

Hockenheim, 20 April 2007

## Motorsport

### 2007 DTM season starts with best time for Audi

- **Mattias Ekström quickest in first test**
- **Extremely close results in Hockenheim season opener**
- **Colourful mix of all vehicle generations**

The 2007 DTM's first day of practice has given spectators a foretaste of what to expect in the season opener at Hockenheim: extremely close results and a colourful mix of all vehicle generations.

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The first top result of the year was achieved by Audi driver Mattias Ekström: The Swede in the new Red Bull Audi A4 DTM of Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline was the quickest driver in the first test session in the morning. In the afternoon, when the Audi drivers concentrated on racing simulations, Timo Scheider in second place was the best Audi driver.

In the afternoon, 19 of the 20 drivers were within a single second of each other. The top four positions were occupied by vehicles from all three model years, which in the DTM compete different basic weights – the older the car, the lighter it is permitted to be.

Things will really get serious for the first time in qualifying on Saturday. ARD will broadcast the session live from Hockenheim on “Das Erste” starting at 1:30 p.m. (local time).

### Quotes after Friday's tests

**Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** “We saw an extreme mix of three model years today. With our current cars we did three long runs. Two of them were pretty good. Now we're going to compile the data from all the vehicles and work out the set-up for the important practice on Saturday. I don't think that everything was shown today. That makes the qualifying even more interesting.”

**Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #3)**

**1st place / 7th place, 1m 34.761s**

“It was a great thrill to be driving under the same conditions against our rivals again for the first time. We made some good steps forwards today – exactly as we’d been planning. So far so good. Now we have to sort everything and concentrate on qualifying.”

**Timo Scheider (Gebrauchtwagen:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM #8)**

**5th place / 2nd place, 1m 34.787s**

“For me, it was a positive Friday. Not only because of the result but mainly because all the changes went into the right direction. We improved my Audi A4 DTM in both practice sessions so now I’m able to say on Friday evening: I’m really satisfied and optimistic for tomorrow.”

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**Tom Kristensen (Siemens Audi A4 DTM #7)**

**3rd place / 6th place, 1m 34.920s**

“It’s great sitting in the car again – finally – after this long winter break. I think everyone was very excited and anxious to see how close the field would be together. And if this was any kind of indication today, the fans can really look forward to a very exciting season. All that counts is Saturday afternoon, and that’s why we’re in for one of those typical, long nights with the engineers and lots of data.”

**Alexandre Prémat (Audi Bank Audi A4 DTM #17)**

**4th place / 14th place, 1m 34.931s**

“In the first session, things were going well straight away. We’ve already found a good balance for Saturday’s qualifying. I’ve got a lot of confidence in the car. The second test was okay as well. I think that I can further reduce the gap to the quickest car by the time we go into qualifying. It’s been a good day on which we learned a lot along with the engineers.”

**Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #4)**

**9th place / 8th place, 1m 35.045s**

“It’s a great feeling that the season is finally starting again. The first official day of the year was quite alright as far as the times were concerned. I’m not one-hundred-percent satisfied with the set-up of my A4 yet but we’ve still

got a bit of time. Now I can hardly wait for the action to continue tomorrow.”

**Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM #16)**

**7th place / 18th place, 1m 35.073s**

“My time at the end of the day was the result of deciding not to run on any more new tyres. We took the set of used tyres from this morning in order to be able to concentrate on the long run and to work on the set-up. We saved some tyres for Saturday. I’m anxious to see if this will pay off.”

**Adam Carroll (Futurecom Audi A4 DTM #20)**

**16th place / 9th place, 1m 35.105s**

“In the first session I did a lot of laps very early in order to get to know the track. We tried several things. In the afternoon, the practice session was going a little better. I only used one set of tyres, and everything felt okay with them. I’m hoping that we’ll be able to improve some more tomorrow to squeeze out a few more tenths of a second.”

**Lucas Luhr (Philips Audi A4 DTM #12)**

**11th place / 17th place, 1m 35.224s**

“I definitely had a positive day even though this is not yet reflected in the result. But we know the reasons: Things are going well on old tyres, but on a new set of tyres we don’t manage to set faster times. We know why this is and are hoping to put a stop to it by tomorrow. Then we’ll be further towards the front as well.”

**Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM #11)**

**17th place / 19th place, 1m 35.700s**

“I’m very unhappy. I’d been hoping for better results after the tests and cannot understand why we’re so far in the back, because for my team-mate Lucas Luhr things weren’t going much better than for me. Now we’re going to have to work hard to find out what might be the reasons.”

**Vanina Ickx (Futurecom Audi A4 DTM #21)**

**18th place / 20th place, 1m 36.326s**

“It’s great being back at Hockenheim for the first race of the season. It’s an exciting feeling to sit in the car again. The weekend started well on this sunny day. The car is running perfectly. Now I’ve got to find my rhythm in order to drive a good race.”

**Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline):**

“There’s one thing that hasn’t changed as yet another season is being kicked off: Friday remains our most intensive day of work. We’ve tried to work out all the findings we need with our four vehicles and are very happy with the result. Now I’m looking forward to tomorrow – my guess is that we might be seeing one of the closest qualifying sessions in a long time.”

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**Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix):** “The first test went the way we’d been hoping and expecting. Alexandre (Prémat) quickly found his pace and set good times. Christian (Abt) was also pretty satisfied. In the afternoon, though, we no longer achieved the times with the long runs we’d been shooting for. Now we need to find out why this was the case.”

**Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg):** “Today wasn’t exactly to our liking. We’re still trying to figure out what it is that’s missing in the equation. We’re going to analyse the situation carefully.”

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