

EuroSpeedway, 20 May 2007

## Motorsport

### Timo Scheider best Audi driver in chaotic race

- **Safety car causes confusion in the DTM**
- **Controversial result at the EuroSpeedway**
- **Communication problem costs Mattias Ekström points**

77,500 spectators (throughout the weekend) witnessed one of the most turbulent races in DTM history at the EuroSpeedway Lausitz. Even a few hours after the podium ceremony, the course of events continued to be the subject of heated debates, and the race result will always provide a subject for discussions. As the best Audi driver, Timo Scheider was classified fifth.

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Total confusion was created by a safety car period caused by Mercedes driver Mathias Lauda when Lauda pushed the Audi driven by Markus Winkelhock against the barrier in turn 3. After the incident, the safety car did not move in the position ahead of the front runner, and the light at the pit lane exit was not working properly, causing several drivers to gain a lap. An attempt by race control to correct the picture by deploying the safety car a second time caused additional confusion among the spectators. At 5:15p.m. – about two hours after race end – the stewards declared that the result was official, despite admitting that they had made mistakes. In the interest of sport, Audi decided not to lodge a protest against the race being counted in the Championship.

The safety car also deprived the previous leader of the standings, Mattias Ekström, of a good result: Due to a communication problem the Swede turned into the pit lane before it was opened. While running in fourth position, the Swede had to make an additional stop shortly before race end, which caused him to drop out of the points. Having achieved the fastest lap in the race was only small consolation – but evidence of how strong the latest-generation A4 DTM is even with additional weight on board.

Similar lap times as Ekström over long phases of the race were set by his team-mates Timo Scheider and Martin Tomczyk. Adam Carroll was bumped by Mercedes driver Jamie Green and thus deprived of a better result.

Mike Rockenfeller and Lucas Luhr fought a duel over the entire race distance, but lost a lap on account of the safety car periods. Vanina Ickx finished the race in 15th place.

Christian Abt had to park his Audi A4 DTM shortly before the race ended, after touching the barrier in turn 3. His team-mate Alexandre Prémat pushed forwards from sixth to fifth place right after the start but, following a spectacular collision with Oschersleben winner Gary Paffett at the end of the start-finish straight, was forced to retire from the race as well after 23 laps.

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After the turbulent race at the EuroSpeedway, Audi drivers Mattias Ekström and Martin Tomczyk share second place in the DTM standings, with an equal points score.

## Quotes after the race

**Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** “Of course the way the race went, as well as the result, weren’t to our liking. The unfortunate events surrounding the deployment of the safety car completely distorted the picture. In the interest of sport, we have accepted the stewards’ decision to count the race with this particular result, and congratulate Mika Häkkinen on his second DTM victory. Despite their additional weight our 2007-spec cars were consistently fast. This gives us every reason to be hopeful for Brands Hatch. There, we’re going to strike back.”

**Timo Scheider (Gebrauchtwagen:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM #8)**  
**5th place, + 13.076s**

“I was no longer able to see what was going on in the race. In the meantime I got angry because I wasn’t allowed to pit. Then, I was allowed to pit, but I didn’t understand why. After that, I thought I was in a hopeless position and, in the end, finished in fifth place despite all this. What a chaotic

situation! My thanks to the squad for keeping a handle on what was happening.”

**Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #4)**

**9th place, 23.742s**

“A chaotic race. After crossing the finish line, nobody knew what had been going on, that’s why I don’t want to make any further comments. I drove my race, my car was very good. The result is irrelevant for me.”

**Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #3)**

**10th place, + 24.071s**

“That was absolutely not our race! There were several misunderstandings because our team radio wasn’t working properly, and the race was very crazy. Of course I’m deeply disappointed not to have scored any points.”

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**Adam Carroll (Audi A4 DTM #20)**

**11th place, + 24.829s**

“An eventful race! The start wasn’t that great, but I maintained my position. The pit stops were very good and the team did a really superb job. I was in the points when Jamie Green turned me around – again he! This action cost me a lot of positions. Too bad, because the car was running perfectly throughout the race.”

**Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM #11)**

**13th place, - 1 lap**

“That was definitely not my race. It already started on the formation lap: I accelerated in the last turn, spun and felt like a beginner. I’m very sorry about this. The start was pretty good. Due to the caution periods the race was very turbulent. Nobody was able to figure out what the strategy was. Susie Stoddart ran into me once, and I spun completely. After that, the car was difficult to drive. After the highlight at Oschersleben, this was a sobering weekend.”

**Lucas Luhr (Philips Audi A4 DTM #12)**

**14th place, - 1 lap**

“The start, already, was difficult as I wasn’t able to see the lights. That meant I was only able to start when the car in front of me took off. Not

putting during the safety car period was a big mistake. At that point, our race was finished.”

**Vanina Ickx (Audi A4 DTM #21)**

**15th place, - 1 lap**

“The race was pretty crazy – both from an outside and the cockpit perspective: Safety car periods, then the pit lane was closed, then it was opened again. But, in retrospect, it’s been my best DTM race so far. I was able to keep the pace within my group. I was concentrated all the way to the end, and that’s why I’m pretty satisfied.”

**Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM #16)**

**17th place, - 4 laps**

“The start was a bit unfortunate. The drivers on the rear of the grid couldn’t see the lights. I waited until they were switched on, but then everyone was taking off and I was so shocked that I stalled the engine. This was followed by a chase to make up ground, all the way to tenth place. Suddenly the door on my right-hand side, which was heavily damaged, opened. That made the car undrivable.”

**Alexandre Prémat (Audi Bank Audi A4 DTM #17)**

**Retired (accident, lap 24)**

“I’m deeply disappointed. We were in a good position to fight with our Mercedes rivals. Then the safety car periods followed, which destroyed our race. When I wanted to overtake Gary (Paffett) I touched him slightly and pulled towards the right. Maybe he braked after that, because I hit him hard. Only at first glance my car looks pretty much as though it were destroyed – the damage is not so bad, however.”

**Markus Winkelhock (Siemens Audi A4 DTM #7)**

**Retired (accident, lap 13)**

“The start was okay. In turn 1 I restrained myself because I didn’t want to risk an accident. The first few laps I was behind Lucas Luhr and kept his pace. My car started understeering but that was easy to control. Mathias Lauda followed me later. When exiting the slower corners he was a little faster than I. Then he slightly hit my rear on the inside, and passed me on the inside, did not give me any chance at the beginning of the start-finish,

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and pushed me into the tyre stacks where my car got caught. That was an unnecessary action on his part.”

**Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline):**

“The safety car phase caused a lot of confusion. Of course we’re not happy about the result. Race control made mistakes and admitted them. But cancelling the race retroactively would probably not have been fair to the DTM fans. Now we’ve got a clear picture before the next race at Brands Hatch.”

**Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix):** “As expected, Alexandre Prémat was able to keep the pace and was on a par with Mercedes, despite being slowed by Paul di Resta. We were very happy with his performance. The collision with Gary Paffett was too bad. Christian Abt spun on the first lap and started chasing to make up ground. He pitted early to have a free run. We thought that we’d gotten him much further towards the front with the second stop during the safety car period. But the totally confusing actions prevented that. The stops were good, the boys did a good job – a big compliment to them.”

**Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg):** “I’ve never seen such confusion. What exactly went wrong has to be analysed in detail. Our pit stops were okay with Mike (Rockenfeller), he came in at exactly the right time. Then Susie Stoddart turned him around. This put him directly in front of Mika Häkkinen, and he had to let him pass, which cost him a whole lap.”

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## The result at the EuroSpeedway

- 1 Mika Häkkinen (Mercedes), 48 laps in 1h 09m 10.219s
- 2 Paul di Resta (Mercedes), + 1m679s
- 3 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes), + 4.175s
- 4 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes), + 8.714s
- 5 Timo Scheider (GW:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM), + 13.076s
- 6 Jamie Green (Mercedes), + 14.453s
- 7 Mathias Lauda (Mercedes), + 20.107s
- 8 Gary Paffett (Mercedes), + 23.161s
- 9 Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), + 23.742s
- 10 Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), + 24.071s
- 11 Adam Carroll (Audi A4 DTM), + 24.829s
- 12 Susie Stoddart (Mercedes), - 1 lap
- 13 Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM), - 1 lap
- 14 Lucas Luhr (Philips Audi A4 DTM), - 1 lap
- 15 Vanina Ickx (Audi A4 DTM), - 1 lap
- 16 Daniel la Rosa (Mercedes), - 2 laps
- 17 Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM), - 4 laps

### **Not classified:**

- Alexandre Prémat (Audi Bank Audi A4 DTM), 24 laps (accident)  
Markus Winkelhock (Siemens Audi A4 DTM), 13 laps (accident)  
Alexandros Margaritis (Mercedes), 1 lap

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