

Ingolstadt, 28 August 2007

Motorsport

Audi driver Alex Prémat about the Nürburgring

- **Sprint-circuit is scene of eighth DTM race**
- **Home race for Audi Sport Team Phoenix**
- **One of the most challenging circuits of the year**

The final phase in the 2007 DTM begins at the Nürburgring on the first weekend in September (Sunday from 2:30 p.m. live on German TV “Das Erste”). The 3.629 kilometre “sprint-circuit” is used. Alexandre Prémat, who claimed his first ever DTM podium finish at the end of July at Zandvoort, describes the scene of the next DTM race. It doubles as the “home race” for Audi Sport Team Phoenix, for whom the young Frenchman starts in the DTM.

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Is it a special feeling to drive on the Nürburgring?

“Yes, definitely! The old circuit which is steeped in tradition is always at the back of a driver’s mind. This makes the Nürburgring something of a legend.”

The DTM races on the short sprint version of the Nürburgring. What are the peculiarities of this track?

“In the GP2 series we drove on the long circuit, I know the short track layout from my Formula 3 days. The Nürburgring is a technically demanding circuit. It also has a few peculiarities of its own: The new sections after the first corner are a little less bumpy than the remainder of the original circuit. You have to be able to pinpoint the braking point exactly just before the chicane on the back straight because there is very little in the way of visual reference points. Also, you can’t cut every corner since the kerbs at the Nürburgring are fairly high – in the chicane for example. Another speciality of the Nürburgring are the enormous run-off areas.”

What matters the most around the Nürburgring spring-circuit?

“The set-up on such a demanding circuit is always a compromise – not only between the technical objectives, but also between car and driver. The car must be very agile. At the same time, the nature of this circuit means that the driver must be extremely concentrated and must also possess excellent car control. Whoever wins at the Nürburgring can rightly claim to be one of the best drivers.”

Where is the best place to overtake?

“There are three places to overtake: The first corner, the chicane and also the final corner. It is actually very difficult because the speed at the entry and exit is relatively high.”

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www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation required)**