

Communications Motorsport

Jürgen Pippig

Tel: +49 (0)841 89 34200

E-mail: juergen.pippig@audi.de

www.audi-motorsport.info

Daniel Schuster

Tel: +49 (0)841 89 38009

E-mail: daniel2.schuster@audi.de

Audi A5 DTM before its racing debut

- **DTM season opens at Hockenheimring on April 29**
- **DTM debut of junior racer Adrien Tambay**
- **Audi with youngest driver line-up of the three manufacturers**

Ingolstadt/Hockenheim, April 20, 2012 – Exactly nine months or 275 days after its roll-out, the event where Audi Sport’s youngest baby will begin to run in earnest is now coming up. On April 29, 2012, the new Audi A5 DTM will go into its first race at the Hockenheimring.

Audi has already managed two impressive showings at season openers this year. With the Audi R18 TDI, Audi Sport Team Joest won the opening round of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) in the middle of March. On the Easter weekend, the WRT customer team was triumphant with the new Audi R8 LMS ultra at the first race of the FIA GT1 World Championship.

Now, the eagerly awaited DTM season opener, which marks the beginning of a new era for the popular touring car racing series, is following suit. For the first time since 2003, the DTM is racing with coupe cars. And for the first time in 20 years, the three big German premium manufacturers – Audi, BMW and Mercedes-Benz – are competing against each other again.

Despite several joint track tests – most recently at Valencia, Spain, and at the Hockenheimring – the relative strengths have not really been determined so far. Which of the competitors has done the best job of developing the new DTM vehicle generation will only become obvious – at the earliest – in the first qualifying event – and 24 hours later at the first race covering a distance of nearly 175 kilometers (both live on “Das Erste”).

Eight new cars in the field

Audi is fielding a total of eight newly assembled A5 DTM cars at Hockenheim. This means that Audi Sport even before the first race of the year has won a minor race:

the race against time. Finishing all eight cars and the associated spare parts on time was a major logistical feat that could only be accomplished by a huge effort on the part of the whole Audi squad, the three partner teams, Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Audi Sport Team Phoenix and Audi Sport Team Rosberg, and the suppliers.

DTM debut of Adrien Tambay

Adrien Tambay in particular can be pleased with the outcome, as it allows the 21-year-old Frenchman to make his DTM debut as early as at the season opener at the Hockenheimring – the track on which his father, Patrick Tambay, won the German Formula 1 Grand Prix in 1982 at the wheel of a Ferrari.

The youngster is the only newcomer to the current Audi driver line-up which – with an average age of 27 – is the youngest squad of the three manufacturers.

For the brand's newly developed DTM cars, the Hockenheimring was a good track at past events. The last three models won their maiden races there in 2007, 2008 and 2009. In 2010 and 2011, the technology in the DTM was frozen.

Quotes by the officials

Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “The new DTM era with new Technical Regulations and Germany's three premium manufacturers united in a championship event – that's something the fans can really look forward to. We developed attractive race cars that not only look superb and dynamic, but which are quick as well and that can deliver a tremendous spectacle. Obviously, we'll be doing everything within our means to ensure that our new Audi A5 DTM leaves a particularly good impression.”

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): “After a long winter, we're very much looking forward to the new DTM season. We actively prepared for it and have tried to improve our structure and processes in any situation in order to be well set for the big competition with Mercedes-Benz and BMW. Those who know us are well aware of the fact that we're always eager to squeeze out the maximum in terms of performance. We really like the new Audi A5 DTM. I'm hoping for us to be at the far front with it after qualifying at Hockenheim.”

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): We haven't had such a high level of suspense in the DTM in years. Nobody knows where they stand before the

first race. As a team, we're highly motivated but can't really tell yet whether we're good enough as a whole. We've been making every effort to gel with our new driver package to keep from having any kind of 'friction losses'. I think that'll allow us to show what we showed last year too: that we're among the front runners."

Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg): "Everyone in Audi Sport Team Rosberg is looking forward to the first race with the new Audi A5 DTM – a car that's not just great in terms of looks. We augmented our staff in the winter and were involved in the development work with the A5 right from the beginning. That gives us completely different prerequisites than we had in previous years. And our two uncut diamonds, Filipe (Albuquerque) and Edo (Mortara), received some fine polishing in their first DTM season."

Facts and quotes by the Audi drivers

Filipe Albuquerque (26/P), TV Movie Audi A5 DTM #22 (Audi Sport Team Rosberg)

- Took German lessons at the Audi Academy in Ingolstadt during the winter
- Is fully concentrating on the DTM in 2012

"I'm expecting an even fiercer competition than before. A manufacturer and additional drivers have joined the series. That's good for the fans but also for us drivers. On position 14, you're no longer at the rear of the grid but right in the middle. Naturally, the air is getting even thinner. To be the best, absolutely everything's got to a fit to a T. But that's how we've come to know the DTM – and that's what people value in the DTM."

Mattias Ekström (33/S), Red Bull Audi A5 DTM #3 (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)

- Won the 2007 and 2008 season openers
- Finished last year's race as the runner-up

"After working so long on developing a new car it's nice to finally drive races and to see how quick it is. It's become tradition for the new DTM season to start at Hockenheim but this year the race will surely be special because in BMW a new manufacturer has joined the series. The DTM fans have been waiting for this moment for a long time."

Rahel Frey (26/CH), E-POSTBRIEF Audi A5 DTM #17, Audi Sport Team Abt)

- Is tackling her second DTM season
- Switched from Phoenix to Abt in winter

“I’m really excited about the new season – finally – starting. I worked hard during the winter and thoroughly prepared myself, both mentally and physically. I finally want to see the results of my work – and also where I stand. I want to further improve compared with last year. I’ve got the opportunity to do so in Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline. I feel really well received there.”

Miguel Molina (23/E), Red Bull Audi A5 DTM #10 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix)

- Clinched two pole positions at the last three DTM races of the 2011 season
 - Took his first DTM podium at the 2011 finale at Hockenheim
- “The first race of the year is always special. For me, this is now the third DTM season opener – and each one took place at Hockenheim. I’m looking forward to it, even though it’ll be tough. I want to be as competitive as I was in the final races last year. With three manufacturers in the field, it’ll be a fantastic championship – and Hockenheim is just the beginning.”

Edoardo Mortara (25/I/F), Playboy Audi A5 DTM #21 (Audi Sport Team Rosberg)

- Was the best rookie in the DTM last year
 - Has a new vehicle engineer – Erich Baumgärtner
- “Alongside Audi and Mercedes-Benz, BMW is joining the field as a new manufacturer. This means the beginning of a new era in the DTM, which looks very positive. I’m happy to be part of it. It’ll be interesting for us and also for the fans. I think that with the new cars the DTM will be even more spectacular than before. I’m hoping that 2012 will be a great season for Audi, the DTM and the spectators.”

Mike Rockenfeller (28/D), Schaeffler Audi A5 DTM #9 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix)

- Returned to Audi Sport Team Phoenix, for which he competed as early as in 2010
 - Was the quickest Audi driver in track tests at Hockenheim
- “The excitement about the new DTM season coming up is huge because a large number of new factors are involved. That makes it very interesting. Obviously, the biggest question mark is where we stand compared with the competition. Personally, I’ve been doing fine with the new Audi A5 DTM and am pleased with the tests. I’m motivated and eager to see where we stand. I’d like to win the season opener!”

Timo Scheider (33/D), AUTO TEST Audi A5 DTM #4 (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)

- In 2008, won the final race at the Hockenheimring
- Has a new vehicle engineer for the third consecutive time

“After 2000, being part of the beginning of a new era for the second time is fantastic – especially at Hockenheim, the most emotional place in my DTM career because that’s where I won both of my titles. These feelings will always be there. Being part of the field on the DTM’s revival for Audi is really special. We’re in for a great future in the DTM.”

Adrien Tambay (F/21), Audi ultra A5 DTM #18 (Audi Sport Team Abt)

- Prevailed in an Audi evaluation of young drivers
- Is contesting his first DTM race at Hockenheim

“When you’re a rookie it’s always difficult to talk about expectations – particularly in a highly competitive series such as the DTM. Obviously, I’ve set goals for myself. I want to do my job as best I can, make no mistakes and finish the race – because for me it’s mainly about gathering experience. I’m eager to see what kind of result I’ll be able to score.”

The Audi drivers in the 2012 DTM

Filipe Albuquerque (P): * Jun 13, 1985 in Coimbra (P); residence: Coimbra (P); single; height: 1.74 m; weight: 64 kg; Audi driver since 2011; DTM races: 10; pole positions: 0; victories: 0 (best result: 2nd place); fastest laps: 0; points: 9; DTM titles: 0; best result, DTM season opener Hockenheim: 17

Mattias Ekström (S): * Jul 14, 1978 in Falun (S); residence: Salenstein (CH); single (partner Heidi), one son (Mats); height: 1.83 m; weight: 77 kg; Audi driver since 1999; DTM races: 114; pole positions: 18; victories: 17; fastest laps: 12; points: 534; DTM titles: 2 (2004, 2007); best result, DTM season opener Hockenheim: 1

Rahel Frey (CH): * Feb 23, 1986 in Niederbipp (CH); residence: Aedermannsdorf (CH); single; height: 1.63 m; weight: 50 kg; Audi driver since 2011; DTM races: 10; pole positions: 0; victories: 0 (best result: 12th place); fastest laps: 0; points: 0; DTM titles: 0; best result, DTM season opener Hockenheim: 15

Miguel Molina (E): * Feb 17, 1989 in Girona (E); residence: Lloret de Mar (E); single; height: 1.75 m; weight: 62 kg; Audi driver since 2010; DTM races: 21; pole positions: 2; victories: 0 (best result: 3rd place); fastest laps: 1; points: 26; DTM titles: 0; best result, DTM season opener Hockenheim: 8

Edoardo Mortara (I/F): * Jan 12, 1987 in Geneva (CH); residence: Geneva (CH); single; height: 1.82 m; weight: 75 kg; Audi driver since 2011; DTM races: 10; pole

positions: 0; victories: 0 (best result: 3rd place); fastest laps: 0; points: 21; DTM titles: 0; best result, DTM season opener Hockenheim: 14

Mike Rockenfeller (D): * Oct 31, 1983 in Neuwied (D); residence: Altnau (CH); single (partner Susanne); height: 1.75 m; weight: 67 kg; Audi driver since 2007; DTM races: 51; pole positions: 1; victories: 1; fastest laps: 2; points: 74; DTM titles: 0; best result, DTM season opener Hockenheim: 5

Timo Scheider (D): * Nov 10, 1978 in Lahnstein (D); residence: Lochau (A); single (partner Jessica), one son (Loris); height: 1.78 m; weight: 74 kg; Audi driver since 2006; DTM races: 119; pole positions: 9; victories: 6; fastest laps: 8; points: 354; DTM titles: 2 (2008, 2009); best result, DTM season opener Hockenheim: 2

Adrien Tambay (F): * Feb 25, 1991 in Paris (F); residence: Aix-en-Provence (F); single; height: 1.81 m; weight: 69 kg; Audi driver since 2012; DTM races: 0; pole positions: 0; victories: 0; fastest laps: 0; points: 0; DTM titles: 0; best result, DTM season opener Hockenheim: –

Audi DTM statistics

Champion's titles: 8 (in 15 years)
Victories: 61 (in 194 races)
Pole positions: 64 (in 159 qualifying sessions)
Fastest laps: 53 (in 194 races)

All winners of the season openers since 2000

2000 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes-Benz), Bernd Schneider (Mercedes-Benz)
2001 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes-Benz)
2002 Laurent Aiello (Abt-Audi)
2003 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes-Benz)
2004 Gary Paffett (Mercedes-Benz)
2005 Jean Alesi (Mercedes-Benz)
2006 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes-Benz)
2007 Mattias Ekström (Audi)
2008 Mattias Ekström (Audi)
2009 Tom Kristensen (Audi)
2010 Gary Paffett (Mercedes-Benz)
2011 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes-Benz)

2011 flashback: Mattias Ekström with strong performance

For many fans, Mattias Ekström was the hero of the 2011 DTM season opener. Only 73 days after he broke his left wrist in a sporting accident, the Swede clinched second place and thus a podium finish for Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline. Ekström even took the lead after making a good start but was overtaken by Bruno Spengler off-track on the outside in turn 1. After a defect on the rear suspension, Ekström managed to save his race in a photo finish, barely beating Ralf Schumacher, who made a mistake on the last lap and was almost outrun by Timo Scheider too. The two-time DTM champion missed the podium by merely 0.671 seconds.

Track info

Track length: 4.574 km

Race distance: 38 laps = 173.812 km

DTM track record in qualifying: Mattias Ekström (Audi), 1m 32.244s = 178.509 km/h (Oct 25, 2008)

DTM track record in the race: Paul Di Resta (Mercedes-Benz), 1m 33.576s = 175.968 km/h (Oct 26, 2008)

Pole position 2011: Bruno Spengler (Mercedes-Benz), 1m 34.270s = 174.673 km/h

Fastest lap 2011: Bruno Spengler (Mercedes-Benz), 1m 35.230s = 172.912 km/h

Turnout 2011: 58,000 (throughout the weekend)

TV live rating 2011: 1.17 million / 9.6% market share (source: ARD)

Mattias Ekström about the Hockenheimring: “The season opener at Hockenheim is always a very special event for us drivers because everything is new – from the Hospitality through to team-wear. The first race shows the relative powers in the new season. This year will be particularly thrilling because of the new vehicles and the third manufacturer. The atmosphere at Hockenheim is always great – the fans are just dying to finally see all the cars in action. Usually, we’ve got nice spring weather at the season opener. In addition, Hockenheim is a great track for the first race. It has a good rhythm and a nice mix. Unfortunately, there’s just one good place for overtaking, in front of the hairpin, unless your immediate rival makes a mistake.”

Timetable**Friday, April 27**

09:45–10:15	Roll-out
10:15–10:20	Starting practice
13:20–15:00	Free practice 1

Saturday, April 28

09:10–10:50	Free practice 2
13:40–14:50	Qualifying

Sunday, April 29

10:20–10:50	Warm-up
14:00	Race

TV schedule (“Das Erste” live)**Saturday, April 28**

13:35–15:00	Qualifying
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Sunday, April 29

13:40–15:30	Race
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– End –

The Audi Group delivered 1,302,659 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2011. In 2011 the Company posted revenue of €44.1 billion and an operating profit of €5.3 billion. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). The Audi Q7 is built in Bratislava (Slovakia). In July 2010, CKD production of the Audi Q5 was added to the existing Audi A4 and A6 manufacturing operations in Aurangabad (India). At the Brussels plant, production of the Audi A1 has been running since May 2010, while production of the new A1 Sportback began in 2012. The Audi Q3 has been built in Martorell (Spain) since June 2011. The Company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include AUDI HUNGARIA MOTOR Kft., Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese (Italy), AUDI BRUSSELS S.A./N.V. in Brussels (Belgium) and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Subject to a positive decision by the responsible competition authorities, the Italian sports motorcycle manufacturer Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. will also belong to the Audi Group. Audi currently employs around 64,000 people worldwide, including around 48,000 in Germany. Between 2012 and 2016 the brand with the four rings is planning to invest a total of €13 billion – mainly in new products and the extension of production capacities – in order to sustain the Company's technological lead embodied in its “Vorsprung durch Technik” slogan. Audi is currently expanding its site in Győr (Hungary) and will start production in Foshan (China) in late 2013 and in Mexico in 2016.

Audi has long been fulfilling its social responsibility on many levels – with the aim of making the future worth living for generations to come. The basis for Audi's lasting success is therefore formed by environmental protection, the conservation of resources, international competitiveness and a forward-looking human resources policy. One example of AUDI AG's commitment to environmental issues is the Audi Environmental Foundation. Within the context of “Vorsprung durch Technik,” which extends far beyond its products, the Company is directing its activities toward a major goal – comprehensive CO₂-neutral mobility.