

04 / Hockenheim, 16 April 2005

## Motorsport

### New Audi A4 DTM takes pole for debut race

- **Title defender Mattias Ekström quickest at Hockenheim**
- **Three Audi A4 DTM cars in Super Pole**
- **Abt and Stippler best drivers with last year's A4 cars**

In its racing debut, the new Audi A4 DTM will be starting from the pole position. At the Hockenheim season opener, defending champion Mattias Ekström drove the fastest time in Saturday's Super Pole qualifying session to secure the best starting position for the race on Sunday (start at 2 p.m., live on ARD from 1.45 p.m.). Martin Tomczyk and Tom Kristensen, as well, qualified for the single car qualifying of the fastest ten. The best drivers of last year's Audi A4 DTM cars were Christian Abt and DTM newcomer Frank Stippler on positions twelve and 13 respectively.

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### Quotes after qualifying

#### **Mattias Ekström (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline #1)**

##### **1st place Super Pole, 1m 35.251s**

"Clinching the pole position today has made a small dream come true. We knew that our new Audi A4 is a good car, but not exactly where we're standing in comparison to the competition. Track conditions today changed between the qualifying and the super pole. That's why there was a little luck involved on my fast lap as well. My thanks to the team and the Audi engineers, who were working in the right direction."

#### **Martin Tomczyk (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline #2)**

##### **7th place Super Pole, 1m 36.222s**

"Because of the change in track conditions, it was very difficult today. We made some changes to the car for the super pole, but they didn't work out. My lap left a lot to be desired, the car was understeering heavily. But starting from position seven is something you can live with."

**Tom Kristensen (Audi Sport Team Abt #5)**

**9th place Super Pole, 1m 36.489s**

“After being fastest yesterday and second in free practice and in qualifying, I am obviously deeply disappointed with my starting position. We are still playing around in different areas, trying to find the best possible setup, and the car was very nervous in Super Pole. I lost everything in turn 1 when the rear snapped away and then the car kept oversteering for the remainder of the lap.”

**Christian Abt (Audi Sport Team Joest Racing #14)**

**12th place, 1m 35.464s**

“My car was a lot better than position 12. Unfortunately, I sacrificed nearly three tenths of a second in my best lap in the first sector. Fifth place would have been possible, and my team would have deserved this today as well. But if you know me, you know that I’ll be fighting in the race.”

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**Frank Stippler (Audi Sport Team Joest Racing #19)**

**13th place, 1m 35.467s**

“Starting from position 13 in my DTM debut is okay. Still, I’m a bit disappointed, because my sixth place in the free practice session would have been possible in the qualifying here as well. The track was quick only in the very beginning, and that’s where I allowed myself to become a bit distracted by a competitor. The DTM field is so tight that you always have to be wide awake.”

**Allan McNish (Audi Sport Team Abt #6)**

**14th place, 1m 35.625s**

“First of all, it’s very, very tight, which is what I expected. I am happier now than I was this morning or yesterday. Because now, we have got a feeling for the car. We made some changes between the sessions and we gained straight away. It’s a couple of tenths from the top ten where ultimately we should be. But from the weekend’s point of view, we are going in the correct direction. And I beat Mika Häkkinen at his debut...”

**Pierre Kaffer (Audi Sport Team Joest Racing #15)**

**18th place, 1m 35.915s**

“Overall, I feel comfortable in the DTM. The car is running well, too. But I didn’t get it quite right today. There was probably a certain amount of nervousness involved as well, because, after all, everything is new. The times are extremely

close. Three tenths less, and I would be as much as a few rows further ahead on the grid. I know that I'm always very strong in the race and that my car has good balance. That's why I'm going to attack again tomorrow."

**Rinaldo Capello (Audi Sport Team Joest Racing #18)**

**20th place, 1m 36.020s**

"Today, the fast time had to be driven with the first set of tyres. Unfortunately, I didn't manage to do this. I think I didn't warm up the tyres enough. In the second corner I had big understeer, which cost me a lot of time. That's a question of experience."

**Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline):** "The pole position is a great reward for all the hard work of the past few months. We've all been working towards this and are very happy. Of course we're still in a learning process with the new car, but that's normal. We got it right today and are continuing to work hard. We want to put on a great race tomorrow for the many Audi fans in the grandstands."

**Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest):** "Generally, things are going very well this weekend. Only the qualifying, unfortunately, didn't work out all that well. Christian recorded a best sector time, but then unluckily got caught behind another car. During the other two attempts the track was slower. This was particularly bad for our new drivers, who, due to their lack of experience, simply would have needed several trials. In the race, we'll try to work our way up further towards the front of the field."

**Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** "I think there could hardly be a more thrilling qualifying session than this one. Matthias proved yet again that the higher pressure the stronger he gets. He drove a perfect lap. And that did it, because making even the smallest mistake meant you couldn't be at the very front. I'm delighted about our new Audi A4 DTM starting from position one on the grid in its debut. That's a great way to start the season."

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