

Communication Motorsport

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New Audi A4 DTM dominates in racing début

- **Commanding 1-2-3 victory at Hockenheim DTM opener**
- **Mattias Ekström wins ahead of Timo Scheider and Tom Kristensen**
- **Martin Tomczyk shines in fight to make up ground**

Ingolstadt/Hockenheim – With a commanding 1-2-3 victory at the Hockenheim DTM season opener Audi, yet again, underpinned the brand's slogan "Vorsprung durch Technik", not only on the road but on the circuit. 93,000 spectators (throughout the weekend) witnessed an impressive premiere showing of the new Audi A4 DTM, which outperformed the competition in its racing début, clinching positions one, two, three and five.

The fourth-generation Audi A4 DTM features leading-edge technology with numerous innovative details, particularly in the area of aerodynamics. Using advanced CFD (Computational Fluid Dynamics) calculations, the engineers intensively worked on the airflow around and through the vehicle. In addition, the technology specialists at Audi Sport managed to lower the vehicle's centre of gravity and achieved a further reduction of the car's dry weight. With the four-litre V8 engine that delivers approximately 460 hp, the engineers found further development potential as well.

At the season opener at Hockenheim the new Audi A4 DTM was the quickest car straight from the start. In the race the Audi drivers impressively demonstrated that their new "company" car is not only competitive throughout a lap but delivers consistently fast lap times along with immediate reliability. On average, race winner Mattias Ekström beat the best Mercedes by over half a second per lap – a margin of mammoth proportions in the DTM.



At Hockenheim, the race was crucially determined as early as at the start: Mattias Ekström managed to take off a bit quicker than his team colleague Timo Scheider, who had started from the pole position. The Swede had to briefly relinquish his lead only during the two mandatory pit stops. His eleventh victory in the DTM now makes Ekström the most successful Audi DTM driver of all time.

Timo Scheider followed Mattias Ekström over the entire race distance like a shadow and saw the chequered flag in second place merely 0.824 seconds behind the title defender. By finishing as the runner-up, Scheider repeated his best DTM result so far, achieved in the 2007 season finale.

Tom Kristensen, who had started from position five on the grid, finished third to complete Audi's total triumph. The Dane benefited from perfect pit stops and a good strategy of Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, which caused him to move in front of the two Mercedes cars driven by Bruno Spengler and Paul di Resta. Impressive, as well, was Martin Tomczyk's fight to make up ground. Tomczyk had dropped to ninth place at the start, but managed to improve to fifth. Shortly before race end, he even caught up with Bruno Spengler.

Solid performances were also shown by the drivers of the 2007-spec A4 cars: Oliver Jarvis, Mike Rockenfeller, Alexandre Prémat and Markus Winkelhock captured places nine to twelfth, respectively. Finishing the very first DTM race in his career in ninth place, the 24-year-old Brit Oliver Jarvis barely missed scoring a point. Jarvis clearly won the duel between the DTM newcomers against former Formula 1 star Ralf Schumacher.

Katherine Legge finished her first DTM race as well. Her team-mate Christijan Albers retired after a collision with Ralf Schumacher in the early stages of the race.

The Audi squad will not have a lot of time to celebrate its triumph at Hockenheim: as early as next weekend, the second 2008 DTM round is on the agenda at Ochersleben – a circuit on which Audi has traditionally been very strong.

Quotes after the race

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "This is really a superb start for the new Audi A4 DTM. It was obvious that this car delivers very good performance. The front row on the grid and three podium places in the first race – it's hard to wish a better result than this. Martin (Tomczyk) even came extremely close to clinching fourth place. A great achievement by the squad throughout the winter, as well as here on site. We were strong in terms of driving performance, and the pit stops – particularly with the new cars – were sensational. Now we've got a good base. Of course we need to continue working on it to sustain a consistently good performance."

Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #1): "The car was simply fantastic. I want to thank Audi Sport and everyone in my team who had a part in creating such a good car. These were the best prerequisites. I was able to really enjoy the race because the car did everything I expect a racing car to do. In the end, we clinched places one to three, which is great for the team. I think after such a good weekend, we definitely deserved this result."

Timo Scheider (GW:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM #10): "Starting with the completely new developed Audi A4 DTM after the winter break was a difficult task. Nobody would have expected us to strike like this on a circuit that used to be Mercedes territory. I want to really thank Audi and the Abt squad for this brilliant feat. They laid the foundation for what we achieved today. Except for my start, my race was perfect. I had a bit too much wheel spin, that's why Mattias (Ekström) passed me. I wasn't able to follow him too closely because my car would have had more understeer in that case. The car was good enough for winning the race. I think my team and I are strong enough to fight for podium places and also victories on numerous other occasions this year."

Tom Kristensen (Audi A4 DTM #9): "That was a superb race. Having started from fifth position on the grid, it was clear to me that I'd have to fight in a Mercedes sandwich. My crew had a good strategy and performed an excellent pit stop. When I left the pit lane, I fought for half a lap with Bruno Spengler before I was able to get away. A great feeling! But my two team-mates were already too far away at that point so that I took it easier, something I've never done before in the DTM. Places one to three on our rival's home circuit – that's a great feeling."



Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #2): "My race was good even though it hadn't started well. I lost a few places at the start. The car had a great setup and was running very well over the whole distance. After my second pit stop I caught Bruno (Spengler). It was a very tough but always fair duel. I was lacking a tiny bit of speed to overtake him. It was the first race, so a scoring points is more important than trying to force the issue."

Oliver Jarvis (Best Buddies Audi A4 DTM #15): "My start was great and I managed to move forwards to sixth place. In the first two turns, though, I had to let up a bit, and my tyres picked up some dirt, which caused the car to oversteer. When I pitted for the first time, I was in eighth place. Just as I was about to leave the pit lane, Ralf Schumacher came in and I had to stop briefly, which cost me a second. Bernd Schneider overtook us. At that point, our race became very tough. After the second pit stop 'Rocky' was really putting on the pressure. Too bad, that I wasn't able to score a point. Still, it was a good first race."

Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM #18): "Of course tenth place isn't what we'd been hoping for this weekend. I started from twelfth place. The pace was okay. I had a very good start but lost four places as early as on the first lap. I was too passive for fear of having an accident. I should have attacked more. The performance in the race was okay, but we need to get stronger at Oschersleben. I want to thank my team for their work."

Alexandre Prémat (Audi Bank/Shell Helix Audi A4 DTM #14): "That was a very difficult race. Even the start wasn't good because my tyres were spinning too much and I lost ground. After that, there were some nice position fights. The car was difficult to drive because I didn't find a good setup all weekend. The car consistently changed between under- and oversteer. I am definitely disappointed about eleventh place. But I'm all the more delighted about Audi's places one to three for Mattias (Ekström), Timo (Scheider) and Tom (Kristensen)."

Markus Winkelhock (Playboy Audi A4 DTM #19): "The start was very good but I was driving a bit too defensively. I didn't want to take any risks and so I lost everything. Up to the first pit stop I was caught behind Mathias Lauda. Then we pitted twice in short succession, after which I drove 22 laps in one go. The car felt good, and I fought with Alex Prémat. I could have driven a bit faster but didn't want to take any risks in a fight with other Audi drivers. That's why I only managed to finish in twelfth place. It's unfortunate that we didn't do better in qualifying, otherwise a better result would have been possible."



Katherine Legge (Audi A4 DTM #20): "At my first DTM race the atmosphere was fantastic, which was a pleasant experience. Unfortunately, our race didn't go according to plan because we had a few problems. But we did finish and can learn from this."

Christijan Albers (Audi A4 DTM #21): "We had a very good day on Saturday, but Sunday was a bad day. I had a normal start. After that, I was fighting with Markus Winkelhock and the other Audi drivers. But then Ralf Schumacher came from behind and hit my right front wheel. As a result my suspension broke."

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): "This was a sensational day. I really, really thank everyone. Everybody was fully in control while doing their job. The cars were perfectly prepared. Today, everything fit. Such a made-to-measure opening race is hard to imagine. But it wasn't sheer luck, but meticulous, detailed work throughout the winter. Congratulations to the entire team!"

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): "The race couldn't have been any better. A 1-2-3 victory for Audi is a great exploit and we're all very happy. We weren't able to keep the pace of the new A4 cars and fought with the Mercedes drivers. Oliver (Jarvis) did a superb job in his first race and made a great start. He's a fantastic fighter. I'm very satisfied. Behind him, Alex (Prémat) fought with Markus (Winkelhock). The boys showed a nice race. Unfortunately, we were a little too far at the back, but next time we'll get closer again."

Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg): "Congratulations to Audi, to Dr Wolfgang Ullrich and to the entire squad on clinching places one, two and three! Our race was unspectacular. I have to thank my pit crew because we had to manage although several of our people were absent due to illness. Nonetheless, the crew performed four very nice stops. Markus (Winkelhock) put up a great fight and could have driven faster. Still, finishing the race in ninth and the following places with cars from last year is okay. 'Rocky' drove a flawless race – today, that's all we were able to do."



The result at Hockenheim

- 1 Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM) laps in 59m 17.726s
- 2 Timo Scheider (GW:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM) + 0.824s
- 3 Tom Kristensen (Audi A4 DTM) + 19.604s
- 4 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes) + 20.872s
- 5 Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM) + 21.269s
- 6 Jamie Green (Mercedes) + 33.019s
- 7 Gary Paffett (Mercedes) + 33.956s
- 8 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes) + 34.726s
- 9 Oliver Jarvis (Best Buddies Audi A4 DTM) + 40.720s
- 10 Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM) + 41.798s
- 11 Alexandre Prémat (Audi Bank/Shell Helix Audi A4 DTM) + 46.339s
- 12 Markus Winkelhock (Playboy Audi A4 DTM) + 46.950s
- 13 Paul di Resta (Mercedes) + 47.867s
- 14 Ralf Schumacher (Mercedes) + 49.873s
- 15 Mathias Lauda (Mercedes) + 56.308s
- 16 Susie Stoddart (Mercedes) + 1m03.824s
- 17 Maro Engel (Mercedes) + 1m 05.161s
- 18 Katherine Legge (Audi A4 DTM) + 1m 33.669s

Not classified:

Christijan Albers (Audi A4 DTM), - 34 laps (front right-hand suspension)

Photographs and information can be obtained at www.audi-motorsport.info

AUDI AG sold a total of 964,151 cars in 2007 and thus achieved its twelfth consecutive record year. With revenue of €33,617 million and profit before tax of €2,915 million, the company attained its best figures ever. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). At the end of 2007, production of the Audi A6 started in Aurangabad, India. The company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include Automobili Lamborghini Holding S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese, Italy, and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Audi employs about 54,000 people worldwide, including 45,000 in Germany. The brand with the four rings invests more than €2 billion each year in order to sustain the company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. Audi plans to nearly double the number of models in its portfolio by 2015, from the 25 currently on offer to 40.