

Ingolstadt, 04 February 2002

Audi Works Drivers Recharge Their Batteries at Fitness Camp in St. Moritz

Before the 2002 motorsport season takes off with the 12 Hours of Sebring on 16th March, the Audi works drivers Frank Biela, Rinaldo Capello, Johnny Herbert, Tom Kristensen, Christian Pescatori and Emanuele Pirro have recharged their batteries at a fitness training camp in Switzerland's ski resort St. Moritz. For six days in Upper Engadine, the Audi drivers trained alongside the pilots from Abt Sportsline, who contest the DTM in the Audi TT. Audi team physician Dr. Christian John, who compiled the exercise plans, is satisfied with the results: "We worked well and are optimally prepared."

The objective of the training camp run at high altitude in Upper Engadine was to improve basic fitness and endurance. "We've laid a foundation which the drivers can build on at home," said Dr. John. The day began early for the Audi drivers: On the programme before breakfast was 30 minutes of stretching followed by a 90 minute workout with weights. "For race drivers in particular the focus is on strengthening shoulder, neck and arm muscles," explains Dr. John. In the late morning Biela, Pirro & Co. strapped on their cross-country skis. After returning from the trails they went back to the gymnasium for another hour of volleyball, basketball or football.

"Fitness is a prerequisite for success," emphasizes Dr. John. "If you're not fit you make mistakes in extreme situations." For over ten years the training camp in St. Moritz has been a fixture in the preparation for the season. It is neither the elegance nor the "exciting champagne atmosphere" that lure to St. Moritz. "Here we find ideal conditions for our fitness training: modern gymnasiums, a well-equipped weight-training room, and around 180 kilometres of maintained trails," said Dr. John. The high elevation provides an ideal "additional stress". Taking part for the first time in St. Moritz was Johnny Herbert who strengthens the Audi works team at the Sebring 12 Hour race and the 24 Hours of Le Mans. "You have to be fit for Le Mans. The race is extremely hard," says the Le Mans winner of 1991. Herbert was delighted by the warm welcome he received from the Audi works squad. "It was great fun with the boys."

Concluding the training camp in the Upper Engadine was a taxi bobsled ride on St. Moritz's olympic run. The race drivers also enjoyed the experience on four runners. "Great fun, but it really shook me up," said Tom Kristensen after his icy run down the canal. Kristensen recently received the Sportsman of the Year award in Denmark.