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Test of courage for Audi drivers at rallycross in Belgium

- Round three of twelve on rallycross calendar
- Race track one of the most unusual and difficult ones

Neuburg a. d. Donau, May 8, 2018 – Tight turns, tire walls as track barriers and a spectacular jump into the valley: Circuit Jules Tacheny at Mettet, Belgium, some 80 kilometers southeast of Brussels will host round three of the FIA World Rallycross Championship (World RX) this weekend (May 12/13) – and test the drivers' courage.

The two EKS Audi Sport drivers are traveling to Mettet with mixed feelings as well. In 2016, Mattias Ekström won the World RX round there, but has also had some unpleasant encounters with the tire walls in previous events. "The fans and the atmosphere in Belgium are great. But this is one of those strange, artificial race tracks we drive on from time to time," says the Swede. "Actually, the track has only turnoffs and this massive downhill jump. The racing line is narrow. It's difficult to achieve a fast lap time and the Joker Lap is so slippery and slow that you feel like you're stopping." Because overtaking is difficult EKS Audi Sport has focused on further optimizing the starts in recent days, among other things.

Ekström's new teammate, Andreas Bakkerud, currently the World RX runner-up trailing title defender Johan Kristoffersson in a Volkswagen, ended his test at Mettet at the beginning of 2018 with a spectacular accident. "I'll definitely try to avoid that this weekend," the Norwegian says. "Mettet has always been my weakest round in the World RX to date. I need to improve there and show the consistency I had in my first World RX events in the Audi S1 EKS RX quattro." He is in awe of the Belgian track: "It's easy to make a mistake there and crash into the tire walls." That he reeled off the largest number of kilometers in the pre-season test at Mettet and gained more confidence in the process is a positive, he adds.

Bakkerud visited the Audi plant in Ingolstadt last week. From there he traveled on to Hockenheim to keep his fingers crossed for Mattias Ekström in his DTM farewell race. Subsequently, the two Audi drivers got in the mood again for World RX round three by driving race karts. Live streaming from Mettet on www.fiaworldrallycross.com will start on Sunday at 2 PM (CEST). In Germany, ProSieben Fun will air live coverage.



About Mettet RX

Track	Circuit Jules Tacheny, 80 km southeast of Brussels
Track length	1.031 km (Joker Lap: 1.102 km)
Surface	61% tarmac, 39% gravel
Turns	6 left, 6 right
Top speed	approx. 170 km/h
Averages	approx. 97 km/h
Longest jump	approx. 23 m
Lap record	Johan Kristoffersson (S), 38.074s (2017)
Winner 2017	Johan Kristoffersson (S), 4m 02.316s
Race duration	4 laps (qualifying), 6 laps (semi-finals and final)
Event hashtag	#MettetRX

Schedule (CEST)

Saturday, May 12

09.30	Free practice
11.00	Qualifying 1 (Q1)
13.40	Qualifying 2 (Q2)

Sunday, May 13

08.30	Warm-up
10.00	Qualifying 3 (Q3)
12.00	Qualifying 4 (Q4)
15.00	Semi-finals and final
15.50	Podium ceremony

– End –

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