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Motorsport / 19 days until the start of the 2006 DTM

The Audi drivers and their competition numbers

- **Tom Kristensen and his lucky number seven**

When Tom Kristensen climbed into his new competition car for the 2006 season at Brands Hatch on Tuesday morning, the Dane was beaming like a little boy: His Audi A4 DTM has competition number “7” this year – the lucky number of the seven-time winner of Le Mans. “It was the ‘lucky seven’ with which I clinched the title in the Japanese Formula 3, my first Le Mans victory and, in 2003, the Le Mans victory with Bentley,” says the Audi factory driver. “And, what’s more, my date of birth is 7/7/67.”

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His team-mate Mattias Ekström will be competing in car number “5”, the same number with which he claimed the Championship title in 2004. “Not a bad omen,” the Swede feels. “But honestly, I don’t really care about competition numbers.”

This opinion is shared by the majority of his Audi colleagues. Only Martin Tomczyk is happy about number “4”. “Four’s the winner, any five-year-old would tell you that,” says the Bavarian in jest.

Neither does Vanina Ickx attach a lot of importance to competition numbers – with one exception: “For some reason I get something to do with the number 22 more often than with others.” And that is the number Susie Stoddart, her female rival from the Mercedes camp, will be competing with in the 2006 DTM.

Tomorrow: Films instead of paint – the design of the Audi A4 DTM cars

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