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Motorsport / Start of the 2006 DTM

Audi race engineers – technicians and psychologists

- **The race engineers' role in the DTM**

When the new DTM season is launched at Hockenheim at 14:05 today, the spotlight will not only be on the Audi drivers. The race engineers, too, will be playing an important role. The interaction between the engineer and the driver requires perfect rapport and painstaking attention to detail when handling the Audi A4 DTM. What is more, at each race weekend the vehicle's set-up is worked out from scratch for every circuit according to a basic, systematic approach.

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For the race engineer, the race weekend begins with so-called long runs in the first test on Friday, during which the race is simulated. Another race simulation follows in the second test before the set-up work for the qualifying, in other words a fast lap, starts. "Trimmed for qualifying," the A4 DTM goes out for the first time in Saturday morning's free practice session. In the qualifying session on Saturday afternoon the race engineer concentrates on the perfect timing of the various trials.

Together with the data engineer, who performs a mathematical simulation of the various scenarios, the race engineer then develops different strategies for the race. Final strategy corrections are made after the warm-up on Sunday morning, which primarily serves to check the consistency of the tyres. In the race, carrying out all these moves to perfection is crucial: the race engineer coordinates the actions with his driver via radio communications in order to ensure optimum execution of the pit stops and strategy as well as being able to respond to the way the race unfolds. A crucial element of success: the race engineer needs to be as much a technician as a psychologist.

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