

## **Interview with BILSTER BERG Managing Director and Project Developer Hans-Jürgen von Glasenapp: "In this crisis, we all stand together!"**

### **Mr von Glasenapp, Covid-19 dominated our lives in 2020. How has the pandemic affected the activities at BILSTER BERG?**

We were able to adapt very quickly and flexibly to this special situation thanks to our spacious facilities and our concept of "rather small but fine events". Shortly after the end of the first lockdown in spring 2020, we were able to welcome our guests back at BILSTER BERG. As it has never been our business model to organize large events, this was an additional advantage and helped us to react quickly to the pandemic.

### **What have been the special challenges for BILSTER BERG during the ongoing pandemic?**

It was certainly a challenge to safely organize events at BILSTER BERG again, both for our guests and with our team. The hygiene concepts were of utmost priority but were possible to implement thanks to the good cooperation with our clients.

In addition, it was essential to adjust operations very quickly during the lockdown periods, thus cutting the running costs. The entire BILSTER BERG team stood together and contributed significantly. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them once again for their huge commitment!

### **What are the economic effects of the pandemic on BILSTER BERG?**

Economically, we have been able to cope well so far. Although we have lost a considerable amount of turnover of approx. 750,000 euros, we were able to implement many customer events during the lockdown-free period. For that, I am very grateful.

The current financial and liquidity situation of the company is secure. The company has positive account balances and liquidity reserves that make it possible to deal with this extraordinary situation. In addition, already implemented cost-cutting measures, such as short-time work or the absorption of external services by the company's own employees, continue. Other expenses are regularly checked as well to save costs preventively.

**What has surprised you most in these difficult times, positively but also negatively?**

The fact that we as the BILSTER BERG team are standing together in these difficult times is what I really appreciate the most. Everyone is moving in the same direction, including the advisory board and the majority of the stakeholders. That is great!

What I find most depressing, however, are the many negative social, economic and, individual effects. Above all, the ongoing unpredictability of how long the pandemic will last is a burden.

**At the end of last year, the BILSTER BERG's application for an adjustment of the emission guideline value at the St. Nikolaus retirement home and hospital in Nieheim was rejected by the Minden Administrative Court. What does this mean for the future of the company?**

Despite this decision by the Minden Administrative Court, we are very well positioned for the future and will continue to develop. The court's decision will not significantly affect the company's successful path. Nevertheless, we maintain that this emission guideline value set for Nieheim cannot be correct. Therefore, we are now examining whether and how we can take action against this decision of the court.

**Are there any special projects you want to tackle this year?**

For me as project developer and managing director of BILSTER BERG, there are two main projects this year, in addition to the every-day work. On the one hand, that is the installation of photovoltaic systems on various buildings of the facility, and on the other hand, to continue the project planning of guesthouses as overnight accommodation for our customers on-site.

**What do you wish for in 2021?**

I wish for the pandemic to end quickly and for normality to return as soon as possible. Furthermore, I look forward to continuing the successful development of activities at BILSTER BERG.

**Can you give a forecast on the development of BILSTER BERG beyond 2021?**

Despite the current pandemic, I am very optimistic about the future. Thanks to the important strategic reorientation in 2015/2016, BILSTER BERG was able to reposition itself in line with the target groups. The brand relaunch at that time raised our profile and made us more successful. The automotive industry highly appreciates our facility. Customers rate our services extremely positively because it clearly stands out from other facilities in terms of appearance, atmosphere, readiness to provide service, friendliness of the staff, and the price-performance ratio. As a result, BILSTER BERG is appreciated as an exceptional location.

In addition, the company has entered into important strategic service partnerships in order to expand the overall offer for our customers. The already mentioned "guesthouses" project will help to complete our

offer. Thus, we will add "accommodation" to the already existing offer pillars of "driving experience", "food & drink" and "technical support". Consequently, BILSTER BERG would be much more independent, able to attract new customer groups as well as expand and stabilize existing customer relationships.

For the coming years, the success of BILSTER BERG will depend heavily on the automotive industry and its transformation processes. However, in any change process, there is always a great opportunity too, which BILSTER BERG will certainly not miss!

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**Pictures:** <https://1drv.ms/u/s!AjW9Dfe3cfMPhDBjqK8jOe-Fibcq?e=r6UJvy>

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## **About BILSTER BERG**

Built on an ammunition depot of the NATO Rhine Army in Bad Driburg, approximately 200 km East of Cologne, BILSTER BERG opened on June 1, 2013. After a planning period of 7 years, this was the first time in 80 years that a new track started operating in Germany. Formula 1 architect Hermann Tilke and German rally legend Walter Röhrl were significantly involved in the planning and construction. However, BILSTER BERG was not primarily designed for use as a racetrack. Car manufacturers often rent BILSTER BERG as a test and presentation track. Due to the white label principle of the track, it is also often used for product presentations and by film crews.

Part of BILSTER BERG is also an Off-Road Course, a club house, the restaurant TURN ONE as well as a Dynamic Area offering possibilities for wet-track testing for example. The project cost 34 million euros and was fully privately financed by 180 shareholders.

All shareholders have the opportunity to drive on the track themselves on selected dates.

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