

Communications Motorsport

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Audi sets best time at Le Mans on Friday

- **Tom Kristensen in front at Le Mans in DTM too**
- **DTM leader Timo Scheider sets second-best time**
- **Christijan Albers fifth in the best “used car”**

Ingolstadt/Le Mans – Audi started the test day of the DTM’s tenth round at Le Mans by setting two best times with the A4 DTM. In the morning, the Swede Mattias Ekström was leading the time sheets at the “Circuit Bugatti” in front of Tom Kristensen, in the afternoon, the Dane was running in front. In the second test, a wet track created special conditions for a long period of time.

As early as in the first test Audi set the pace: Mattias Ekström set the best time at 1m 32.822s. Tom Kristensen, at the wheel of a new Audi A4 DTM from Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline as well, followed with a gap of 48 thousandths of a second. At times, slight, drizzling rain made for inconsistent and difficult conditions.

In the afternoon, after a rain shower, the teams started their work on a wet track that only dried off very slowly. Due to a heavy accident of a rival only a few minutes before the scheduled end of the test the session was interrupted. Subsequently, Tom Kristensen, the eight-time winner of the 24-Hour Race of Le Mans, secured the best time of 1m 31.601s on the 4.185-kilometre version of the French circuit. Leader of the standings Timo Scheider managed setting the second-best time with a gap of 0.890 seconds.



"My car was good, both on the dry and the wet track," said Tom Kristensen. "We tried many different things and of course it's nice to head the time sheets at the end of the day. It was also nice to see that so many fans came to the circuit as early as on Friday. I hope that by Sunday the weather will be better and the grandstands will really be crowded."

While Markus Winkelhock as the quickest driver of a year-old car managed setting the sixth-best time at 1m 33.114s in the morning, Christijan Albers drove the fifth-quickest lap of 1m 32.593s in the two-year-old Audi A4 DTM in the afternoon.

In view of the external circumstances, Audi Head of Motorsport Dr Wolfgang Ullrich cautiously summed up the day: "In both tests today we were confronted with heavily changing weather conditions and practically achieved no consistent times. On slicks, it was possible to drive to some extent just in the last 15 minutes. We tried out various set-ups for rain and dry conditions and hope to be able to use the information we gained in the process for Saturday."

Positions for the starting grid will be determined in Saturday's qualifying starting at 1:28 p.m. (CEST). ARD will start to broadcast live from Le Mans at 1:30 p.m. on "Das Erste". The free practice from 09:40 to 10:40 a.m. can be watched live on www.dtm.tv. As always, background reports are available at Audi.tv.

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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 57,000 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 to 40.