

Vallelunga/Ingolstadt, 2 March 2006

Motorsport

Heinz-Harald Frentzen debut in Audi A4 DTM

- **Good start at test in Vallelunga**
- **Timo Scheider also new to Audi A4 DTM**
- **First laps in DTM car for Vanina Ickx**

Heinz-Harald Frentzen made a good impression during his first test in the Audi A4 DTM. The former Formula 1 driver, who only signed his 2006 DTM contract at Audi on Monday, felt comfortable at the wheel of his new car immediately, and gave the Audi engineers' precise comments about the A4 DTM car's handling.

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At the official DTM test in Vallelunga (Italy) Frentzen shared a 2006 Audi A4 DTM with Martin Tomczyk. A total of three evolution A4 DTM cars were in action, which have been labelled "R12 plus" internally at Audi Sport and were driven in Vallelunga by Heinz-Harald Frentzen, Martin Tomczyk, ex-DTM Champion Mattias Ekström and Le Mans record winner Tom Kristensen.

The new factory teams Audi Sport Team Phoenix and Audi Sport Team Rosberg, which each tested with a year-old car (R12), were also in action for Audi in Vallelunga. Christian Abt, Pierre Kaffer, Timo Scheider and Frank Stippler were able to familiarise themselves with their new teams and the 2005 Audi A4 DTM. Newcomer Timo Scheider also got off to a good start in the A4.

Vanina Ickx was particularly hard-working: The DTM debutant who sat at the wheel of a DTM car for the first time completed a total of 269 laps over the course of the four-day test with the Team Midland 2004 Audi A4 DTM.

Before the season opener at Hockenheim on 9 April, another official DTM test will be held between 20 and 23 March at Brands Hatch (GB) where all Audi teams and drivers will run again.

Comments after the test in Vallelunga

Christian Abt (Audi Sport Team Phoenix)

1:29.225 min. (109 laps)

“I felt comfortable in my new team and new car immediately. The two days in Vallelunga were very productive. We now have a good base for the next test. I think that result for a year-old car was extremely good.”

Mattias Ekström (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)

1:28.480 min. (240 laps)

“It was a good test for us. We’d intended to do a lot; we got through almost everything on our test programme and came away with some interesting results which will help us along the way.”

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Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)

1:29.485 min. (121 laps)

“I was extremely curious to find out exactly how the Audi A4 was to drive and to learn the team and how it works. I’ve satisfied my initial curiosity. The car is precise and reacts well to changes. The basic handling is very good.”

Pierre Kaffer (Audi Sport Team Phoenix)

1:29.052 min. (181 laps)

“It was great to finally be able to sit in a race car again after the long winter break. We were able to test and try a whole host of things. The R12 is completely different to the R11 that I drove last year – and it is great fun.”

Tom Kristensen (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)

1:28.455 min. (137 laps)

“Audi Sport just doesn’t sleep. The technicians have again had some great ideas, which we tested on the test car in Vallelunga. I hope that we can surprise the competition during the course of the year. I’m already looking forward to the next test in Brands Hatch.”

Vanina Ickx (Team Midland)**1:29.681 min. (269 laps)**

“I was very impressed by the Audi A4 DTM – the engine has plenty of power, the brakes are amazing, the car reacts sensitively to small changes. I learnt a lot during my first DTM test and was even able to compare my laps with those of Mattias (Ekström). It was however very strenuous to drive on four consecutive days.”

Timo Scheider (Audi Sport Team Rosberg)**1:29.018 min. (180 laps)**

“It’s a great feeling to be back in the DTM. I felt comfortable in the Audi A4 DTM immediately and it was fun to drive from the off. I was able to feel the car on the limit relatively early on, which was an important factor for me to be able to say: I’m get along fine.”

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Frank Stippler (Audi Sport Team Rosberg)**1:29.478 min. (132 laps)**

“I tried a different driving style, which didn’t work quite as well as I’d expected. That’s why I didn’t get down to a time. Because there aren’t so many opportunities to test in the DTM I broke off the experiment and went back to my old driving style, which worked very well.”

Martin Tomczyk (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)**1:28.951 min. (252 laps)**

“I drove the new car for the first time and got behind the wheel again for the first time since the 2005 season finale at Hockenheim. I used the time to get used to my old race engineer again and get through my test programme. I feel comfortable in the car and notice the changes that were made over the winter.”

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