

Hockenheim, 27 October 2006

## Motorsport

### Abt and Ekström quickest Audi drivers

- **Changing weather in DTM finale at Hockenheim**
- **Mattias Ekström only 188 thousandths behind best time**
- **Five Audi drivers in top ten on Friday**

In the DTM's final round, Christian Abt and Mattias Ekström were the quickest Audi drivers on Friday. Christian Abt in the Playboy Audi A4 DTM set the morning's third-best time in the rain. In the afternoon, Mattias Ekström in the Red Bull Audi A4 DTM, who finished in second place, was the quickest Audi driver. The Swede missed the day's best time set by Bruno Spengler by merely 188 thousandths of a second.

AUDI AG  
Kommunikation  
85045 Ingolstadt  
[www.audi.com](http://www.audi.com)

Changing weather conditions during both 85-minute test sessions made the work of the teams more difficult. Following rain showers in the morning, the tarmac only started drying off towards the end of the second test. Most of the Audi drivers used the last 35 minutes for long runs to find the optimum set-up for the race.

As usual, the cards won't be put on the table until qualifying on Saturday (live coverage on "Das Erste" starting at 2 p.m. local time). With five Audi and five Mercedes cars in the top ten, fans can look forward to a thrilling shoot-out for the best grid positions, in which weather might be playing a crucial part as well.

In the Audi customer team Futurecom TME the Swede Thed Björk will again stand in for injured Nicolas Kiesa from Denmark. Audi Sport Team Rosberg's mechanics had to do without a lunch break on Friday: after Frank Stippler went off the track, the crew managed to repair the damage to the front section of his S line A4 in time for the second session.

### Quotes after Friday's tests

**Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** "Track conditions differed a lot during both tests. In the second session the circuit was dry and continuously

building up grip. We used the time to complete long runs which were quite good. Our cars used different set-ups. Now we're consolidating the various ideas."

**Mattias Ekström**

**Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #5**

**7th place / 2nd place, 1m 35.180s**

"In wet conditions this morning we just checked proven set-ups again. More exciting was the afternoon when we tried a few new approaches that worked well. That's why I'm looking forward to tomorrow."

**Martin Tomczyk**

**Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #4**

**9th place / 4th place, 1m 35.348s**

"This was a successful Friday, although in the wet this morning it had been off to a somewhat difficult start. In the afternoon we did a long run, but then had to pare down the programme slightly due to the changing conditions. I can drive this weekend with a little less pressure than usual because my position in the Championship has been determined already. Nevertheless, I definitely want to clinch a great result before the winter break."

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**Pierre Kaffer**

**Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Castrol Audi A4 DTM #14**

**14th place / 5th place, 1m 35.437s**

"In the morning we took a careful approach with our set-up and sorted a few things for the rain. In the afternoon we worked for the race. My long run was quite alright. We can build on that when doing the set-up."

**Heinz-Harald Frentzen**

**Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Veltins Audi A4 DTM #6**

**6th place / 9th place, 1m 35.641s**

"Today, we were exposed to everything between dry and wet – in other words the kind of weather Hockenheim is known for. We tried out the set-ups for both conditions. Unfortunately, we didn't have sufficient time to do enough detailed work for each version or to drive a long run. That's not a real problem, though, because we already know Hockenheim a little."

**Timo Scheider****Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Gebrauchtwagen plus Audi A4 DTM #16****8th place / 10th place, 1m 35.681s**

“Due to the weather we didn’t drive all that much today. We tried a lot of things on the wet track, and discarded a few. In dry conditions we were heading in the right direction. On a set of new tyres I made a small mistake that cost me two tenths of a second. The day wasn’t bad but I’m not satisfied yet.”

**Frank Stippler****Audi Sport Team Rosberg, S line Audi A4 DTM #15****19th place / 12th place, 1m 35.930s**

“The day ended without serious consequences after all. Although my car wasn’t yet in top shape in the afternoon after my accident this morning, the team did manage to repair it very well again in the short time. The boys did a super job. Now we’re going to look at Saturday morning in order to make up a bit more time.”

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**Tom Kristensen****Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Siemens Audi A4 DTM #7****4th place / 13th place, 1m 36.004s**

“Today we had four seasons on a single day. That’s why team work was very important for us to be able to try all kinds of set-up variants on our cars. Because I didn’t go out on new tyres at the end of the practice session this afternoon, I’m not giving too much thought to my position – but most definitely to the guy at the very top of the time monitor: Bruno Spengler, my rival in the battle for the second place in the Championship.”

**Thed Björk****Futurecom TME, Futurecom Audi A4 DTM #19****12th place / 15th place, 1m 36.430s**

“This was a good Friday. For the first time, I drove a DTM car in the rain. Of course towards the end it was all about clocking the best time on slicks. We’re also working hard on the car’s balance. It’s a great thing that I’m able to compete in the DTM so soon again.”

**Christian Abt**

**Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Playboy Audi A4 DTM #12**

**3rd place / 16th place, 1m 36.562s**

“We did a lot of testing and are well sorted already. We’ve got solutions for the rain and during the long run we gathered lots of data we need to analyse in the evening. I think we’re well set for tomorrow.”

**Vanina Ickx**

**Futurecom TME, Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM #20**

**20th place / 20th place, 1m 37.464s**

“It was quite a normal Friday. Due to the wet track our programme started on rain tyres. Unfortunately we lost time because of a small problem with the car.”

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**Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline):** “Today we only had 35 minutes to work on a dry set-up. We drove several programmes and need to sort everything first. I think it’ll be tight at the front yet again.”

**Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix):** “In the first test we tried to find a set-up for the wet track. In the dry we were even able to drive a long run with Pierre (Kaffer). We’re not really unsatisfied at all. We’re still lacking a bit of speed, but we were consistent.”

**Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg):** “We’re still playing with the set-up. With Frank (Stippler) – following his excursion this morning – things were going quite alright again. With Timo (Scheider), as well, we’re in good shape, but we do need to get a bit faster.”

**Communication Motorsport**

**Telephone +49 (0)841 89 34200, fax +49 (0)841 89 38617**

**E-Mail [motorsport-media@audi.de](mailto:motorsport-media@audi.de)**

**Photographs, sound bites and additional information on the Internet:  
[www.audi-motorsport.info](http://www.audi-motorsport.info) (Accreditation necessary)**