

**Communications Motorsport**

Jürgen Pippig

Telephone: +49 (0)841 89 34200

E-mail: [motorsport-media@audi.de](mailto:motorsport-media@audi.de)

[www.audi-motorsport.info](http://www.audi-motorsport.info)

## **DTM countdown: Proven technology, new tires**

- **Only two weeks before the DTM opener**
- **Million seller Audi A4 also successful on the race track**
- **A4 DTM runs for first time on Hankook tires**

**Ingolstadt, April 14, 2011 – While Audi produced the fifth million A4 several days ago, the new season begins for its victorious brother in racing. At Hockenheim on May 1 the A4 DTM rolls to the grid with proven technology, but with new tires.**

2011 is the fourth and final year of racing for the current A4 DTM originally developed by Audi Sport for the 2008 season under the project name “R14.” The car evolved to become the “R14 plus” in 2009 after a technical update. Both model versions are in action again this year, since DTM car technology is frozen since August 2009. Further developments are prohibited.

While Audi Sport works feverishly in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm on the internally labeled “R17” successor complying with the new regulations valid from 2012, the technicians face a completely different challenge for the 2011 season: They have to adapt the A4 as well as possible to the tires of new DTM exclusive supplier Hankook, without being able to change the car’s basic technology.

Audi suffered painfully last season through the significance of the tire’s impact in the DTM. The new design of the former supplier did not harmonize with the A4 DTM. The Audi drivers complained about the lack of “feedback” from the front axle and the rear tires could not be stressed as in the previous years. “Our hands were tied since the technology is frozen,” remembers Head of Audi Motorsport Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich uneasily of the 2010 season in which Audi could only win two races after taking three successive DTM championship titles.

The Audi Sport technicians were justifiably sensitive when in the DTM – just like in Formula 1 – a change of tire supplier appeared on the agenda. During joint development tests with the new Korean partner, the primary aim of all parties

involved was to configure a tire for the 2011 season which disadvantaged none of the competing manufacturers – despite the technology freeze.

Previous test results appear to confirm this goal. “We have to applaud Hankook,” says Mattias Ekström, DTM Champion in 2004 and 2007. “The company has designed and produced a tire for the first time for demanding DTM race cars like our A4 DTM. The tire works very well. Hankook deserve a big compliment.”

Ekström gives good grades for both a fast lap and race distance: “The tire functions immediately on the first lap in qualifying. In the race we expect excellent durability, which is why in my opinion the races will be even more exciting. I think the field will stay much closer together for much longer.”

As before in the DTM there is only one tire type for dry conditions, the so-called “slicks”, and another type for rain. During the pre-season tests the main goal for the Audi Sport teams Abt Sportsline, Phoenix and Rosberg was to develop the best possible set-up for qualifying and the race with the new tire – because in view of the extremely close levels of performance in the DTM optimal use of the tire is the key to success.

A stony silence exists among the teams and Audi Sport regarding the knowledge gained over the last few months. Nobody is willing to show their hand before the season starts. Only so much: “You have to set the car up differently and adapt your driving style,” says Mattias Ekström. “I’ve managed this very well up to now.”

His team mates’ assessments are similar. If they prove correct then the DTM fans can look forward to an exciting and close season in which the tires form the foundation for close competition.



The Audi Group sold around 1,092,400 cars of the Audi brand in 2010. The Company posted revenue of €35.4 billion and an operating profit of €3.3 billion in 2010. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). Aurangabad in India saw the start of CKD production of the Audi A6 at the end of 2007, of the Audi A4 in early October 2008 and of the Audi Q5 in July 2010. Production of the new Audi A1 has been running at the Brussels plant since May 2010. The Company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include AUDI HUNGARIA MOTOR Kft., Automobili Lamborghini Holding S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese (Italy) and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Audi currently employs around 60,000 people worldwide, including around 46,600 in Germany. Between 2011 and 2015 the brand with the four rings is planning to invest around €11 billion, mainly in new products, in order to sustain the Company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. By 2015, Audi plans to increase the number of models in its portfolio to 42.

Audi has long been fulfilling its social responsibility on many levels – with the aim of making the future worth living for generations to come. The basis for Audi's lasting success is therefore formed by environmental protection, the conservation of resources, international competitiveness and a forward-looking human resources policy. One example of AUDI AG's commitment to environmental issues is the newly established Audi Environmental Foundation.