

Ingolstadt, 30 August 2006

## Motorsport

### **“Pool position” for Christian Abt at Zandvoort**

- **Part two of “1st Audi Dutzendteich Challenge” in DTM**
- **Audi DTM stars race each other in paper boats**
- **Creativity determined the starting grid**

After the creative part, now it's time for the practical test: on Friday night, the Audi DTM stars will be putting to sea in ten so-called paper boats – crafted by their mechanical crews with careful attention to detail from cardboard (!) – for the “1st Audi Dutzendteich Challenge” at Zandvoort (the Netherlands). The “pool” sitter will be Christian Abt, whose boat, “Bunny 1”, was selected by a professional jury as the most creative in what is arguably the “craziest race of the year”.

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Originally, the funny boat race was scheduled to be staged in Nuremberg. Toxic blue algae in the “Dutzendteich” lake, however, had prevented the competition, which is now being held during the DTM round at Zandvoort – although, in consideration of the Audi factory drivers' health, not on the currently rough waters of the North Sea but on a pond directly behind the “Audi S Bocht” alongside the 4.307-kilometre circuit.

The starting grid for both preliminary heats was determined back at the Norisring. Crucial for the decision was the creativity of the boats built by Audi Sport Teams Abt Sportsline, Phoenix and Rosberg as well as the Audi customer team Futurecom TME. Countless hours of free time were invested by the mechanics who are now able to get the rewards as well: in the podium ceremony, for a change, the spotlight will not be on the Audi factory drivers but on the mechanical crews who have the chance to win valuable prizes – including VIP tickets for a home match of Audi's partner FC Bayern München – as a reward for their hard work.

Even the determination of the starting grid was an event that caused quite a sensation and lots of laughs in the DTM paddock. Part two promises to be even more spectacular, especially since some of the paper boats have never been put to water. “I'll be happy if I can keep from sinking,” jests Tom Kristensen who is

certainly used to crazy racing stunts: last weekend he won a 24-hour race for mountain bikes (!) in his native Denmark.

Actually, the Dane has no big reason to worry: although the boats entered by Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline will start from the last two grid positions in the two preliminary heats because the jury did not find them creative enough, they are considered top favourites for victory on account of their slim build. Timo Scheider from Audi Sport Team Rosberg, though, has already announced that he intends to defend his position using his paddles if need be. His team director, Arno Zensen, would have preferred a race on the North Sea: "There, our constructions with their three floats would have had the best chances."

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The crew of Audi Sport Team Phoenix is optimistic that the pole positions clinched in the two preliminary heats can be converted into victories. "My son has performed some tests in a swimming pool, and everything went well," said team manager Frank Lynn.

The question as to who will be putting customer team Futurecom TME's boat, "Antje", to sea has not been decided yet. Nicolas Kiesa and local hero Jeroen Bleekemolen, who will be driving the Audi A4 DTM racing taxi at Zandvoort and who may have a home advantage on the pond behind the "Audi S Bocht", are as many as two aces the team has got up its sleeves.

The "1st Audi Dutzendteich Challenge" at Zandvoort is scheduled to start at 7 p.m. (local time) on Friday with the two preliminary heats of five boats each. The winners of both heats will contest the final, the second placed boats will fight for third position. The way to the pond behind the "Audi S Bocht" is sign-posted.

**The starting grid for the two preliminary heats at Zandvoort**

**Race 1:**

- 1 Bunny 1 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Christian Abt)
- 2 Pond Rocket (Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Timo Scheider)
- 3 Letzter Einbaum (Futurecom TME, Vanina Ickx)
- 4 Abt Allgäu III (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Heinz-Harald Frentzen)
- 5 Abt Allgäu IV (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Martin Tomczyk)

**Race 2:**

- 1 Öli 5W30 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Pierre Kaffer)
- 2 Wave Runner (Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Frank Stippler)
- 3 Antje (Futurecom TME, Jeroen Bleekmolen/Nicolas Kiesa)
- 4 Abt Allgäu II (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Mattias Ekström)
- 5 Abt Allgäu I (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Tom Kristensen)

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