

Oschersleben, 21 May 2006

Motorsport

Victory and DTM lead for Audi driver Kristensen

- **Superb tactical and driving exhibition at Oschersleben**
- **Heinz-Harald Frentzen in fourth position**
- **Every Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline car takes points**

Tom Kristensen kept his word: The Audi factory driver claimed his second DTM race win at the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben from pole position and assumed, as a result, the championship lead in the most popular international touring car race series.

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64,000 spectators witnessed a dominant performance from the Le Mans record winner, who also celebrated his first DTM race victory at the same venue in 2004. The Dane took control immediately as the lights turned green after making a text book start in the Siemens Audi A4 DTM. Kristensen completed the first lap with an advantage lead of 1.3 seconds. The Audi driver continued to build his lead over his closest rivals, before being held up by two slower Mercedes drivers following the first of his two pit-stops, and as a consequence Bruno Spengler and Jamie Green were able to close the gap. Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline reacted correctly and brought Kristensen in early for his second pit-stop. With an extremely fast lap after changing tyres the Dane was once again able to open up a reassuring cushion to his competitors. The Audi driver had a 3.5-second advantage and the championship lead in his pocket at the flag.

Heinz-Harald Frentzen only narrowly missed finishing on the podium. Although his Veltins Audi A4 DTM was not handling as perfectly after changing tyres, the former Formula 1 star was able to hold Bernd Schneider, the previous championship leader, in check for the entire race. Martin Tomczyk and Mattias Ekström took the chequered flag in sixth and seventh positions with the brace of Red Bull A4 DTM cars – as a result, Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline took points with all four cars. Ekström overtook Bernd Schneider at the start, but lost a lot of time during the first pit-stop when the right-hand front wheel nut jammed.

Quotes after the race

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “That was a dominant performance from Tom, who really did drive a perfect race without a single mistake and who was extremely strong over the course of the entire weekend. The strategy was good, even when we had to adopt it once when Tom was held up slightly. We had to react quickly. The team performance was also very good. We can be happy. I think the flood gates have opened – from my side things can continue like this.”

Tom Kristensen

Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Siemens Audi A4 DTM #7

1st place, + 3.499s

“It was a tough race. I made a great start and pushed really hard during the opening laps to create a gap, which I managed, as I had a big lead before making my first pit-stop. I was able to control the race, but after I passed Lauda and Stoddart easily I caught two other Mercedes who appeared to be racing among themselves. They weren’t very quick in the corners and really did hold me up. It was a genius move from the team to bring me into the pits early when Spengler closed in. However, the last stint was very long and I had to look after the tyres. In my out-lap after the pit-stop I immediately pulled out a 1.5 second gap to Spengler. Afterwards I could pace myself and drive a little more conservatively; I only forced the pace again in the last five laps when I noticed that the tyres would last.”

Heinz-Harald Frentzen

Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Veltins Audi A4 DTM #6

4th place, + 24.622s

“The start went well and the car felt well-balanced. On the second set of tyres the balance was no longer as good. The car was understeering and the braking balance could not be adjusted any more. I wasn’t able to attack properly any longer and concentrated on keeping Bernd Schneider from overtaking me. That worked out and he behaved fairly. Fourth place is okay – it’s my second-best result this year.”

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Martin Tomczyk**Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #4****6th place, + 27.360s**

“Unfortunately, this wasn’t a thrilling race for me. We drove our pace. If we hadn’t been held up for such a long time, we could have achieved a better finish yet. I’m glad to have come sixth. My thanks go to Audi and the Abt team because the strategy worked very well. Like this, racing and teamwork are fun.”

Mattias Ekström**Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #5****7th place, + 27.728s**

“My start was very good but then I made a mistake and Häkkinen got past me. After that I was stuck behind him for a while. Perhaps the strategy wasn’t the very best but the car felt good. The Qualifying ruined the weekend for me.”

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Pierre Kaffer**Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Castrol Audi A4 DTM #14****10th place, + 35.170s**

“My race was super, the start very good. I’m incredibly sorry about having brushed Timo Scheider – it was not intentional. I want to thank the team for two great pit stops. With a little bit of luck we, too, are able to finish in the points.”

Frank Stippler**Audi Sport Team Rosberg, S line Audi A4 DTM #15****13th place, + 50.995s**

“After starting from eighth place on the grid, our result should have been better. We were troubled by lots of trivia and one major issue – the drive-through penalty for speeding in the pit lane. A piece of head protection on the side of the seat got lost and was moving around between the pedals. After my contact with Christian Abt in the second corner, a wing at the right front flew away. I had clear understeer in left-handers.”

Timo Scheider**Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Gebrauchtwagen:plus Audi A4 DTM #16****14th place, + 58.510s**

“That was a bad race – Oschersleben simply doesn’t bring me any luck. The start, already, was poor. Perhaps it was a mechanical problem, perhaps my mistake.

Unfortunately, Pierre then hit me in the Hotel corner, a thing that shouldn't happen among brand colleagues. The boys did a good job during both pit stops.

Unfortunately, I caused the engine to stall during one of them. Later, I was given a drive-through penalty for speeding in the pit lane."

Christian Abt

Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Playboy Audi A4 DTM #12

17th place, - 1 lap

"The start was good. In the second turn I spotted a gap to Bernd Schneider's car. I got out of the way to be on the safe side. Then someone hit my wheel. My car was clearly damaged at the front. It's a shame that a few people from our own ranks are a bit too motivated. They should be a little more careful, because we're a family."

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Vanina Ickx

Futurecom TME, Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM #20

18th place, - 1 lap

"My start was very good and I gained several places. I lost them again when I had to run through the grass in order to evade Timo Scheider, who was spinning. After that, I was only able to overtake my team-mate. My race was more consistent than the first two races and better than the warm-up had suggested. Unfortunately, the pit stops cost me a lot of time again. This is an area in which the team has got to improve before Brands Hatch, and I need to practice my starts a bit more."

Olivier Tielemans

Futurecom TME, Futurecom Audi A4 DTM #19

19th place - 1 lap

"My start was good and I overtook a few cars. Unfortunately, through, I flat-spotted my tyres. That's why the car was vibrating heavily and I wasn't able to keep the cars chasing me from overtaking. On the second set of tyres, things got better, and on the third, as well. My thanks to the team for two good pit stops. Towards the end I was touched by Daniel la Rosa, I spun and I received a drive-through penalty. Unfortunately, I don't know why."

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): "This is a huge relief because our team worked very hard for this. It was a perfect race of the whole team with a great result. We're all happy because the championship is exciting again, and we're back in the race, as well."

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): “Christian got involved in a crash in the beginning. Afterwards, the car wasn’t able to keep the pace of the field any more. You could see that a component was hanging down from the front end. Still, Christian finished the race, which was a good thing. Pierre drove a very good race, but got slowed a bit towards the mid-point of the race. Even with our pit stops we didn’t manage to bring him further towards the front. So, unfortunately, we just came tenth although we’d been hoping to score our first point today.”

Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg): “I’m not satisfied, We lost a lot as early as at the start. This was followed by a drive-through penalty for each of our drivers. They probably released the button too early at the end of the pit lane, which is something we still need to check. This time we were good in Qualifying but in the race our speed wasn’t good enough. We need to continue working on our performance.“

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www.audi-motorsport.info (Accreditation necessary)

Results

- 1 Tom Kristensen (Siemens Audi A4 DTM), 44 laps in 1h 01m 29.257s
- 2 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes), + 3.499s
- 3 Jamie Green (Mercedes), + 4.868s
- 4 Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Veltins Audi A4 DTM), + 24.622s
- 5 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes), + 24.992s
- 6 Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), + 27.360s
- 7 Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), + 27.728s
- 8 Jean Alesi (Mercedes), + 30.644s
- 9 Mika Häkkinen (Mercedes), + 34.865s
- 10 Pierre Kaffer (Castrol Audi A4 DTM), + 35.170s
- 11 Daniel la Rosa (Mercedes), + 44.282s
- 12 Stefan Mücke (Mercedes), + 44.850s
- 13 Frank Stippler (S line Audi A4 DTM), + 50.995s
- 14 Timo Scheider (Gebrauchtwagen:plus Audi A4 DTM), + 58.510s
- 15 Susie Stoddart (Mercedes), + 1m 05.187s
- 16 Mathias Lauda (Mercedes), + 1m 09.113s
- 17 Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM), - 1 lap
- 18 Vanina Ickx (Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM), - 1 lap
- 19 Olivier Tielemans (Futurecom Audi A4 DTM), - 1 lap
- 20 Alexandros Margaritis (Mercedes), - 2 laps

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