

Audi in the DTM 2005

"Take Advantage"

"Take Advantage" – this is the Audi motto for the 2005 DTM. The works comeback in Europe's most popular touring car series could hardly have been more successful: Audi scoop all three titles first time out: The Audi A4 DTM won five of the ten races during the 2004 season, an Audi driver started six times from pole position. The advantage, which Audi has worked for, must be maintained and cashed in for more victories. "Our rivals will do everything in their powers to overcome our advantage next year," explains Audi Motorsport Head Dr Wolfgang Ullrich. "Therefore, we assume that the 2005 season will be even harder than last year's. But we are well equipped with both technical and driver talent."

New Audi A4 DTM with new look and new technology

Although the Audi A4 DTM always set the benchmark around tight and twisty circuits, the Audi Sport engineers have certainly not been resting on their laurels. The new Audi A4 DTM will not only differ from its successful predecessor with its prominent single-frame radiator grille and new bodywork shape. "We learnt a great deal during our first DTM year in 2004," explains Dr Ullrich. "Although the A4 DTM was a very good car, several details on the A4 DTM 2005 will be different." The first tests are planned for the end of January.

Proven partners: Abt Sportsline and Joest

Two proven partners assume responsibility for the race logistic of the eight Audi A4 DTM cars on behalf of Audi: Abt Sportsline and Joest Racing. Audi Sport works closely with both teams for many years. Abt Sportsline has been the Audi partner in touring car racing since 1996 and Audi works team since 2004. Joest Racing was involved as works team on the successful sportscar project from 1998, and swapped, together with Audi, to the DTM last year.

DTM proven drivers and strong newcomers

Audi also backs proven drivers in the 2005 DTM: They all originate from the Audi family and are therefore familiar faces. The three most successful Audi DTM drivers of the 2004 season form the spearhead: DTM Champion Mattias Ekström (26), the six-time Le Mans winner Tom Kristensen (37), who successfully mastered the change from the Audi R8 to the Audi A4 DTM in his first season, and Martin Tomczyk (22), the best placed German driver in the 2004 DTM. With Christian Abt (37) another DTM seasoned campaigner remains on board. Four drivers, who proved their qualities in the past in the Audi R8 and Abt-Audi TT-R, are new to the Audi DTM team: Rinaldo Capello (40), Pierre Kaffer (28), Allan McNish (34) and Frank Stippler (29).

McNish won the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) in the Audi R8 during the 2000 season, before getting his chance in Formula 1. In 2004 the Scot returned to the Audi family and formed, in the Le Mans-Endurance Series (LMES), a strong duo with Pierre Kaffer, who also swaps to the DTM. The young German impressed in his debut

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sportscar season with four wins in eight outings and incredible raw speed. Rinaldo "Dindo" Capello has been Audi works driver for ten years, and more recently won the 24 Hours of Le Mans twice in succession, and demonstrated during the DTM guest appearance in Shanghai in July just how quick he is in a DTM car. Frank Stippler made an excellent impression during the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring.

"We have a very potent and, at the same time, international driver squad," says Dr Ullrich. "Simultaneously, those drivers who missed their opportunity last year in the DTM, get their chance now. Allan, Dindo, Frank und Pierre will be a real gain for the DTM."

Clear objective: Successful title defence

The aim for the 2005 DTM season is clear: "We want to be capable of winning again and try successfully to retain the three titles," explains Dr Ullrich. "Although we now have one year's DTM experience, it will however definitely not be any easier, because our rivals are wide awake. New race tracks add to the challenge."

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