four occasions in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013. The team claimed fifty grand prix victories, fifty-seven pole positions and forty-five fastest laps. All statistics are current to the 2015 Canadian grand prix. It achieved considerable success in a very short period of time and is one of the most accomplished team in the history of the sport.

Dr Helmut Marko has been instrumental in the success of Red Bull Racing. Dr Marko was born on 27 April 1943 in Graz. He graduated from the University of Graz with a doctorate in law. Dr Marko was a successful racing driver claiming victory in the 1971 24 Hours of Le Mans endurance race. His formula one career ended abruptly at the 1972 French grand prix. A stone from a competitor's automobile penetrated his helmet visor and resulted in the loss of sight in his left eye. He decided to manage young Austrian and German drivers. Gerhard Berger and Karl Wendlinger achieved considerable junior success with Dr Marko's management before both entered formula one. Dr Marko established RSM Marko, a successful team in European formula 3000 and formula three. He is an advisor to Red Bull Racing and nurtured driving talent for Red Bull GmbH since 1999, particularly Sebastian Vettel. Vettel won the world championship in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013.

Gustav Brunner is an Austrian engineer and designer with a distinguished career in formula one. Brunner was born in the Styrian capital of Graz and graduated from the Graz University of Technology with a degree in mechanical engineering. His career in formula one began in 1978 with a brief role at ATS. He returned to ATS in 1983 and designed two chassis for the team. He was employed by RAM in 1985 and designed a chassis. Ferrari recruited Brunner to lead the design team. It contributed to the victories Gerhard Berger achieved at the Japanese and Australian grands prix in 1987. He was employed by several less competitive formula one teams until 2001. Toyota recruited Brunner in 2001 and he became the technical director for the manufacturer's entry to the sport. He led the design team until the end of 2005.

Anstalt für Verbrennungskraftmaschinen List GmbH (AVL List GmbH) is a distinguished Styrian automotive consulting corporation. The corporation was established by Dr Hans List in the Styrian capital of Graz in 1948. It is the largest privately owned corporation in the world developing powertrain systems with internal combustion engines, instrumentation and test systems. It generated revenue of EUR 1.15 billion in 2014. The corporation has a rich and successful heritage in formula one. Ferrari used computer simulation to prepare for grand prix weekends at AVL List GmbH's dynamometer laboratory in Graz during the 2003 season. The engines and drivetrains were completely and accurately tuned for peculiarities of individual grand prix circuits. AVL List GmbH enjoys a long term association with Red Bull Racing to simulate and test engines for race conditions. AVL List GmbH and Ferrari began collaborating in late 2014 to develop the automobile, engine and systems for the 2015 formula one season.

Styria has a rich heritage and tradition in formula one. Every Austrian formula one grand prix has been staged in the province. Red Bull GmbH purchased the automobile racing circuit and transformed the property into a leisure paradise. Luxury hotels and events throughout the year created a destination for enthusiasts and travellers. Austria produced world champion drivers and a constructor. Red Bull Racing has been a dominant team in the sport during the last decade. Austrian talent incorporates engineering and design. Gustav Brunner enjoyed a distinguished career in formula one. AVL List GmbH enjoys success with Ferrari and Red Bull Racing in conducting grand prix simulation and developing an engine for Ferrari to contest the 2015 season.