



FIRA RoboWorld Cup 2006: Robot-Soccer Players From All Over The World Fight For The Title

Whereas a striker of flesh and blood needs condition, liveliness, cleverness and a certain amount of “goal hunger” to be successful, robot-soccer calls for a mature hardware as well as correct programming. During the FIRA RoboWorld Cup 2006 of the Universität Dortmund which takes place between the 30. June and the 3. July in the Dortmund Westfalenhallen (hall 2N), students and scientists from all over the world fight for the world title.

The proximity to the Dortmund World Cup Stadium and the integration of the Dortmund Fan Festival guarantees the real “stadium atmosphere”. From the 9. June to the 9. July the Dortmund Westfalenhallen offer a daily program all about soccer. Live broadcasts of the World Cup games and concerts of national and international artists are part of it. The Fan Camp with places to sleep for about 4000 soccer fans can also be found in one of the halls.

The FIRA RoboWorld Cup already takes place for the 11th time and gets great attention worldwide. In the 2005 World Cup in Singapore 83 teams from 16 countries took part.

During the tournament in Dortmund robots of different sizes and classes are competing against each other. The so-called “MiroSot Class” has the highest number of participants. This is about a cubical robot with a side length of 7.5 cm. The maximum speed for the metal athletes is 3 meters per second. Batteries supply them with power. A camera above the field observes the game and a computer on the sidelines takes over picture analysis, strategy planning and the control of the soccer-robots.

The teams have five or eleven players and their field is 4.40 by 2.80 meters. The minimum playtime is two halves of 5 minutes each. After that the batteries of the robots are empty. The rules do not include either offside nor hands but free kick and a kind of penalty kick. Even robots do not always play fair. A human referee on the sidelines ensures a correct game.

To make their team win the students have to master tasks from totally different fields of science. Dr. Norbert Jesse from the Chair Computer Science I at the Universität Dortmund underlines the versatility of robot-soccer: “Robotics is a very interdisciplinary field where methods and technologies from mechanical engineering (hardware design, electronic drives, fine mechanics), electrical engineering (control technique, microelectronics, sensors), neurology (analysis of





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biological models) and computer science (intelligent software) are applied”. According to Jesse the soccer games are a very challenging test field for the development of autonomous intelligent robot systems. “What looks like pure fun at first has become a worldwide accepted scientific “test field” in the course of time“.

Apart from the actual soccer games, a scientific congress is also part of the FIRA RoboWorld Cup 2006. At the “FIRA Robot World Congress” the scientific and technological progresses in robotics are presented and discussed. The applications and developments in the fields entertainment, education and personal computers are going to be in the fore. The congress takes place in the Congress Centre of the Westfalenhallen.

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