

Communications Motorsport

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Audi A5 DTM finishes debut on podium

- **Mattias Ekström in third place at Hockenheimring**
- **142,000 spectators witnessed fast and furious start of new DTM era**
- **Total of four Audi A5 DTM cars in the points**

Ingolstadt/Hockenheim, April 29, 2012 – In front of an impressive crowd of 142,000 spectators (throughout the weekend) the DTM made a fast and furious start into its new era with a turbulent race at the Hockenheimring. The new Audi A5 DTM started from the pole position and finished in third place after 40 laps.

This marked a repetition of DTM history. In 1990, Hans-Joachim Stuck clinched third place in Audi's first DTM race in the V8 quattro at Zolder – at the end of the year he became champion. In 2004, Mattias Ekström took third place on the Audi A4 DTM's first run at Hockenheim as well. The Swede, too, captured the title in the end.

Mattias Ekström started from the pole position in his Red Bull Audi A5 DTM at the Hockenheimring and immediately took the lead, which he kept until lap five before making a braking mistake in turn two, dropping behind Jamie Green and shortly afterward behind Gary Paffett too. From then on the Swede from Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline concentrated on safeguarding third place which, as in Formula 1, is rewarded with 15 points this year.

“When you start from the pole position third place is certainly not your dream result,” said Mattias Ekström. “But our rival was simply better today; we’ve got to accept that. But not to worry: we’ll come back! It was very warm today and we didn’t have the optimum set-up for these conditions.”

Mike Rockenfeller in the Schaeffler Audi A5 DTM of Audi Sport Team Phoenix took fifth place after having to let Mercedes driver Christian Vietoris pass shortly before the end of the race. His team-mate Miguel Molina in the Red Bull Audi A5, who had started from position 17 on the grid, scored points in ninth place as well. The top ten at the DTM opening round were completed by Filipe Albuquerque in the TV Movie Audi A5 DTM of Audi Sport Team Rosberg, who thus grabbed the last point.

Albuquerque's team-mate Edoardo Mortara in his Playboy Audi A5 DTM was running in the top group in the first half of the race but after a collision with the BMW of Joey Hand had to serve a drive-through penalty that caused him to drop from fourth to twelfth place. He ultimately finished in eleventh place.

Rahel Frey in her E-POSTBRIEF Audi A5 DTM was fighting a duel with her rival Susie Wolff almost during the whole race. She lost a possible 13th place shortly before the end of the race after spinning. The Swiss finished the race in 16th place.

Timo Scheider (AUTO TEST Audi A5 DTM) and Adrien Tambay (Audi ultra A5 DTM) were forced to retire. Scheider was hit by Ralf Schumacher right on lap one and later by Roberto Merhi. The suspension of his A5 DTM was damaged in the process. After a few strong initial laps, Adrien Tambay was running in the top ten on his DTM debut before the Frenchman became entangled in a collision through no fault of his own and was forced to park his car with a defective radiator.

"After yesterday's pole position third place was certainly not what we'd been expecting from the race," commented Head of Audi Motorsport Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich. "We've got to analyze why we didn't have the performance we thought we'd have in the race. By finishing third Mattias Ekström made the best of the situation and scored important points. We're going to learn from this race for the Lausitzring. On the whole, it was a tremendous opening round for the DTM in front of a fantastic crowd with a turbulent early phase. And it was obvious that overtaking is definitely possible in the new DTM."

The Audi squad will not have time to take a deep breath after the season opener as the next DTM race is on the calendar for next weekend. That is why the teams are traveling directly from Hockenheim to the Lausitzring.

- 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.