

Oschersleben, 20 May 2006

Motorsport

Audi driver Kristensen wins Qualifying thriller

- **Second pole position in a row at Oschersleben**
- **Four Audi A4 DTM cars among the top eight**
- **Frank Stippler best driver of a car from last year**

The “King of Le Mans” is well on his way to become “King of Oschersleben” too: Audi factory driver Tom Kristensen in the Siemens Audi A4 DTM cockpit took the pole position at the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben for the DTM’s third round. This means the Dane from Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline will start from the first row for the third, and from the grid’s top position for the second time in a row at Oschersleben. What is more, in 2004 the seven-time Le Mans winner celebrated his first DTM exploit at Oschersleben.

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In Saturday’s shoot-out Qualifying which, yet again, turned out to be a real thriller, he relegated Mercedes driver Jamie Green to the position of the runner-up by 0.009 seconds. Since the leader of the standings, Bernd Schneider, will be starting the race merely from position six, Kristensen has good chances on Sunday to capture the lead in the overall classification.

Heinz-Harald Frentzen (grid position five), Martin Tomczyk and Frank Stippler at the wheel of the best 2005-spec car were three other Audi drivers to make it into the shoot-out session of the quickest eight. Mattias Ekström was lacking merely 21 thousandths of a second. In the morning’s Free Practice the Swede had been the fastest contender and the first part of the Qualifying still saw him following Tom Kristensen as the runner-up.

Before the start of the race on Sunday, Marco Werner will be taking the Audi R10 TDI out for demonstration laps at Oschersleben. Audi’s new diesel sports prototype is the car in which Tom Kristensen will compete in the 24 Hours of Le Mans on 17/18 June. ARD on “Das Erste” will broadcast live from the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben on Sunday, starting at 1:45 p.m. (local time).

Quotes after Qualifying

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "That was a very thrilling Qualifying. Fortunately, we were able to break the knot in the end because Tom really drove a fantastic lap. We achieved our goal. We've got one car at the very front, four among the top eight and for the first time a 2005-spec car in the top eight. This makes us happy. As expected, the competition was very strong in Qualifying – but we've got a good base for race Sunday."

Tom Kristensen

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

1st place, 1m 19.686s / 1m 19.563s / 1m 19.264s

"This was exactly the result I needed. Of course things would be quieter for me in the race if the other Audi cars were further at the front. But my team always has a good strategy and the long-runs yesterday weren't bad either. My goal is to repeat my 2004 victory. Despite the threat of rain we completely concentrated on a dry set-up in Qualifying. The team did a perfect job with the tyre pressures and consistently responded correctly as the track kept getting quicker. In the end, we clinched pole with a very narrow gap to the previous 'Mister Pole Position,' Jamie Green. My team and I are very happy about this."

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Heinz-Harald Frentzen

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

5th place, 1m 20.069s / 1m 19.855s / 1m 19.820s

"I'm pretty satisfied with my car. Compared with Friday, we made progress, both in Free Practice and Qualifying. Needless to say I would have preferred a position further at the front. We had the car to achieve this but, unfortunately, I got into a bit of traffic at the end."

Martin Tomczyk

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

7th place, 1m 20.022s / 1m 19.881s / 1m 19.973s

"Looking at yesterday, we can be relatively satisfied with seventh place. But my goal for today had definitely been higher. In the final trial I would have liked to have been a bit quicker yet, but unfortunately I was slowed by another car."

Frank Stippler**Audi Sport Team Rosberg, S line Audi A4 DTM #15****8th place, 1m 20.221s / 1m 19.908s / 1m 20.480s**

“I’m absolutely elated about eighth place. Big compliments to my team for having achieved a very good balance of my car after the exchange of some parts towards the end of the Free Practice. After this feat of coming eighth a load has been taken off my chest.”

Mattias Ekström**Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #5****9th place, 1m 19.835s / 1m 19.929s**

“Things started pretty well but in the end we simply weren’t quick enough. The car had just a little bit of understeer in the second session but still felt pretty good. So, subjectively, everything was running well but we just didn’t manage to clock better times. Of course things will be difficult, starting from position nine, but on Sunday there’s a long race awaiting us.”

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Christian Abt**Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Playboy Audi A4 DTM #12****10th place, 1m 20.319s / 1m 20.025s**

“The Qualifying was okay even though I made a couple of slight mistakes. My last trial went well. Unfortunately, Heinz-Harald (Frentzen) returned to the pits in front of me a bit slowly. That cost me the crucial tenths, otherwise I’d have been among the top eight. I wouldn’t have had fresh tyres for the final outing, though. That’s why better than eighth place wouldn’t have been possible anyway.”

Timo Scheider**Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Gebrauchtwagen plus Audi A4 DTM #16****12th place, 1m 20.235s / 1m 20.123s**

“I was surprised that we were relatively far at the front straight away although I had lost a bit of time in Free Practice. That’s why we were no longer able to sort the front suspension. Before the Qualifying session we had made a change in the right direction but that wasn’t quite enough. It’s nice, though, that Frank claimed a place among the top eight – that shows the car can do it.”

Pierre Kaffer**Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Castrol Audi A4 DTM #14****13th place, 1m 20.677s / 1m 20.397s**

“The Qualifying is always very close in the DTM, and we’ve seen this today yet again. Everything simply has got to be a thousand percent right or it’s not enough. We’re giving our best and have come close, too. That bit of racing luck that’s still missing will follow, too, I’m sure .”

Vanina Ickx**Futurecom TME, Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM #20****19th place, 1m 21.960s**

“Since the last race we’ve clearly improved. I’m able to concentrate better on the Qualifying and do a better job of getting everything on the dot to drive good lap times. Nevertheless I allowed myself a small mistake compared to the Free Practice. On Saturday things went a lot smoother, though, than on the previous weekends. Hopefully Sunday will be better yet.”

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Olivier Tielemans**Futurecom TME, Futurecom Audi A4 DTM #19****20th place, 1m 22.425s**

“Unfortunately, the Qualifying did not go completely as planned. We should have been faster with the second set of new tyres. Unfortunately, towards the end the first rain drops started falling and my wheels locked when I was braking into the second corner, otherwise I would have finished a bit further towards the front.”

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): “That was one of the most exciting Qualifying events I’ve ever experienced. The DTM field is simply incredibly tight. Congratulations to Tom Kristensen who has been doing a very good job throughout the weekend and deserves the pole position.”

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): “The competition in the DTM is very fierce. Being quicker by one tenth would have put us among the top eight. Next time, we’ve got to get better yet.”

Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg): “I’m happy that, for the first time, we finished among the top eight with a car from last year. When Frank crossed the finish line, he immediately received an SMS from Keke Rosberg

from Monaco: 'Stippi, well done!' It's too bad there wasn't a bit more in the cards with Timo."

The starting grid at Oschersleben

- 1 Tom Kristensen (Siemens Audi A4 DTM), 1m 19.264s
- 2 Jamie Green (Mercedes), 1m 19.273s
- 3 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes), 1m 19.513s
- 4 Mika Häkkinen (Mercedes), 1m 19.561s
- 5 Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Veltins Audi A4 DTM), 1m 19.820s
- 6 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes), 1m 19.876s
- 7 Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), 1m 19.973s
- 8 Frank Stippler (S line Audi A4 DTM), 1m 20.480s
- 9 Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), 1m 19.929s
- 10 Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM), 1m 20.025s
- 11 Alexandros Margaritis (Mercedes), 1m 20.087s
- 12 Timo Scheider (Gebrauchtwagen:plus Audi A4 DTM), 1m 20.123s
- 13 Pierre Kaffer (Castrol Audi A4 DTM), 1m 20.397s
- 14 Jean Alesi (Mercedes), 1m 20.441s
- 15 Daniel la Rosa (Mercedes), 1m 20.747s
- 16 Stefan Mücke (Mercedes), 1m 20.774s
- 17 Mathias Lauda (Mercedes), 1m 21.367s
- 18 Susie Stoddart (Mercedes), 1m 21.432s
- 19 Vanina Ickx (Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM), 1m 21.960s
- 20 Olivier Tielemans (Futurecom Audi A4 DTM), 1m 22.425s

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