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"When something needs doing, neither of them makes any excuses. Neel and André are always prepared to work on themselves – and with great enthusiasm," said the Austrian. Just like the drivers have kept in touch, there has been just as much active communication with their trainer. During the coronavirus pandemic Lotterer and Jani mainly worked out in their home gyms. They sent their training data to their coach via the internet for Fink to analyse from afar so that he could modify the workout plans if necessary.

Routine sport

In addition to physical exertion, Formula E is mainly about maintaining focus and concentration, meaning that drivers need to be especially fit when it comes to endurance. In the main training phase, which usually reaches its peak shortly before the start of a motorsport season, the drivers train five times a week, for about six to seven hours a day. "After it was clear that the Formula E season would be put on hold, we increased the intensity of our workouts again up until mid-July, meaning that André and Neel are well prepared for Berlin," said Fink.

No travel and a lot of time at home were the perfect conditions for that. The training programme usually starts with several hours of endurance training in the morning, followed by strength training after lunch. This is usually finished off by honing coordination skills. After the coronavirus restrictions were eased, Fink visited Jani in Switzerland and Lotterer in France, for an intensive week of training with each of them.

Fink: "Only when you stay in the flow and the feeling is coherent does everything fall into place." Visualising also plays a major role, and that is mainly practiced when working with the simulator. "Racing drivers create a type of film in their mind. They drive the track virtually, internalise braking points, for example, and in doing so visualise every detail of the track in their mind," explained Fink. Sim racing is another perfect mental training tool for them, which wasn't neglected in recent weeks thanks to the ABB Formula E 'Race at Home Challenge' and the virtual 24-hour race at Le Mans. "Even a small mistake is punished in Esports racing. Virtual races require a high level of fine motor skills, whereas real-world racing also requires gross motor skills. The external influences in the race car give the drivers better feedback in their bodies," said Fink.

Performance is the main goal

Ultimately one thing matters to every racing driver: winning. In Berlin there will be plenty of opportunities to be up there at the front, with six races in nine days. Fink doesn't believe that the compact format will increase the pressure significantly. "Pressure is always there. When something doesn't go as hoped for, the drivers have the opportunity to do it better the next day. An athlete always wants to perform at their best, so the compact format is more of an advantage than having to wait a few weeks for the next race." Once a racing driver puts on their helmet, the only thing on their mind is fast lap times. Any thoughts about the coronavirus pandemic and the strict safety concept on site will be suppressed while they are in the car at least. Lotterer and Jani are well prepared for their appearances in Berlin, thanks as always to their shared trainer.

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