

# NÜRBURGRING CORNER ANALYSIS

## Bellof Esses to Start/Finish

Hey Everyone. We are getting closer and closer (kind of like the Armco coming out of Kallenhard) to driving on the real thing. Are you feeling more comfortable with the place? I realize that is a relative term when referring to the Nurburgring. Have you all been doing your visualizing? Are you able to imagine one entire lap of the Ring? If you can you are preparing well. If you can't, do what you can. Don't get stuck anywhere. Finish the lap in your mind then go back to the videos or these corner analyses and fill in the blanks. Previous trips have made it very clear that the people that did the most prep had a much easier time of it when they put the rubber to the track. Do the best that your schedule allows. Let us know if there are any sticking points.

We are going to cover some distance in this section so buckle up. This will include the front straight, though, so not too tough. In our last episode, we had just completed the Bellof Esses.



As I said, the rumble strip is usable, but hold onto your dentures. It is pretty rough. Looking ahead, we are approaching Schwalbenschwanz, or swallow's tail. It was named that because it looks like that from above. Hey, by this time they were running out of names for all of these corners. It includes a quick right-hander followed by a slow left.



Coming into the braking zone, this is one of those corners I always feel like I over-slow. It is peculiar too, in that there is almost a corner before the corner. You come into it fast, but a medium brake is enough to make it through.



It is difficult to see, but there is a peak in the track that looks like an apex. Don't get suckered in like I always do. The actual apex is just beyond that, where the GTR is.



Coming into the actual corner, on a balanced throttle carrying some good speed.



At the apex, we can now see the left-hander up ahead. So, between here and there we need to slow down, grab a lower gear and transition the car to a left-hander. The trick here is don't let the car track-out of the right-hander to the extreme left. The left-hander is a very late apex corner and if you track-out to the left it will make the left-hander...well...less than ideal.





So, we have tracked out to about mid-track and are bringing the car back to the right, a firm brake pedal and lower gear is needed.



This is a deceptively late turn-in. Probably somewhere at the end of the curbing or just beyond. This corner can catch you. You have almost finished the lap so it is easy to get sloppy. Adding to that it seems like there is always a lot of cars congesting this area. Hold your focus here.





Coming into the apex, pretty straight forward from here. We are heading to the Kleine Karussell



You can give the car a squirt of gas, but you will be back on the brakes to slow for this corner. The corner name translates into the Little Carousel because, well, that is sort of what it is, a little version of the Karussell. Another corner of concrete slabs, but much shorter than the other. You basically dive into this thing, hold it for a bit and then jump right back out. But you do have to slow significantly for it. The braking zone is just ahead of this picture.



The turn-in point is just short of the end of the curbing. The corner is very cambered, but tight, so it is not a good place to try to maximize your entry speed.



Into the corner here. Notice that, unlike the big Karussell, you do use the asphalt here. The exit of this corner is really rough.





Getting ready to exit the corner. The exit really unbalances the car. Go to power carefully and free up the car to track out to the right a bit until the car settles. It is a common place to see people rotate the car and hit the wall on the left.



You have exited the Kleine Karussell and are getting the car collected from being thrown around a bit. Notice in the above picture the peak just ahead. You are in a turn, hard on the power with your brain on the front straight coming up. Again, I have seen many spins here and also motorcycles down during Touristenfahrten. Be aware of it. Just try to straighten the steering a bit as you go over it.





Heading up to Galgenkopf, which translated means gallows head. This is where they used to hang people back in the day. Lining up on the left side of the track, you will likely be in fourth gear and moving quickly. The track heads uphill slightly giving the car more grip at turn-in. A touch of the brakes just before turn-in seems to help here, too. Turn-in is about a car length before the end of the curbing on the left.



You are approaching the turn-in point here, on a balanced throttle. You can just see the first apex curbing on the right. This, obviously, is one of the most important corners on the track, as it leads onto a very long front straight. It is not an easy corner to master.



At the initial apex. At this point you want to free up the car to track out to the edge of the white line on the left. The corner is kind of a constant radius, but not completely.



We have tracked out to the edge of the track, and you are anxious to get into the power here, but patience will be rewarded. Up ahead, on the left, is the marshal's station at marker "186."



Notice the dramatic elevation change as you approach the turn in point ahead. Just when you want to be going to power the track falls away dramatically, decreasing traction.



Calling this a turn-in point is generous. You are just going to slightly tighten your steering at the fence to bring it down to the apex, which is around the corner. Again, you can really see how the track drops and goes off camber slightly.



This is why you have to go to power judiciously (I love that word) coming out of Galgenkopf. Use a long apex, you can go to full power about half-way around the painted curbing.



Half-way around the curbing and you can see how the track rises to meet the car as you add power.





From here allow the car to track-out. Take a deep breath (maybe several) as you accelerate down the front straight. Don't forget to take a quick look at the Schloß (no that is not a B. Think two s's. Yes, you get a German lesson here too... you're welcome) on the hill to the right. Check your gauges and thank the car for staying in one piece. If it is Touristenfahrten, your lap is basically done. Move right, slow down to enter the parking area. If it is a track day you will be mentally gearing up for the very fast turn under the bridge ahead going into the Tiergarten compression. So that's Galgenkopf. True, many have choked here, but if you keep your head on straight, you will be fine. I'm sure you will all get the hang of it. (I could go on like this all day but won't. Really. That would be very knotty.) Okay, keep at it. If there is any noose (really, that is the last one) or questions from your NECK of the woods let us know. (Keep this up and you will need to get a gag order. Ha Ha!)

## Galgenkopf to Tiergarten

For ease of use you are getting this section on top of the other one. Let's finish this beast. You, of course, didn't choke going through Galgenkopf, so have a serious head of steam going down the front straight past the staging area. Keep the car in the center of the track, but watch your mirrors for overtaking cars coming up on your left. You are looking up the hill and can see the bridge where you know you will need to turn in and head down into the Tiergarten compression. The car you are in could easily be reaching its top speed, if you are so inclined.



This is where you need to be very conscious of cars coming out of the staging area, and the speed differentials that are possible. You should be able to see them entering the track on the right. You could be doing 160 mph or more, they will be doing 30. Not such a big deal here, but after the bridge it is a very big deal.



Approaching the bridge, if traffic allows, move to the right to set up for the turn. As you gain experience here you can still be hard on the power.



The turn-in point, which is really a smooth, easy bend, is just beyond the Antoniusbuche sign at the “199” marker. It doesn’t take much as you are really moving here. And because you are going to be heading down hill, you will continue to pick up speed if you stay in the throttle.



You will know you got the turn-in point right if you go under the midpoint of the bridge. They even put a white dot on the bridge to show you the midpoint.





Bring the car down to the apex. Be sure to bring it in close, but obviously it is not a good thing to touch the curbing. If a car has come out of the staging area this is the most dangerous point. You are going like mad down this hill and have gotten to this point only to find out there is a car to the far right (your track-out area) that is doing exactly half the speed you are. I once followed a car through here on its bumper. It tracked out to the right and then leapt to the left revealing a much (MUCH) slower car right in front of me. I just missed going up the guys exhaust. So be very aware of this possibility coming through this corner. There have been some serious accidents here. If you are coming out of the staging area, it is a good idea to get up to speed as fast as you can.



So, you have survived that piece and are now looking down the barrel of this compression. It would be fine if the track just went straight after the compression, but then that would not be very Nurburgring-like would it. A suggestion...slow the car before you get to the compression. Someone (I can't imagine who) went through this without slowing and, well, let's just say this person was very busy after the compression.



If it were just dealing with the compression, that would be bad enough. Coming out of this thing the car will get very light. If you aren't already set up for the left, you may not make the left. This is a very common place for Touristenfahrten accidents.



This picture shows a lot. We are in the compression now. If you look closely you should be able to see the gouges in the road from the cars bottoming out here. As the car lightens up coming out of the compression, you have to get it turning. But there's more.



The car is pointed well here. Just a few feet farther you can see a series of undulations, with a good size bump at the apex of the left-hand corner. There is just a lot going on to upset the balance of the car and throw you left or right into the green stuff. The take-home here is to slow before you get to the compression and you will be fine. You can still carry quite a bit of speed through here, just not front straight speed.



Okay, you made it through and are heading toward a right/left/right/left/right combination that leads onto the start/finish straight. You are going to be slowing dramatically, but I am always surprised the amount of speed you can carry through this section. You will want to begin braking as you enter the right-hander up ahead.





You are braking and shifting down from your highest gear to 3<sup>rd</sup> (and maybe even 2<sup>nd</sup> depending on the car). You want to aim for the corner of the Armco up ahead on the left.



Yes, that close to the Armco. You are continuing to brake hard and will use all the road and then some beyond the barrier on the left to set up for the right-hander.



The right-hander. Yes, this curb is usable. A little squirt of power and then back on the brakes. This and the next few corners are really slippery in the rain.



Heading into the penultimate corner. On the right you can see the entrance to the old pits.





Into the final corner of the Nürburgring. Try to get close to the Armco on the right but be sure to leave the mirror intact.



Look familiar? Yes, this is the Start/Finish straight. You were here about nine minutes ago. Now you know everything there is to know about the track. (That's a nice fantasy). So obviously this is a lot of information. You can only take in so much. Go over it, drive the sim, watch videos, learn the corner names. It will eventually start to gel. Realize your brain is taking in more than you think. Do something every day. It is well worth the effort. We look forward to the smile on your face after your first session. In the end, HAVE FUN with this. Don't make it a job. You will learn more that way and have a better time in the process. Good luck!!!