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Motorsport

Audi aims big at Zandvoort

- **DTM title battle enters decisive phase**
- **As many Audi drivers as possible should occupy the podium**
- **Audi drivers love track on the North Sea coast**

The DTM title battle enters its decisive phase: Only four races remain before the winner of the most popular international touring car series this year will be named. Following his retirement at Brands Hatch and a brace of fifth place finishes at the Norisring and Nürburgring, Audi driver Tom Kristensen is twelve points behind championship leader Bernd Schneider (Mercedes). The next race at Zandvoort on 3 September is of particular importance for the Dane who drives for Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline: Kristensen must do everything in his power to reduce the gap.

AUDI AG
Kommunikation
85045 Ingolstadt
www.audi.com

Head of Audi Motorsport Dr Wolfgang Ullrich has therefore made his intentions perfectly clear ahead of the DTM event on the Dutch North Sea coast: Audi must and will strike back on the track in the dunes following the two unfortunate races around the Norisring and Nürburgring. The target is that as many Audi drivers as possible should occupy the podium so as to improve the situation in the championship.

Without doubt a difficult, but not impossible task. The 4.307-kilometre long circuit is considered one of the most challenging on the DTM calendar – and one that suits both the Audi drivers and the Audi A4 DTM. In 2002, Mattias Ekström celebrated his first DTM victory at Zandvoort, and made another decisive step towards clinching the championship title in 2004. The Swede mounted the podium four-times in succession at his favourite track. Christian Abt, Heinz-Harald Frentzen and Martin Tomczyk have also claimed podium positions at Zandvoort. On the North Sea coast, Christian Abt (2001) and Timo Scheider (2003) took their only pole-positions to date in the DTM.

The race at Zandvoort is considered to be one of the absolute highlights of the year on the DTM calendar because of its unique location in the dunes, the demanding

nature of circuit and the popular and friendly spectators. 77,000 fans came last year and, as a result, made Zandvoort the most successful DTM event outside Germany.

Many German spectators also travel to Zandvoort. The circuit is located about 250 kilometres north-west of Düsseldorf. Those preferring to watch the feverish title fight on television are served by ARD. Qualifying (Saturday from 2 p.m. local time) and race (Sunday from 1:45 p.m.) will be broadcast as usual live on “Das Erste”.

Quotes before the race at Zandvoort

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “Everybody at Audi Sport and the teams are fully motivated and are aiming to do everything possible in Zandvoort to ensure that the championship pendulum swings in our direction. We travel to Zandvoort with the aim of filling the podium with as many Audi drivers as possible and score maximum points. This is what we are working towards.”

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Martin Tomczyk

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

“It would be fantastic to be able to follow on from the result at the Nürburgring and to finish in the points again in Zandvoort and to get on the podium if possible. All of us like the circuit, and we’ve always had good results at Zandvoort, which is why we want to score as many points as possible there this time.”

Mattias Ekström

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

“Zandvoort is one of my favourite DTM circuits, of which I have a lot of good memories. I won in 2002 and Laurent Aiello, my team-mate at that time, clinched the championship there on the same weekend. I also won in 2004, was second in 2005 – that’s not such a bad run of results.”

Heinz-Harald Frentzen

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

“I’m looking forward to Zandvoort. There is a great cheerful atmosphere there, lots of people and is an interesting circuit. The race will be a little tougher than usual, but I’m happy to sweat there.”

Tom Kristensen**Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Siemens Audi A4 DTM #7**

“The circuit is fantastic and is located picturesquely in the dunes close to the beach. Our Audi is usually very good there. There are loads of spectacular corners – both fast and slow. Therefore it’s time for the next Audi victory. At Zandvoort we have a very good chance for this.”

Christian Abt, Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Playboy Audi A4 DTM #12

“Zandvoort is a circuit that really suits me. I’ve had some fantastic races and results there over the last few years and that’s why I’m particularly looking forward to this race.”

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

“Zandvoort is a highlight. Fans turn up in large numbers and the dunes are full of people. I was amazed by the unique atmosphere at Zandvoort last year.”

Frank Stippler**Audi Sport Team Rosberg, S line Audi A4 DTM #15**

“I’m going to make the next attempt to end my streak of bad luck at Zandvoort. Until now, I’ve actually had a great deal of ‘trouble’ during the races this year. However, I’m still looking ahead optimistically and hope that things go better in Zandvoort and everything falls into place.”

Timo Scheider**Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Gebrauchtswagen:plus Audi A4 DTM #16**

“I’m really looking forward to Zandvoort, its one of my all-time favourite tracks. I took my first and only DTM pole-position to date there, and have fond memories of it. The circuit should suit our Audi A4. I’m personally aiming for a top-five finish.”

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

“I heard that the circuit at Zandvoort is fast and quite difficult to learn. I’ll try to sneak a look at the circuit beforehand. Whatever happens, it will once again be a huge challenge for me.”

Nicolas Kiesa

Futurecom TME, Futurecom Audi A4 DTM #19

"I gathered a lot of useful experience at the Nürburgring, which will help me to be even better at Zandvoort. I'm not starting from zero anymore since I now at least know the basics of the DTM."

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): "Things just simply have to go our way at Zandvoort. The team performed fantastically at the Nürburgring. At Zandvoort we finally want to get back to the front and give an equally strong team performance."

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): "Zandvoort is a genuine driver's circuit, on which you need drivers with a big heart. Christian (Abt) loves the circuit; Pierre (Kaffer) is also good around such circuits. That's why I assume that we'll put up a good showing there."

Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg): "I'm looking forward to Zandvoort. I hope that we can reproduce the good race result we had at the Nürburgring and score points for Audi again."

Communication Motorsport

Telephone +49 (0)841 89 34200, Telefax +49 (0)841 89 38617

E-Mail motorsport-media@audi.de

Photographs, sound bites and other information can be found in the Internet at: www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation required)

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Kommunikation
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Facts about the DTM race at Zandvoort

Previous winners at Zandvoort

2001	Uwe Alzen	Mercedes
2002	Mattias Ekström	Abt-Audi
2003	Christijan Albers	Mercedes
2004	Mattias Ekström	Audi
2005	Gary Paffett	Mercedes

Pole Position 2005

Bernd Schneider (Mercedes), 1m 32.730s

DTM lap record

Gary Paffett (Mercedes), 1m 34.785s (2005)

Circuit length

4.307 km

Race distance

38 laps = 163.666 km

Previous results of the Audi drivers at Zandvoort

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Tomczyk	R	R	R	2	6
Ekström	R	1	3	1	2
Frentzen				R	3
Kristensen				6	4
Abt	2	7	11	R	10
Kaffer					11
Stippler					R
Scheider	6	5	R	12	
Ickx					
Kiesa					

R = Retired

Point standings DTM 2006

Drivers

1 Schneider	46
2 Spengler	34
3 Kristensen	34
4 Green	19
5 Häkkinen	17
6 Tomczyk	17
7 Ekström	16
8 Frentzen	8

Teams

1 Vodafone/Salzgitter AMG Mercedes	65
2 DaimlerChrysler Bank AMG Mercedes	51
3 Audi Sport Team Abt	48
4 Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline	33
5 stern/Easy Rent AMG Mercedes	22
6 Audi Sport Team Rosberg	5
7 TV-Spielfilm/TrekStor AMG Mercedes	5
8 Audi Sport Team Phoenix	5