



Inner Detector software workshop at Ringberg castle

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"Marvellous" - that's what you hear from participants when they recall last week's Inner Detector software workshop at Ringberg castle. It was the second of its kind, preceded by the famous Ringberg 2006 workshop.

As such, it is on its way of becoming an ATLAS tradition. The remote and stunning location on Ringberg mountain overlooking lake Tegernsee in the Bavarian "Oberland" close to the Austrian border certainly plays its role in making these workshops successful. "The atmosphere is stimulating and unique among the workshops and conferences I know of," says Jochen Schieck, head of the local organization committee.



Nearly the entire Inner Detector software community assembled to look over each other's shoulders and to identify achievements and shortcomings of the present ATLAS Inner Detector software. For one week, task lists were prioritized and the status and readiness of the offline software chain were assessed in the light of the upcoming challenges.



During the daytime sessions as well as the late night round table discussions many people got deeper insights and a clearer picture of the future of the ATLAS Inner Detector software and the work which is still left to be done. Beer and snacks helped to keep spirits up during late hours of brainstorming.

Beautiful Ringberg castle was not only the conference site, but also provided the accommodation for most of the participants, who enjoyed the comfort of 20th century aristocratic life. Also the catering was exquisite: breakfast buffet and three-course meals for lunch and dinner left no culinary wish unfulfilled. Already at lunch refreshing Bavarian beer, brewed less than 3 km away from the castle, was served

As typical for this season in Germany, weather conditions changed quite drastically during the five days of the workshop. While everybody still arrived in perfect sunshine, the first night in the castle brought snow. "Did you order this weather to keep participants focused on their work?", Daniel Froidevaux asked the local organizers laughingly.

Luckily it cleared up again after the third day so that Andi Salzburger of the tracking group could be overheard saying "I'm already looking forward to our big night out!" The last evening of the workshop was memorable in many ways. It started off with a guided tour through the castle by Mr. Hörmann, manager of Ringberg castle. During his explanations about the history of the building he also led the crowd into various participants' bedrooms, which are kept in their original state since the castle was turned into a conference site of the Max Planck Society. Afterwards, a true Bavarian buffet introduced participants to local delicacies such as ox tongue and Obatzda before leaving to Tegernsee brewery. This place started off as a monastery in the 8th century and nowadays is still the center of civilization at the lake, hosting church, high school and brewery all in one building.

In total, the workshop was a big success. The concluding speaker Richard Hawkings summed it up nicely: "After 15+ years of work, we are nearly there. But the last 5% is the hardest - so keep working! I'm looking forward to the Ringberg workshop 2010 and the data we will have by then."

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