



Press Information

Hockenheim, 1 October 2004

Audi quick under difficult conditions as well

The new DTM champion, Mattias Ekström, was the quickest Audi driver in Friday's tests for the DTM's finale at Hockenheim. The Swede in his Audi A4 DTM missed the day's fastest time by merely 91 thousandths of a second. Martin Tomczyk and Tom Kristensen, as well, managed to make it into the top ten. During the two 90-minute tests, rain showers made conditions difficult, the track only dried off towards the end of the second session. Nevertheless, Ekström today topped his time in Friday's tests at the season opener in April by four tenths of a second.

Quotes after Friday's tests

Mattias Ekström (Audi Sport Team Abt / Audi A4 DTM #5)

4th / 3rd place, 1m 35.292s (36 laps)

"Today we had extreme changes in conditions and surely the most thrilling Friday test of the whole season: the guys at the pit-wall were hardly able to keep up with switching the positions and times on my pit board as quickly as they were changing. We probably have to improve a bit more, but now I know that Mercedes are not unbeatable here at Hockenheim."

Martin Tomczyk (Audi Sport Team Abt / Audi A4 DTM #6)

5th / 5th place, 1m 35.664s (31 laps)

"This was a successful Friday for us. In the second test I waited for a long time for the track to dry off somewhat. Then we tried out a set-up that worked out very well right away. And we'll continue exactly from that base in tomorrow's free practice."

Tom Kristensen (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline / Audi A4 DTM #12)

7th / 8th place, 1m 35.896s (51 laps)

"I did a lot of laps today because, for the first time this season, we had the opportunity to fully test our A4 under changing conditions. This gave me the chance to experiment a lot with the set-up and the car. When the track was drying off towards the end of the second test, I was out with a set-up that tended to be more on the conservative side."

Frank Biela (Audi Sport Infineon Team Joest / Audi A4 DTM #45)

18th / 12th place, 1m 36.423s (52 laps)

"Because of the rain the first test didn't amount to much, but the second session was quite alright. The car has very good balance, except for a bit of oversteer. Around tenth place, the field is very tight again. Perhaps I'll manage to make it into the top ten tomorrow."

Christian Abt (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline / Audi A4 DTM #11)

13th / 13th place, 1m 36.519s (57 laps)

"I'm satisfied with Friday's tests. This afternoon, things were very difficult because the track got drier and drier from one minute to the next, which meant that the fastest time wasn't possible until the very end. My A4 feels very good, and this makes me optimistic for tomorrow."

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Emanuele Pirro (Audi Sport Infineon Team Joest / Audi A4 DTM #44)

16th / 14th place, 1m 36.542s (54 laps)

"Actually, I'm quite satisfied, my A4 is making a very good impression.

Unfortunately, I didn't have a free lap at the end when I was out with new tyres and the fastest times were clocked. But for tomorrow I'm optimistic."

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): "So far, everything has been going according to plan: despite having the drivers' and teams' titles in our pocket already, our squad are working with the same concentration as they have been the whole year and doing everything to be as well set as possible for the fight for the manufacturers' title. Due to the changing conditions, the times clocked today are hard to judge. But it does look like we'll be seeing a thrilling fight between three contenders this weekend."

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Infineon Team Joest): "Relatively normal conditions were prevalent only at the end of the second test and, at that point, the track was of course pretty crowded. Basically, you could forget about the first test completely, but in the second session we pulled off our programme pretty much and sorted out the most important things. Although we had to do without long runs today, we'll be able to draw on experience factors from the first race as far as that's concerned."

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "Today's result must be taken with a pinch of salt, because the track kept getting drier and drier and therefore faster. The deciding factor was the time at which you were out. Despite the changing conditions, all three brands are very close to each other yet again. I do hope that we'll have dry conditions tomorrow in order to be able to draw a true comparison."

Find photos and further information on the internet:

www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation required)

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