

Nürburgring, 20 August 2006

## Motorsport

### Martin Tomczyk clinches podium result for Audi

- **Strong performance of the youngest Audi factory driver**
- **Tom Kristensen fifth after suffering tyre problems**
- **Audi drivers forfeit chances for victory at the start**

116,000 spectators at the Nürburgring witnessed another thrilling DTM weekend on which Martin Tomczyk in the Red Bull A4 DTM of Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline – finishing in third place – achieved a podium result for Audi. Tomczyk – aged 24 and thus the youngest of the Audi factory drivers – pushed forwards in the rain from tenth to fourth place with a lightning start, made up another position on the sixth lap and, in the final phase on the meanwhile dry track, even nearly caught up with the Mercedes of the current DTM leader, Bernd Schneider. Tomczyk thus made it to the podium again for the first time since the 2004 DTM finale at Hockenheim.

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Tom Kristensen and Mattias Ekström, on the other hand, forfeited a possible Audi victory at the Nürburgring straight at the start. Kristensen, who had gone into the race from the front row, dropped from second to sixth place with spinning rear wheels, while Ekström stalled the engine, causing the Swede to leave the first lap in merely 14th place. With fast lap times, particularly half-way through the race, both Audi drivers managed to fight their way back to the front. Kristensen was running fourth – just behind Tomczyk – for a long time. On the third set of tyres, though, he encountered vibrations, which caused the Dane to make several braking mistakes and to drop to fifth place. Heinz-Harald Frentzen, Timo Scheider and Mattias Ekström finishing in places six, seven and eight meant that a total of five Audi drivers scored points at the Nürburgring.

A practically sensational start was managed by Christian Abt, who turned his Playboy Audi A4 DTM into the first corner in second place but ultimately had to settle for tenth position after some tough duels.

In the overall standings Tom Kristensen continues to rank in second place with a twelve-point gap.

## Quotes after the race

**Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** “The result is disappointing. In the race we saw the pace we were able to keep, but we forfeited everything at the start. With a good strategy and good lap times on a dry track we made up a lot of ground, but the situation in the Championship is bad. I’m happy for Martin (Tomczyk), who confirmed in the race what he’d been showing as early on Friday and in the Free Practice. Six cars in the top ten and five cars in the points is a good team performance. I’m content with this.”

### **Martin Tomczyk**

**Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Siemens Audi A4 DTM #7**

**3rd place, + 12.504s**

“For me, it was a perfect race. I, and this also goes for the team, feel a great sense of relief after such a long period of waiting for a good result. Today, things finally worked out. We worked hard the whole weekend. In the race, the car was simply perfect even though the prerequisites after the qualifying hadn’t been all that good. I really can’t say myself how I managed such a great start. After that, every lap got faster and faster.”

### **Tom Kristensen**

**Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Siemens Audi A4 DTM #7**

**5th place, + 25.743s**

“From this starting base, it was a bad race. At first I got away pretty well, but then I had to deal with spinning wheels. Our timing of changing to slicks was perfect. This made it possible for me to make up some ground. On the last set of tyres we lost the race because there were vibrations. These kept getting worse and my wheels locked. That’s why I overshot a corner and lost a position to Alesi. This wasn’t a good day – I would have liked gathering more points for Audi.”

### **Heinz-Harald Frentzen**

**Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Veltins Audi A4 DTM #6**

**6th place, + 27.479s**

“This was my first standing start in rain in the DTM. It was pretty slippery, but I got along quite well. Later, a few duels followed, among others with Alesi. Generally speaking, things were going well, but my car was a little weak on the front suspension. The understeer didn’t get any better throughout the entire race.

Everyone had difficulties finding a perfect set-up for these conditions. Nevertheless, it was a thrilling race that was good fun.”

**Timo Scheider****Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Gebrauchtwagen:plus Audi A4 DTM #16****7th place, + 32.380s**

“After a good start I got through the first turn without any major body contact and was able to make up one or two places. My speed in the rain was surprisingly good compared with Friday when things tended to be a bit on the poor side for us in the wet. We were stronger than Mercedes. In the wet, but in the dry as well, our times were good. Mattias (Ekström) at times was a bit quicker than I on new tyres, so I let him pass. At the end of the race I was quicker and Mattias returned the favour by letting me pass. That was really nice. That’s my idea of team play.”

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**Mattias Ekström****Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #5****8th place, + 32.486s**

“The start was really bad – clearly that was my mistake. In the rain my car wasn’t perfect, in the dry things were going better. The strategy, too, was very good. After stalling the engine at the start, I can be happy to have still scored a point. I had a nice experience of teamwork with Timo Scheider, who has helped me a lot on other occasions. Today, I was able to give him something back.”

**Christian Abt****Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Playboy Audi A4 DTM #12****10th place, + 48.479s**

“That was a bit of a disappointment. After a great start I was really in a good position. I saw that a Red Bull car and Tom (Kristensen) were behind me and I let them pass because they’re fighting for the Championship. Then, unfortunately, I was attacked heavily by our own people. This made me lose a lot of time, otherwise I would have easily been able to clinch a place among the top six.”

**Pierre Kaffer****Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Castrol Audi A4 DTM #14****14th place, + 58.050s**

“At the start, the wheels were spinning too heavily and, as a result, I lost a few places. Then I was bumped from behind and was really standing cross-wise. When the tarmac was beginning to dry, we kept getting slower. We need to analyse why that was. This loss of time we weren’t able to make up any more.”

**Nicolas Kiesa****Futurecom TME, Futurecom Audi A4 DTM #19****17th place, + 1m 22.764s**

“It’s been good to finish the race and be able to gather experience over the whole distance. I did have higher expectations of myself, though. Throughout the weekend there was an upwards trend. I thought that there was even more potential during the race but I had problems with the braking balance. On slicks I quickly secured an advantage even though I wasn’t able to exploit it fully.”

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**Vanina Ickx****Futurecom TME, Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM #20****18th place, - 1 lap**

“This was the funniest race I’ve ever experienced in the DTM. Just because of this start – if for no other reason – I’d drive this race once more. This time, quite a few things happened. In the rain conditions were treacherous, but my speed was right. During the first pit stop I lost a lot of time since the rear, left-hand wheel nut hadn’t been fastened. After that, I got a bit too enthusiastic and slipped into the gravel trap. Altogether, my speed was okay today and I had a lot of fun.”

**Frank Stippler****Audi Sport Team Rosberg, S line Audi A4 DTM #15****Retired (front, right-hand suspension)**

“In the commotion at the start my front, right-hand wheel was hit directly. After that, in left-hand corners the right-hand, front wheel tended to stop while braking. When the grip improved in the dry, this problem got worse. Ultimately, a wishbone broke off, which must have been the consequential damage of contact with another car, because the rim was damaged.”

**Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline):** “Things weren’t going well at the start. Making it to the front of the field from such a position is impossible at the Nürburgring. The team did a super job and made no mistakes. I’m happy for Martin (Tomczyk) because he’s showing a form that’s pointing upwards. We have to live with third place but will continue to work on moving to the front.”

**Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix):** “The team’s work was flawless but the result is disappointing. In the rain we were too slow. That’s why we changed to slicks early. Despite this, Pierre (Kaffer) didn’t manage to move further up. With Christian (Abt), the race wasn’t going all that well. He would actually have had to finish in the points but on the track quite a few things went wrong.”

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**Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg):** “I’m very happy. The Audi family is a sensation. It’s been so incredibly enjoyable. My thanks to Audi, to Timo (Scheider) and to our crew – these were three good pit stops. Too bad that Frank (Stippler) wasn’t able to translate his speed into a better result – he had too much contact with other cars.”

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

## The result

- 1 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes), 43 laps in 1h 06m 28.696s
  - 2 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes), + 10.743s
  - 3 Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), + 12.504s
  - 4 Jean Alesi (Mercedes), + 20.386s
  - 5 Tom Kristensen (Siemens Audi A4 DTM), + 25.743s
  - 6 Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Veltins Audi A4 DTM), + 27.479s
  - 7 Timo Scheider (Gebrauchtwagen:plus Audi A4 DTM), + 32.380s
  - 8 Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), + 32.486s
  - 9 Jamie Green (Mercedes), + 32.866s
  - 10 Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM), + 48.479s
  - 11 Stefan Mücke (Mercedes), + 49.882s
  - 12 Mika Häkkinen (Mercedes), + 50.890s
  - 13 Mathias Lauda (Mercedes), + 51.447s
  - 14 Pierre Kaffer (Castrol Audi A4 DTM), + 58.050s
  - 15 Alexandros Margaritis (Mercedes), + 59.191s
  - 16 Daniel la Rosa (Mercedes), + 1m 03.792s
  - 17 Nicolas Kiesa (Futurecom Audi A4 DTM), + 1m 22.764s
  - 18 Vanina Ickx (Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM), - 4 laps
- Not classified:
- Susie Stoddart (Mercedes), - 16 laps
- Frank Stippler (S line Audi A4 DTM), - 20 laps

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