

Porsche slalom on ice

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23/02/2017 A certain amount of driving skill – without assistance from an electronic control system – is still the safest way to control a vehicle on slippery road surfaces. Nobody can explain this better than World Rally Championship winner Walter Röhrl.

Porsche offers its customers driver safety training sessions as part of its Driving Experience Winter course. The experience also includes exclusive events for small groups instructed by Walter Röhrl, two-time World Rally Championship winner and long-standing ambassador for Porsche. One of these training events recently took place in the idyllic region of Lungau, in the Austrian state of Salzburg.

The training grounds in the beautiful Muhrtal valley close to the town of Tamsweg provided the perfect conditions: icy, cold, sheltered and with three different routes available in the shadow of a high, smooth rock face. Actor Richy Müller, known for his role as police inspector in the Stuttgart-based crime drama Tatort, was the first to dance through the slippery course, performing a 180-degree spin, but without the all-wheel drive active.

Safety training session with Walter Röhrl

Walter Röhrl, wrapped up warm and looking like a polar explorer, stood in the centre of the icy track, giving the drivers practical advice via radio. First, the participants had to learn the difference between understeering and oversteering. Then they had to tackle an icy slalom, practise braking and finally perform evasive manoeuvres without using the brakes.

In short, Röhrl's tips were: “You are all going too fast! Adjust your speed and drive more slowly. Reducing your speed will realign the load by transferring the weight forwards. This gives the front axle more grip and reduces the weight at the rear. A controlled touch on the accelerator will counteract oversteering. Any use of the pedals must be combined with a movement of the steering wheel, or vice versa. Early counter-steering prevents you losing control when you are correcting oversteer. Be careful and do not overestimate your abilities."

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