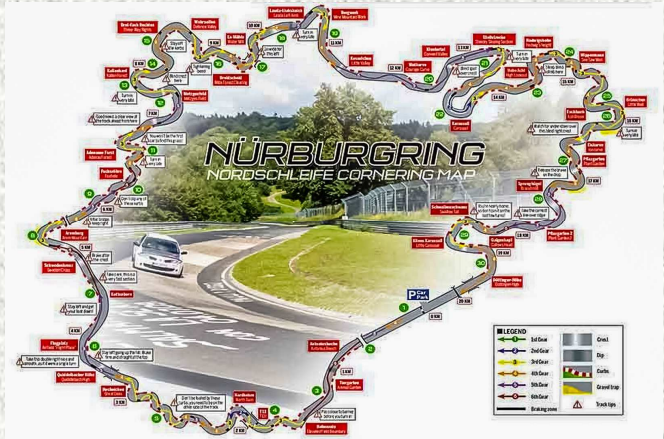


Nurburgring and the Jaguar “Taxis”

By Neville Barlow

The Nurburgring racetrack in Germany is the one of the most famous motoring racetracks of all time, possibly second only to Le Mans. Today there are two tracks—the Grand prix track and the infamous Northern loop, known as the Nordschleife. This latter one is where our Jaguar Taxis ply their trade. The racetrack had its first race in 1927 and continues with some of the most exciting races, but Formula one has been removed to the Northern loop since 1976 after Nikki Lauda’s horrific crash.



At 12.94 miles (29.83 km) long the Nordschleife is the longest racetrack in the world. It has 154 corners of various angles, speeds and elevations. It was named “The Green Hell” by Formula One driver, Jackie Stewart, with some calling it “The graveyard”. Over the years this track has claimed the lives of 70 professional drivers and bruised the egos of hundreds more.

The Nordschleife has a huge elevation change. The difference between the lowest and highest points is 985 feet (300.2 metres), and this occurs abruptly and suddenly. In places the contour on some corners is reversed and it is common to see cars airborne. A section called “The Fox Hole” features five sweeping corners, taken flat out. At the last corner the track goes into a steep downhill descent, followed by a steep elevation producing a G-force in the order of 2.

Of the 154 corners, 90 percent are blind corners, meaning you do not know what is on the end. Some have a very late apex and not what most drivers can ordinarily expect. With so many corners it is almost impossible to learn the circuit. Most racetracks have run off areas but on the Nordschleife. There is less than one metre separating the racetrack from some of the barriers. Anyone who does crash, whether they die or not, becomes responsible for paying for repairs.

A recovery truck is £500. If the track is closed £1350 per hour, replacing each post £39, attendance of armco repair truck £150, etc. The record for an armco repair is £15,000.

This is the racetrack where Jaguar established a garage back in 2012 so they could put, at first, all new models that were to come onto the market. This track has from that time been available to most people who wished to try out their private cars, with very little in the way of rules and regulations but of course with an hourly fee.

Jeremy Clarkson of Top Gear fame famously took a Jaguar S Type diesel to the track and boasted he could record a time of under 10 minutes a lap.

After at least half a dozen attempts he was no where near, having to bail-out on



several corners.

In frustration he appealed to the Manager of the track, a young German girl, who showed him, while he was in the passenger seat that it was possible to run around in under 10 minutes.

In May 2012

passengers could get a ride around the famous track doing a lap in 8 minutes 30 seconds in a Jaguar X-351 which was named the Ring Taxi. This car was based on the Supercharged XJ with Sport Pack option providing 503 bhp and fitted with a roll cage and bucket seats even in the rear. Photos of this car showed how the vinyl graphics on the front mud guard and door had melted from the heat coming off the brakes, after high- speed driving around the track.



Taxis around the world are usually pretty boring, but not two new ones that arrived in May 2018.

They were a Jaguar F Type SVR that has been developed by Jaguar Land Rover Special Vehicle Operations as a 200mph, all-wheel drive supercar. This car is powered by a 5.0-litre supercharged V8 engine producing 575bhp and 516 lb-ft of torque. It has a 0-60mph of 3.5 seconds, enough to scare most passengers.

The second car was a Jaguar XJ575 and is the most powerful XJ ever made in the 50- year history of that model. It is powered by the same engine as the F Type and has a 0-60mph of 4.2 seconds and has a top speed of 186mph.

An onboard high- definition camera will record the entire lap for you to take away. Which ever car you chose, the Jaguar race Taxi will cost £200 for a half hour experience. Jaguar won't charge extra for rear passengers in the case of the XJR575.

In October 2018 visitors to the Nordschleife could now experience the thrill of the fastest production four-door car to lap the legendary circuit as the ultimate XE SV Project 8 has joined the ranks of the Jaguar Race Taxis. Project 8 is the most extreme road-legal Jaguar ever, designed, engineered, and hand assembled by Special Vehicle Operations.



In November 2017 the 600PS 5.0 litre supercharged V8 saloon beat some of the world's fastest coupes and supercars to set a record lap time of 7 minutes 12.23 seconds.

The Jaguar XE with its dynamic design and aluminium monocoque, can sprint from 0-60mph in 3.3 seconds and reach a top speed of 200mph.

An alternative to all this exciting stuff is to sit down and view it all on you tube. With Jaguar tracking in a different direction with electric, will all this Special Vehicle Operations be lost also?

Neville