

Nuremberg, 23 July 2006

Motorsport

Audi driver Kristensen maintains chances for title

- **Strong drive brings four points despite a damaged car**
- **Four Audi A4 DTM cars in the points at Norisring**
- **Record turnout of 147,000**

In front of a record crowd of 147,000 Audi driver Tom Kristensen clinched four points at Nuremberg's Norisring, thus safeguarding his chances of winning the title. At the season's mid-point the Dane from Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline is ranking merely eight points behind the leader, Bernd Schneider, in second place of the standings.

AUDI AG
Kommunikation
85045 Ingolstadt
www.audi.com

Having started the race that was marked by the turbulence that is typical for the Norisring from position seven, Kristensen got entangled in a collision that damaged the bonnet of his Siemens Audi A4 DTM – as early as in the first corner. The damage primarily affected the air supply to the front brakes, which meant that the Dane had to fight with overheating brakes across the entire 69 laps. What is more, during the re-start following a safety car phase shortly before race end, a part of the bonnet came off, forcing Kristensen to complete the final laps nearly blind. Despite all this, he managed to cross the finish line in fifth place, thus saving crucial points in the title fight.

Quickest Audi driver in the race was Mattias Ekström. The Swede in his Red Bull Audi A4 DTM was able to keep the pace of the front of the field although his car had suffered damage in the first-turn collision as well. The Swede lost valuable time when the engine of his A4 stalled during both pit stops. Nevertheless, Ekström managed to push closer and closer towards the third-placed driver, Mika Häkkinen, in the final phase. While trying to bump the former Formula 1 Champion from third place after the restart, Ekström made a braking mistake and ultimately finished sixth.

With Timo Scheider (Audi Sport Team Rosberg) coming seventh, and Pierre Kaffer (Audi Sport Team Phoenix) eighth, two A4 cars from last year scored

points as well. Jeroen Bleekemolen and Vanina Ickx from the customer team Futurecom TME were the best drivers of 2004-spec cars.

Quotes after the race

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “We were simply not quick enough here. On top of that our two best cars did not have perfect starts and were pushed into each other in the first corner, meaning that they were no longer in optimum form. We experienced a bad weekend and the only thing we can do now is concentrate on the next race weekend. At the Nürburgring we will try to position ourselves as best we can in order to make up for this – undoubtedly – disappointing result.”

AUDI AG
Kommunikation
85045 Ingolstadt
www.audi.com

Tom Kristensen

Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Siemens Audi A4 DTM #7

5th place, + 11.068s

“In difficult conditions I collected valuable points today. The first turn produced a typical Norisring sandwich situation – I was pushed onto the guy in front of me. In the process the front end of my A4 was damaged and so the brake ventilation was no longer at its optimum. After a few laps the brake pressure kept dropping. After the first pit stop things got better, but the front wheels kept locking. Only in the safety car phase the brakes started cooling down and I reset the brake force balance back to normal. Then, in the re-start, a part of the bonnet suddenly came off. I really had to stretch my neck in order to be able to see anything at all. My thanks to Mattias for no longer attacking me during my blind flight. Before the next race we are going to have another test. At the Nürburgring, we’re planning to strike back.”

Mattias Ekström

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

6th place, + 11.453s

“My speed was okay – not perfect, but I was quicker than I’d expected. Unfortunately, I made a mistake during both pit stops, causing the engine to stall each time – why that happened is something we need to analyse now. After the re-start my tyres had no grip at all and the brake balance was set way too much forwards, which is why I made a braking mistake. That’s why after the re-start my race was unfortunately not as good as it had been before and I lost a few places.

Fortunately, my colleagues helped me a bit in the final phase. Thanks a lot for this!”

Timo Scheider

Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Gebrauchtwagen:plus Audi A4 DTM #16

7th place, + 11.970s

“My start wasn’t all that great due to wheel spin. I got jammed on the inside in front of the first corner and got pushed onto Tom (Kristensen). This damaged the front of my car, and as a result, it was not as fast any more on the straight. Before the pit stop I had major braking problems but because of the water cooling during the stop everything was okay again. After the safety car phase I was driving in a group with Tom (Kristensen) and Mattias (Ekström). It goes without saying that I would help them. Under these circumstances, two points for seventh place is a good result.”

AUDI AG
Kommunikation
85045 Ingolstadt
www.audi.com

Pierre Kaffer

Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Castrol Audi A4 DTM #14

8th place, + 14.006s

“This was an eventful race, especially after the safety car. The team did a good job. I stayed clear of all the trouble when a number of drivers drove into each other at the beginning. Although this cost me a couple of positions, the fact that the car remained intact as well as our use of tyres were the key to my first point. I’m glad that my speed was right, which – unfortunately – hadn’t been the case in practice. This has been a good day for Audi Sport Team Phoenix, and the boys deserve this point.”

Frank Stippler

Audi Sport Team Rosberg, S line Audi A4 DTM #15

9th place, + 15.854s

“The race wasn’t bad. Because we pitted too late once, though, we lost eighth place to Pierre Kaffer. I settled for ninth when Pierre made a braking mistake in front of me, I was back to eighth again. But then Christian Abt brushed me, that’s why Pierre was able to pass me again.”

Christian Abt**Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Playboy Audi A4 DTM #12****10th place, + 16.085s**

“In the beginning, things weren’t going bad at all, the performance was right. We timed our first stop a bit too late. The second set of tyres cost me a lot of time, probably 20 to 30 seconds. That ruined my race. Otherwise I could have been driving very far at the front of the field as well.”

Heinz-Harald Frentzen**Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Veltins Audi A4 DTM #6****11th place, + 16.668s**

“After the start, I unfortunately got entangled in a massive crash, which caused me to lose crucial aerodynamic components on both sides of the car. This meant I was no longer able to keep the pace I could have maintained otherwise. As a result, it was just a matter of riding with the tide today.”

AUDI AG
Kommunikation
85045 Ingolstadt
www.audi.com

Jeroen Bleekemolen**Futurecom TME, Futurecom Audi A4 DTM #19****12th place, - 1 lap**

“Unfortunately, I missed the start. After that, at least the first lap was fine, because I was able to overtake several cars. Vanina, unfortunately, didn’t see me, which is why our cars touched each other and I lost some time. Afterwards I was able to drive at my own speed. Too bad that at the end I wasn’t on the same lap as the rest of the field during the re-start. But twelfth place is okay.”

Vanina Ickx**Futurecom TME, Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM #20****13th place, - 2 laps**

“I tried everything during the start but produced a jump start in the process, which earned me a drive-through. It took a while until the penalty was imposed. Things continued with a number of incidents: Once I touched the wall and spun. Still, I drove a lap time that was equal to the one I’d done in qualifying, which I’d never managed to do before. By the same token, today produced my best result of the season. So I’m not disappointed at all.”

Martin Tomczyk**Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #4****Retired 57th lap (overheating brakes after collision)**

“That was an awful weekend. The first lap was the best part about it: I drove forwards to tenth place. Then I had a bit of body contact with Timo Scheider. That’s a shame because it didn’t do either of us any good. Instead, my car was damaged at the front and I lost my brake cooling. Things got too dangerous, so I decided to stop.”

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): “We knew today would be very difficult. Tom (Kristensen) had problems right after the start. His car suffered a lot of minor types of damage, and that’s why he also had to save his brakes and was no longer able to keep the pace. Considering these circumstances, we have good reason to be satisfied with the result and the four points.”

AUDI AG
Kommunikation
85045 Ingolstadt
www.audi.com

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): “We’re pleased to see that Pierre was finally able to clinch his first point that was long overdue. He had a good start and drove a good race. Christian wasn’t able to attack at all on his second set of tyres so that we had to change our tactics. Everything was going against him. With two results among the top ten – including one place in the points – we’re satisfied anyhow.”

Kimmo Liimatainen (Team Manager Audi Sport Team Rosberg): “The race was pretty good. Timo could have finished a bit further towards the front, but we’re team players. We need to consider what’s good for Audi – for Tom Kristensen and Mattias Ekström, valuable points were at stake. Looking at it this way, we can be satisfied with seventh place. Too bad that Frank (Stippler) was bumped from the points in the end after all.”

The result

- 1 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes), 69 laps in 1h00m25.693s
- 2 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes), + 0.851s
- 3 Mika Häkkinen (Mercedes), + 7.708s
- 4 Stefan Mücke (Mercedes), + 9.074s
- 5 Tom Kristensen (Siemens Audi A4 DTM), + 11.068s
- 6 Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), + 11.453s
- 7 Timo Scheider (Gebrauchtwagen:plus Audi A4 DTM), + 11.970s
- 8 Pierre Kaffer (Castrol Audi A4 DTM), + 14.006s
- 9 Frank Stippler (S line Audi A4 DTM), + 15.854s
- 10 Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM), + 16.085s
- 11 Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Veltins Audi A4 DTM), + 16.668s
- 12 Jeroen Bleekemolen (Futurecom Audi A4 DTM), - 1 lap
- 13 Vanina Ickx (Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM), - 2 laps
- 14 Susie Stoddart (Mercedes), - 13 laps
- 15 Daniel la Rosa (Mercedes), - 13 laps
- 16 Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), - 13 laps

Not classified:

- Alexandros Margaritis (Mercedes), - 29 laps
Jamie Green (Mercedes), - 35 laps
Mathias Lauda (Mercedes), - 64 laps
Jean Alesi (Mercedes), - 68 laps

Communication Motorsport

Telephone +49 (0)841 89 34200, fax +49 (0)841 89 38617
E-Mail motorsport-media@audi.de

Photographs, sound bites and additional information on the Internet:

www.audi-motorsport.info (Accreditation necessary)

AUDI AG
Kommunikation
85045 Ingolstadt
www.audi.com