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Freiburg Robots Win Football Tournament



*Thrills and spills at the RoboCup German Open Final
Copyright: Robocup German Open*

Over 150 humanoid robot teams from 13 countries faced off at the RoboCup German Open, which was held from 16 to 21 April 2007 at the Hannover Messe industrial fair. In the final, the Freiburg NimbRo Team trounced the Darmstadt Dribblers 15:0.

Racing after the orange ball with jerky motions, Paul, Franz and Gerd push themselves to the limit to score. The players, which are being cheered on by a crowd of enthusiastic supporters, are humanoid robots around half a meter tall. The friendly stand-off is a showcase of sophisticated technology, as the object is for the robots to play a match according to standard football rules without human intervention. Cutting-edge computer science, artificial intelligence and robotics technology are the key to success in this sport.

Baden-Württemberg has had an outstanding record in the many matches to date. The Freiburg NimbRo Team and its "coach", Dr. Sven Behnke of the University of Freiburg Computer Science Institute, are the reigning World Champions and were runners-up twice before that. Paul, Franz and Gerd not only won the tournament in Hanover, but also proved themselves in an obstacle walk, passing tasks and a slalom drill. They are now "training" for the international RoboCup 2007, which will be held in Atlanta in July.