

Ingolstadt, 9 September 2005

Motorsport

Audi pilot Ekström guns for series lead

- **DTM stars again at the EuroSpeedway Lausitz**
- **Mattias Ekström trails Gary Paffett by only one point**
- **Audi lead manufacturers' championship**

The DTM title battle could hardly be more exciting: A single point separates defending champion Mattias Ekström in the Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline Audi A4 DTM and his nearest rival Gary Paffett going into the race at the EuroSpeedway Lausitz on Sunday, 18 September. The overall championship lead has changed hands four times in successive races. In the Lower Lausitz, 130 kilometres south of Berlin, the Audi team will leave no stone unturned in its efforts to replace the current leader with the defending DTM champion at the top of the table and to further increase its manufacturers' championship lead.

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The EuroSpeedway's short 3.442 kilometre DTM circuit layout hosted an exciting race in the Spring, in which the Audi drivers played starring roles. Tom Kristensen fought his way up to second place after starting seventh. Mattias Ekström was fourth despite a 'drive-through-penalty' and damaged car. Pierre Kaffer set the second fastest race lap in Audi Sport Team Joest's year-old A4 and followed Mattias Ekström across the finish line. Frank Stippler finished sixth and scored his best DTM result in doing so.

78,000 spectators followed the first DTM race at the EuroSpeedway. The advanced ticket sales for the second race, which was included in the calendar as substitute for Avignon (France), promises yet another impressive backdrop – no surprise bearing in mind the mounting tension at the top of the table. For those who prefer to follow the title battle on television, ARD broadcasts Qualifying (Saturday, 17 September from 2 p.m. local time) and the race (Sunday, 18 September from 1.45 p.m.) live as usual.

Quotes before the race at the EuroSpeedway

Mattias Ekström (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline #1): “The EuroSpeedway will be tough for us but I aim to take revenge for the race held there in the Spring which didn’t quite run as planned for me. I like the EuroSpeedway and have always been on the pace there. I’m convinced that we will be competitive and have a chance to win the race – assuming that we are good in qualifying.”

Martin Tomczyk (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline #2): “The EuroSpeedway is the first track at which we drive for a second time this year. This makes the set-up work a little easier for us; however, it’s just the same for our rivals. I hope that I’ll have a little more luck than I did at the first race in May and can help Mattias to retake the championship lead.”

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Tom Kristensen (Audi Sport Team Abt #5): “It would have been very challenging to have driven on a difficult street circuit in Avignon but the EuroSpeedway Lausitz is also a fantastic facility. I’m pleased that we compete there for a second time.”

Allan McNish (Audi Sport Team Abt #6): “It’s an advantage for me that we have already driven once on the EuroSpeedway, which means I’m familiar with the track. The A4 has been continuously developed since May, so I’m sure we will be competitive. The track is quite slow and not exactly one of my favourite tracks, however the fabulous atmosphere with the packed main grandstands more than make up for this.”

Christian Abt (Audi Sport Team Joest Racing #14): “I’m afraid that the weekend in the Lausitz region will be one of the hardest of the year for me. The EuroSpeedway isn’t really my cup of tea, and it could be difficult to get points, which I actually desperately need to stop me from sliding further down the table after my no-score in Zandvoort.”

Pierre Kaffer (Audi Sport Team Joest Racing #15): “I scored my best result of the season so far at the EuroSpeedway – I’d obviously like to repeat it. It won’t be easy because the new cars have been constantly developed since May and are quicker. This won’t stop me from trying to finish in the points. After my good race at Zandvoort, I’m convinced that I’ll be on the pace also in qualifying.”

Rinaldo Capello (Audi Sport Team Joest #18): “The EuroSpeedway is the first track at which I have already driven a DTM race. This should help me to get the car perfectly set-up also for qualifying. At the previous races, the set-up was good only by Sunday – and this is a day too late.”

Frank Stippler (Audi Sport Team Joest #19): “I have fond memories of EuroSpeedway: Earlier this year I finished sixth and am already very interested to see whether things run just as well this time. In spite of the long straights our year-old cars showed their potential there in May.”

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Boss Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): “The motto is: Revenge! Our speed was good at the race in May, and the A4 has got even quicker since then. However, the competition hasn’t been resting on its laurels, so the spectators can look forward to yet another really exciting DTM race.”

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest): “At the first race at the EuroSpeedway we were well sorted and scored points with two cars. We want to build on this – but know very well that the new cars have improved massively since then. However, we’ve also found something in our year-old cars.”

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “In the Super Pole at the Nürburgring, and particularly at Zandvoort, we didn’t show our true potential and had to battle to the front from bad grid positions in the race. At the EuroSpeedway we also have to do the business in single lap qualifying, and then we should have a good chance of retaking the lead in the drivers’ championship and increasing our lead in the manufacturers’ championship. One thing is clear: In the DTM this year, every single point counts.”

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