

Oschersleben, 4 May 2007

Motorsport

Audi driver Ekström sets the standard

- **Leader of the standings quickest of the day at Oschersleben**
- **Best times in both tests on Friday**
- **DTM newcomer Lucas Luhr in second place**

The Audi A4 DTM is the car to beat at the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben as well. By setting best times in both 90-minute tests on Friday, Audi factory driver Ekström underlined the fact that his victory in the DTM season opener at Hockenheim two weeks ago was no coincidence. With a time of 1m 23.417s, the Swede in the Red Bull Audi A4 DTM of Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline achieved the fastest time of the day on the 3.696-kilometre circuit.

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The second quickest driver of the day was DTM newcomer Lucas Luhr, who – in last year’s A4 of Audi Sport Team Rosberg – was only two tenths of a second slower than the former DTM champion. Adam Carroll from the Audi customer team Futurecom TME clocked the fifth-best time of the day, suggesting that the 2005-spec Audi A4 DTM will be a serious contender at Oschersleben as well.

Frank Biela and Marco Werner, who are standing in for Tom Kristensen and Alexandre Prémat this weekend, primarily concentrated on familiarising themselves with the A4 DTM and the circuit on Friday. Biela’s day ended prematurely during the second test on account of an oil leak.

On Saturday morning, the teams will have another 60 minutes of Free Practice available to them before – starting at 1:30 p.m. – the grid positions for the DTM’s second race of the season will be determined in the qualifying session. ARD will broadcast live from Oschersleben on “Das Erste” starting at 1:30 p.m. (local time).

Quotes after Friday's tests

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "Today, it was difficult to make good use of the day because conditions on the track kept changing. I do think, though, that we did a good job anyhow. The results look decent, which means we've got a good basis for Saturday. I'm particularly pleased about Adam (Carroll) being able to set good times with the 2005-spec A4."

Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #3)

1st place / 1st place, 1m 23.417s

"A great Friday. I can't remember when I last set the best times in both practice sessions on Friday. But my Audi A4 DTM was very strong straight from the start, which is probably a result of the tests we did here as well. Track conditions are still likely to change a little, but so far our preparations for the race weekend have been going perfectly for us."

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Lucas Luhr (Philips Audi A4 DTM #12)

2nd place / 17th place, 1m 23.622s

"The morning session was okay. I'm also pretty satisfied with the afternoon. But that was not about setting good times, because I was running on used tyres all day. Now we've done enough work for the race. On Saturday, we've got one hour left to prepare for qualifying."

Adam Carroll (Audi A4 DTM #20)

4th place / 3rd place, 1m 23.699s

"That was a good day. Fourth place in the morning and third in the afternoon are great, even though these were only tests. I hope to be able to take this performance with me into qualifying. The basis for this is definitely good. I'm already looking forward to Saturday."

Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM #11)

5th place / 14th place, 1m 23.753s

"On Friday, it's never possible to say how good we or how good the others are – the times set in the tests don't reflect that. We're satisfied because we completed our entire programme as planned. I drove both sessions on one set of tyres that was still left from last weekend. We should have pretty good chances in qualifying – and hopefully in the race too."

Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM #16)

6th place / 12th place, 1m 23.818s

“Basically speaking, we’re satisfied. We tried out a lot and gathered information. We’re going to put all this together for qualifying. We were able to learn a few things today already.”

Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #4)

9th place / 4th place, 1m 23.824s

“My A4 feels good. The only problem is the circuit, which has very little grip and therefore makes it difficult to come up with findings for the set-up. I’m hoping that conditions will improve by tomorrow, and if they do I’m sure that we’ll be running at the very front of the field again.”

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Timo Scheider (Gebrauchtwagen:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM #8)

13th place / 5th place, 1m 23.854s

“In the first practice session the track was very dirty, that’s why the results were not really authentic. On new tyres this afternoon, things were already going a little better because I was immediately among the front runners again. I’m not completely satisfied yet, but we’re heading in the right direction and can build on this tomorrow.”

Marco Werner (Audi Bank Audi A4 DTM #17)

16th place / 16th place, 1m 24.653s

“For starters, I’m not unhappy, even though 16th place is certainly nothing to write home about. The tyre question is not so easy in the DTM – I’m fully immersed in this subject. In the beginning I was in seventh or eighth place on a long run for quite a while, which I was quite happy with. But I wasn’t able to make use of the new tyres because I was only as fast on them as I’d been on the long run. There’s a lot for me to learn. Others of course were able to try a lot more things during the preliminary tests.”

Vanina Ickx (Audi A4 DTM #21)

19th place / 18th place, 1m 24.887s

“I had a very interesting Friday. We made a change to the car straight away, which clearly paid off. Compared to the test a few weeks ago, the car felt very different and was pleasant to drive. That was a good basis. On account

of the track conditions we didn't try out a new set of tyres in the afternoon. We'll save that for Saturday when, hopefully, the track will be better."

Frank Biela (Siemens Audi A4 DTM #7)

20th place / 19th place, 1m 25.048s

"Back in a DTM car after such a long time – it's fun. The generation of cars is more pleasant to drive than the car in 2004. Nevertheless: being quick is difficult. In the first test I was trying to shoot for the best racing line in the DTM. This is important because I wasn't able to drive over the kerbs as much before in the sports car. That's the most difficult thing for me to get used to now. Unfortunately, there was an oil leak at a very early stage of the second test, which we need to check. That's why, unfortunately, I wasn't able to drive all that much today."

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Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline):

"This Friday has confirmed our positive results which we collected during the tests. The boys are all in really good spirits – that gives us every reason to hope for a good Saturday. Frank (Biela) was thrown into the cold water here and is now trying to learn as quickly as possible together with his seasoned race engineer. We're supporting him as much as we can."

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): "As expected, Marco (Werner) had a hard time taking advantage of the new Dunlop tyres to pick up speed. We're trying to practice that. I'm hoping that we'll take another step forwards on Saturday in order to be good in qualifying. Christian (Abt) was complaining about understeer, which we weren't able to resolve until the end. We need to analyse this based on the data so that we can take a step forwards with him as well."

Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg): "In the morning, things were going quite well. For the afternoon session, we had planned to use only one set of tyres. That's why we didn't need more than one set per car all day. Of course we dropped on the timesheet in the end. But I'm not worried about that. The thing that counts is what happens tomorrow."

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