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Motorsport

Audi banks on teamwork in the DTM

- **Four Audi teams and ten Audi drivers in the 2007 DTM**
- **Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline spearheads assault**
- **First race this coming weekend at Hockenheim**

The 2007 DTM finally started for Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline on Wednesday morning at 6 a.m.: Five trucks loaded with the race cars and equipment made their way from Kempten in the Allgäu to Hockenheim, where the opening DTM race of the year starts at 2:03 p.m. local German time this coming Sunday. Advanced ticket sales have already exceeded 40,000. ARD TV broadcasts Saturday's qualifying session and the entire race live on Sunday.

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Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline fields the four latest generation A4 DTM cars for Audi again this year. As a result, the squad under Team Director Hans-Jürgen Abt and Technical Director Albert Deuring once again forms the spearhead of the Audi factory programme in the 2007 DTM – because it is expected that the Abt drivers Mattias Ekström, Tom Kristensen, Timo Scheider and Martin Tomczyk will fight for the title in their new cars.

The Audi squad is strengthened by two additional factory teams, which both enter a pair of 2006 model A4 DTM cars. Christian Abt drives the A4 which sat on pole position at the season finale at Hockenheim last October for Audi Sport Team Phoenix from the Eifel. His new team mate Alexandre Prémat races the winning car from Barcelona 2006.

The two “used cars” fielded by Audi Sport Team Rosberg based in Neustadt an der Weinstraße have also a successful pedigree: The A4 DTM with which 23-year Mike Rockenfeller makes his debut at Hockenheim won two races in 2006 in the hands of Le Mans record winner Tom Kristensen. His team mate Lucas Luhr, also a DTM newcomer, drives the A4 with which Mattias Ekström proved victorious at Brands Hatch last year.

The Bavarian Audi customer team Futurecom TME enters a pair of 2005 model year cars for Audi factory driver Vanina Ickx and Adam Carroll.

The well-thought out regulations guarantee that cars from any year have good chances in the DTM. The 2007 models must compete with the highest weight, last year's cars carry ten kilograms less and the 2005 cars even race 30 kilograms lighter in the opening race of the year.

"I'm convinced that the differences between the individual cars this year will be even smaller than last year," explained Audi driver Tom Kristensen at Tuesday's press conference preceding the season opener. "The regulations ensure that the air in the DTM gets more and more rarefied every year. The smallest of mistakes in qualifying can make the difference between the front and the middle of the grid. The drivers of the older cars also have good chances."

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Teamwork is therefore even more important: "Nobody has ever been champion in the DTM without the support of his team mates," knows Head of Audi Motorsport Dr Wolfgang Ullrich. "We attached great value to having drivers in the team who are not only fast but who also get on well with one another."

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**Photographs, sound bites and additional information available on the Internet:
www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation necessary)**