

Communications Motorsport

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Audi on second row at Norisring

- **Thrilling DTM qualifying in Nuremberg**
- **Timo Scheider in fourth place is quickest Audi driver**
- **All four new Audi A4 DTM cars among the top eight**

Ingolstadt/Nürnberg – The fifth round of the 2008 DTM in Nuremberg promises to become the most thrilling one of the year. The fiercely competitive qualifying on Saturday confirmed that Audi with the new A4 has realistic chances of putting an end to the string of Norisring wins Mercedes has clinched since 2003.

Timo Scheider as the best Audi driver will start from the second row, Martin Tomczyk, Tom Kristensen and Mattias Ekström from positions five, six and eight. This means that on the grid all four new Audi A4 DTM cars are “lying in wait” on rows two, three and four.

During the qualifying, Timo Scheider even gave the many Audi fans in the stands at the Norisring reason to dream of a pole position: In the second session, the leader of the standings was the first Audi driver to break the 48-second sound barrier, clearly setting a best time of 47.877 seconds.

In the third and decisive segment, however, the Oschersleben winner did not quite equal his fastest lap. By merely 65 thousandths of a second, the German missed a position on the front row of the grid, which he would have achieved with his time set in the second session. Only marginally slower than Scheider were



Martin Tomczyk, Tom Kristensen and Mattias Ekström. All four drivers from Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline were lying within 159 thousandths of a second.

The best driver of an A4 from last year was the Frenchman Alexandre Prémat, who secured tenth place on the grid. His team-mate from Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Oliver Jarvis, made it into the second qualifying segment at his Norisring début as well. The young Brit will start to the race from position 13.

For the the drivers of Audi Sport Team Rosberg and the Audi Futurecom-TME customer team, the qualifying ended after the first session. They will be starting from places 16 (Mike Rockenfeller), 17 (Christijan Albers), 18 (Markus Winkelhock) and 19 (Katherine Legge).

The DTM race at the Norisring will start at 2:03 p.m. local time on Sunday. ARD will broadcast the race in Nuremberg live on "Das Erste" starting at 1:45 p.m.

Quotes after qualifying

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "We had expected a little more. I think, theoretically, that would have been possible too but it's incredibly difficult here to cope with the grip conditions that keep changing from one lap to the next. Our rivals were extremely strong again, as they always are here at the Norisring. The new A4 is showing a good performance, but in the qualifying it wasn't enough. Now we need to concentrate on the race. Anything's still possible."

Timo Scheider (GW:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM #10): "We managed developing the car in the right direction, despite the fact that in the past Nuremberg wasn't necessarily our forte. That's exactly why I've got a positive feeling. I'm happy that we've become clearly more competitive vis-à-vis Mercedes than in recent years. That's why fourth place is not a disappointment. But it is disappointing that I didn't manage to set my time from the second qualifying in the third session as well. I'm a little upset about that and it was also partially my fault. We're represented at the front of the grid with all the candidates for the championship title. That's why everything's open for Sunday."



Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #2): "That was quite alright, I'm very satisfied. Everyone knows that the Norisring isn't necessarily my favorite track. In all three sessions I set a good time. Those were my fastest times of the whole weekend. Fifth place at the Norisring linked to my name gives me a positive feeling ..."

Tom Kristensen (Audi A4 DTM #9): "My hopes had been higher. We worked very hard at Audi on improving our performance particularly at the Norisring. The car was very good, but not consistent enough. That's why I had a few small problems in the Schöller-S and in the last turn. It was difficult to manage identical laps. That cost me a tenth, and thus a few places."

Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #1): "I've been pleased with the new Audi A4 throughout the weekend. But in qualifying we didn't have a one-hundred-percent perfect setup – and, unfortunately, at exactly the time when everything should have been perfect. That means tomorrow we'll have to fight from eighth place."

Alexandre Prémat (Audi Bank/Shell Helix Audi A4 DTM #14): "I'm absolutely satisfied, I'd have never thought that it would be possible to clinch tenth place with the heaviest car in the field. We were lacking only a tenth to Gary Paffett, whose car is clearly lighter. I gave the max and am happy with the qualifying."

Oliver Jarvis (Best Buddies Audi A4 DTM #15): "In the first qualifying we were really good. I'm happy about that. In the second qualifying we decided to start on old tyres in order to save one set for Zandvoort. But afterwards, on the new tyres, we didn't achieve the improvement we'd been hoping for. The chicane didn't offer that much grip, the car was understeering."

Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM #18): "On Friday I was satisfied but in free practice the car was almost undrivable on the straight and only jumped at the front axle and bottomed out. So we changed the whole setup. In qualifying it was actually very good, it's just that at the Norisring the times are so close together. You need to have confidence in the car. I didn't have confidence or else we'd have made it into the next qualifying session."

Christijan Albers (Audi A4 DTM #21): "I think we've achieved the maximum. More than that wasn't possible. We can probably expect quite a good race as well because our car is very consistent. That gives us reason for hope."



Markus Winkelhock (Playboy Audi A4 DTM #19): "That was a very mediocre qualifying after I'd been getting along very well with my car in all the practice sessions. In free practice, the car's balance was still good. I was setting a superb time on used tyres, which I didn't achieve again in qualifying. Unfortunately, balance was completely different in qualifying: very poor traction and lots of oversteer."

Katherine Legge (Audi A4 DTM #20): "The qualifying was disappointing after we'd been keeping up with the field pretty well on Friday. Actually, we had all been looking forward to qualifying. However, both of the team's cars were not running perfectly. We've still got some work to do."

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): "We can't be completely satisfied. Our expectations had been higher. We need to continue fighting. We know that the race at the Norisring on Sunday will probably turn into a hot battle in high temperatures again. We're not sticking our head into the sand but will continue fighting in order to be successful after all."

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): "We made it through the first session. That was a must – we had planned on that. Making it into the last session was impossible. That session was reserved for the new cars. We're very satisfied with places ten and 13. We said that, despite the weight disadvantage, we won't give up. We showed what is possible with strong will power and a good team spirit. I'm proud of the boys and the drivers."

Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg): "After the previous sessions I'd been expecting a bit more. That we didn't get beyond the first qualifying with both cars is definitely disappointing."



The starting grid in Nuremberg

- 1 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes) 47.785s
- 2 Jamie Green (Mercedes) 47.963s
- 3 Paul di Resta (Mercedes) 47.969s
- 4 Timo Scheider (GW:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM) 48.028s
- 5 Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM) 48.041s
- 6 Tom Kristensen (Audi A4 DTM) 48.136s
- 7 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes) 48.168s
- 8 Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM) 48.187s
- 9 Gary Paffett (Mercedes) 48.295s
- 10 Alexandre Prémat (Audi Bank/Shell Helix Audi A4 DTM) 48.375s
- 11 Ralf Schumacher (Mercedes) 48.417s
- 12 Maro Engel (Mercedes) 48.538s
- 13 Oliver Jarvis (Best Buddies Audi A4 DTM) 48.565s
- 14 Mathias Lauda (Mercedes) 48.663s
- 15 Susie Stoddart (Mercedes) 48.581s
- 16 Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM) 48.627s
- 17 Christijan Albers (Audi A4 DTM) 48.658s
- 18 Markus Winkelhock (Playboy Audi A4 DTM) 48.662s
- 19 Katherine Legge (Audi A4 DTM) 48.829s

Photographs and information available at www.audi-motorsport.info

AUDI AG sold a total of 964,151 cars in 2007 and thus achieved its twelfth consecutive record year. With revenue of €33,617 million and profit before tax of €2,915 million, the company attained its best figures ever. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). At the end of 2007, production of the Audi A6 started in Aurangabad, India. The company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include Automobili Lamborghini Holding S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese, Italy, and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Audi employs about 54,000 people worldwide, including 45,000 in Germany. The brand with the four rings invests more than €2 billion each year in order to sustain the company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. Audi plans to significantly increase the number of models in its portfolio by 2015, from the 26 currently on offer to 40.