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## Motorsport

### Audi driver Christian Abt about the Norisring

- **Only city street circuit on DTM calendar**
- **Home race for Audi traditionally attracts large crowd**
- **Centimetres and hundredths of seconds are crucial**

The Norisring is about to see the DTM start to its fifth race weekend (Sunday, starting at 1:45 p.m. live on “Das Erste”). The circuit that is typically lined by far more than 100,000 spectators has a tradition of being the season’s highlight. Audi factory driver Christian Abt, who previously finished as the runner-up on this circuit, claiming his best DTM result so far, comments on the 2.300-kilometre race track in the heart of Nuernberg.

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#### **How does it feel to be travelling to one’s home race?**

“Norisring is a sort of living room – obviously, for a Bavarian to compete with a car made by a Bavarian manufacturer in Bavaria is something very special. The atmosphere surpasses that of any other circuit in Germany and abroad. It’s the Monaco of touring car racing. It’s the same flair, but the fans are even closer to the action.”

#### **What role does the surface of this non-permanent race track play?**

“Norisring is a circuit leading over what are normally public streets. You have to get to know the surface over the years in order to find the final hundredths. Where do the road cars normally run, what’s the best line in rain? From the first practice session through to the race, there’s a significant change in grip. As a result, young drivers often have a few difficulties being quick on this circuit straight away.”

#### **In 2005 you finished as the runner-up in a year-old car – does this still bring back fond memories?**

“I’ve got many fond memories of Norisring. Since my days in Formula 3 I’ve often finished among the top five there. I really enjoy driving on this circuit. All of my rivals know that they’ve got to watch out for me there ...”

**How do you find the limit in the tight “channel” through the guard rails?**

“The key is to exploit every centimetre. The nice thing about this city circuit is that the slightest mistake may – in the worst case – mean that your game is over, as early as on Friday or Saturday! Those who drive at the limit here can get special rewards, and those who push the limits too far will be punished accordingly.”

**There are only two hairpins and one chicane – what implications does this have for the set-up?**

“We tackle the chicane between 120 and 130 kph, the sharp turns are very slow, the straight is very long. So we’ve got all the extremes combined on a single circuit. It’s important to come up with a medium level of aerodynamic downforce that enables the optimal lap time. Last year, all cars were within seven tenths of a second in qualifying.”

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