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Motorsport

Audi wants to strike back in the Lausitz

- **DTM stars at the EuroSpeedway**
- **Audi return as last year's winners to East Germany**
- **Shortened circuit layout guarantees even more excitement**

A television audience of 2.22 million watched the live ARD broadcast of the DTM season opener at Hockenheim, 113,000 fans formed an impressive backdrop at the circuit. Only two weeks later on Sunday May 1, Europe's most popular touring car series stars at Europe's leading state-of-the-art circuit, the EuroSpeedway Lausitz, situated 130 kilometres south of Berlin. The fans can look forward to a particularly exciting race because defending champions Audi want to strike back following the somewhat unlucky course of events at the season opener.

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The Audi squad worked hard after the race at Hockenheim to rebuild Tom Kristensen's car, which was badly damaged in a start collision. Also, the data recorded during the season opener was analysed. At Hockenheim, practice results and Mattias Ekström's pole position demonstrated that the new Audi A4 DTM was quick out of the box. The job is now to find the perfect set-up for the EuroSpeedway – especially for the race.

It should also be taken into account that the circuit layout has changed: The 3.410 kilometre DTM version will be used for the first time. The circuit is more than one kilometre shorter than last year, when Mattias Ekström won.

The spectators benefit from the shortened track layout: Instead of the previous 37-lap distance the race is now held over 42 laps. The atmosphere on the Eurospeedway Lausitz main grandstand was unique last year. More than 70,000 fans are also expected this year. ARD broadcasts qualifying (Saturday from 2 p.m.) and the race (Sunday from 1:45 p.m.) live.

Quotes before the race at EuroSpeedway

Mattias Ekström (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline #1): "Now the word is revenge! The EuroSpeedway is the circuit on which I was the most successful, up to now, during my DTM career. I've started there four times and mounted the podium on each occasion. Last year's race was one of the best we have ever given to the DTM spectators. I'm really looking forward to the EuroSpeedway."

Martin Tomczyk (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline #2): "The EuroSpeedway facility is impressive, and, although I've never had a good result there till now, I really liked the old circuit layout. We'll only know if the new track layout suits our A4 after the tests on Friday. But I am confident. After my short race at Hockenheim I definitely want to see the chequered flag at the EuroSpeedway and score points."

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Tom Kristensen (Audi Sport Team Abt #5): "The new Audi A4 DTM was already quick at Hockenheim. Everybody is working hard that it will be even quicker at the EuroSpeedway. I'm really looking forward to the race, especially the new circuit layout. Hockenheim didn't go exactly according to plan, that's why the next race can't come soon enough."

Allan McNish (Audi Sport Team Abt #6): "The Lausitzring is one of the circuits which is new to me. I know that Audi was very competitive there last year and won with 'Eki'. Everybody in the team is really eager to strike back after the somewhat disappointing result in Hockenheim. We will give 100 percent. I now know a little more about how a DTM weekend functions. That's why I'm confident of getting a better result at the Lausitzring than at Hockenheim."

Christian Abt (Audi Sport Team Joest Racing #14): "I think that the new circuit layout will suit our cars. There aren't so many straights anymore, that's why we should be even more competitive than last year. We should have a good chance of being up the front and obviously I hope that I can repeat my good result from Hockenheim."

Pierre Kaffer (Audi Sport Team Joest Racing #15): "I won the first Formula 3 race held at the EuroSpeedway. So, I have good memories of the Lausitz. Generally, I was impressed with just how much goes on during a DTM weekend. It

is just amazing and the races are incredibly exciting as you fight for every tenth of second.”

Rinaldo Capello (Audi Sport Team Joest #18): “I’ve crossed Hockenheim off the list; I want to drive my first proper DTM race on the EuroSpeedway. The circuit is new to me. That’s means that I’ll have to drive as many laps as possible on Friday. At Hockenheim there was some good news: Our 2004 Audi is fully competitive. This gives me hope.”

Frank Stippler (Audi Sport Team Joest #19): “In other race series’ I was always very good at the EuroSpeedway, was often on the podium and took pole position once. I obviously don’t know what to expect in a DTM car, particularly as the circuit layout has also changed. However, I’m really looking forward to the EuroSpeedway and to learn even more about the DTM.”

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Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Boss Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): “The aftermath from Hockenheim has cost time and energy which we would have much rather used elsewhere. We have, however, prepared well and expect a good showing at the EuroSpeedway. We were able to collect plenty of data at Hockenheim and learn quite a lot from it. I hope that we make a better team impression and bring all four cars to the finish.”

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest): “It would be great if the trend, which emerged at Hockenheim, is confirmed and we can continue to brave it out with the leading group in the year old cars. The success at the opening race was fantastic for the entire team and had a motivating effect. The EuroSpeedway is a power circuit, which suited last year’s A4 quite well. The circuit should suit us even more after the modification.”

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “The new Audi A4 DTM was developed just in time for Hockenheim. Practice showed that our new car was quick out of the box. Unfortunately we weren’t able yet to fully convert the potential into the desired results. We have analysed the data and drawn our conclusions from it. The competitiveness in the DTM this year is even greater. The fans can look forward to another fantastic DTM race at EuroSpeedway.“

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