



Press Information

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Audi wants to shine also at DTM finale

Following three one-two's in succession and after clinching the championship early at the penultimate race of the season with Mattias Ekström, Audi has two goals at the 2004 DTM season finale at Hockenheim: In front of an expected record backdrop of over 100,000 spectators, the Audi works team wants to bid farewell to the season by giving another good performance. Furthermore, Audi want to add the DTM Manufacturers' crown to the Drivers' and Teams' championships already won.

Audi heads into the last race of the season with a nine point advantage over Mercedes-Benz. With its long straights, the Hockenheimring is not considered to favour the 2004 DTM championship winning car designed to produce high-levels of downforce. Nevertheless, Audi driver Martin Tomczyk started from the front row at the season opener, held at the same venue, in April. Mattias Ekström managed to finish on the podium with the Audi A4 DTM on its debut. In total, four of the six Audi drivers scored points at Hockenheim in the spring, and last year Ekström missed winning the finale by a mere 0.213 seconds after an exciting duel with Jean Alesi.

The big 2004 DTM showdown starts on 3 October at 2 p.m. Mattias Ekström will be officially announced as the new DTM Champion at a Gala event in the evening.

Quotes before the race

Mattias Ekström (Audi Sport Team Abt / Audi A4 DTM #5): "It's a fantastic feeling to head into the jam-packed Hockenheim Motodrom. However it won't be an exhibition race for me, as my main goal is to beat the Mercedes boys at their home race. We didn't have the chance at the season opener – now my team colleagues and I would quite happily show them just who has made the most progress since then. I'm looking forward to the race as I can drive without having one eye on the tactics and can take a few more risks for the first time."

Martin Tomczyk (Audi Sport Team Abt / Audi A4 DTM #6): "Even though we have already wrapped up the Drivers' and Teams' titles, I don't need anything to boost my motivation: Our task is to win the Manufacturers' championship for Audi at Hockenheim as well. And because Mattias can drive a little more relaxed than of late, there is much more at stake for me: I want to defend my position as best German and I have the ambition to mount the top step of the podium once this year."

Christian Abt (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline / Audi A4 DTM #11): "Obviously with Mattias winning the title, the most important goal of the year has been achieved before the finale. However, at Hockenheim I'd really like to score the first points, in fact the ones I missed in Brno thanks to being pushed off by a competitor. I have only one thing to say to them: Don't worry about me and just let me complete my 37 laps nice and peacefully. It would be fabulous if we could repay the many Audi fans at the finale with a brilliant performance."

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Tom Kristensen (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline / Audi A4 DTM #12): "I'm looking forward to the finale. Mercedes possibly has a small advantage, as top speed is very important at Hockenheim. However, we have developed our championship winning car so well over the course of the season that we have a good chance of taking revenge for the season opener. The Motodrom will be full of spectators, lots of Danish fans come to Hockenheim – there would be nothing sweeter than to win the race there and, as a result, clinch the Manufacturers' Championship for Audi."

Emanuele Pirro (Audi Sport Infineon Team Joest / Audi A4 DTM #44): "I'm really looking forward to the finale following our positive result at Brno. It was clear to see that it is a great help to me if I already know the track – and that is also the case at Hockenheim. Although the circuit is obviously not perfect for our A4 I'm optimistic. I want to score more points and end the season on a high note."

Frank Biela (Audi Sport Infineon Team Joest / Audi A4 DTM #45): "It goes without saying that we still have to work on the performance. As we have already raced once at Hockenheim this year, we already have starting point as far as the suspension set-up is concerned. We have also learnt a few more things on top of this during the course of the season, so it should be possible to get a good result – assuming I have just a little bit of luck."

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): "The championship party was brilliant. In the mean time however, everybody in the workshop is concentrating fully on their jobs, as we want to do everything within our power at Hockenheim that Audi also wins the Manufacturers' title. Audi Sport gave us a car this year with which my drivers were able to fight for victory in every race. Quite simply that's why this title should go to Ingolstadt."

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Infineon Team Joest): "Bearing in mind the advance ticket sales, we can expect a magnificent final event. We know the track from the opening race of the season, and Emanuele scored points there. Our target this time is to score points with both cars. Emanuele still has the chance to finish in the top ten in the overall rankings. And Franks deserves at least a point after his run of bad luck."

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "We head to the finale fully motivated after clinching both the drivers' and teams' championships early. We would obviously also like to win the manufacturers' championship. But we do know that our A4 does not suit the characteristic of the Hockenheim circuit quite as well as it suited Brno. Nevertheless we will do everything possible to bow out of the season with another good result in front of the fabulous crowds expected."

Photographs and further information are available in the Internet:
www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation necessary)

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