

Brands Hatch, 1 July 2006

Motorsport

Audi driver Kristensen in a class by himself again

- **Second consecutive pole position in the DTM**
- **Three Audi A4 DTM cars on the first two rows**
- **Christian Abt quickest driver of a 2005-spec car**

DTM leader of the standings Tom Kristensen in his Siemens Audi A4 DTM will start from the pole position in the British DTM round at Brands Hatch as well. On the “Indy Circuit” with a mere length of 1.929 kilometres on the outskirts of London races are typically decided by hundredths of a second. The Dane from Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, however, outperformed his rivals by more than two tenths. This gives Kristensen an optimum base for expanding his overall lead on Sunday.

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For the first time, all four of Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline drivers managed to make it into the top eight in the shoot-out qualifying. Heinz-Harald Frentzen and Mattias Ekström will go into the race in their two Audi A4 DTM cars from the second row on the grid. The race will be run over 82 laps, starting at 12:00 p.m. local time. Martin Tomczyk will start from position seven.

Heinz-Harald Frentzen claimed third place on the grid, marking his best practice result so far following his change to Audi – despite a spectacular accident. Immediately after the former Formula 1 driver had set his personal best time he lost control of his Veltins Audi A4 at roughly 190 kph when entering the notorious “Paddock Hill Bend”, spinning backwards into the barrier. Frentzen stepped out of the car without sustaining any injuries – giving proof of the level of safety of the A4 DTM which can be repaired before the race.

The quickest driver of in a 2005-spec car was Christian Abt from Audi Sport Team Phoenix who finished in ninth place, barely missing the top eight by a mere 0.148 seconds. Jeroen Bleekemolen in his Audi A4 DTM debut will start from position 17 as the best driver of a 2004-spec car.

Quotes after qualifying

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “Because of the short lap times and the small gaps, qualifying was filled with extreme suspense through to the very end. Heinz-Harald’s accident was a stroke of really bad luck and means there’s a lot of work to do. What’s important, though, is that nothing happened to him and that he set a good time prior to the incident. Tom clinched the pole position yet again on his own merits, by working hard and driving a great lap. The entire team performance was very good, as well, this time.”

Tom Kristensen

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

1st place, 42.406s

“Tomorrow three Audi A4 DTM cars will start from the first two rows – that’s a fantastic result for Audi. My pole lap was perfect, I couldn’t have gotten a better performance out of my car. The entire squad worked hard because the long-runs we did yesterday make us feel confident too. Claiming a pole position on such a short circuit, where it’s about hundredths and thousandths, means something very special to me.”

Heinz-Harald Frentzen

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

3rd place, 42.696s

“I’m feeling fine, the impact wasn’t all that hard even though the car has sustained major damage. I lost control while turning in. I had to change the set-up of my A4 in order to reduce understeer by increasing the grip on the front wheels. On the first lap that worked out. Then I wanted to attack once more but the car went out of control so quickly that I couldn’t catch it again. Driving at the limit at Brands Hatch is very tricky.”

Mattias Ekström

Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #5

4th place, 42.699s

“That was pretty exciting. I was surprised when the red flag suddenly appeared and I had to brake. The car was 99 percent perfect. Fourth place is much better than I’d expected. I’m satisfied and we’ve got good chances in the race.”

Martin Tomczyk

Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #4

7th place, 42.896s

“For Audi, it’s a good result, for me, personally, seventh place is neither the best nor the worst starting base for the race. I’m upset about clocking the same time on five runs without being able to improve – I’m simply not used to that.”

Christian Abt

Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Playboy Audi A4 DTM #12

9th place, 43.073s

“We’ve got to be satisfied because we did a good job. No doubt, my excursion through the gravel trap this morning didn’t help matters. It’s too bad that we missed making it into the last section of the quickest eight cars by such a small margin. On Sunday, driving 82 laps in this heat means that the driver’s stamina and a good vehicle set-up will be crucial.”

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Frank Stippler

Audi Sport Team Rosberg, S line Audi A4 DTM #15

10th place, 43.085s

“I’d been counting on a better result. Towards the end we worked on containing the damage. On my second lap I went through the gravel trap and damaged some components which affect the front aerodynamics. Despite a less than optimal car we claimed tenth place. I’d have wished to be a little further towards the front, though.”

Pierre Kaffer

Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Castrol Audi A4 DTM #14

11th place, 43.115s

“On the one hand I’m satisfied but on the other it would have been possible to today to make it into the top eight. On my last lap I made a mistake. But the team did a super job. In the race I need to manage a good start. Brands Hatch suits me well. The circuit is nice. At the Norisring we’re finally going to shoot for the top eight, though.”

Timo Scheider

Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Gebrauchtwagen plus Audi A4 DTM #16
15th place, 43.238s

“That was clearly a poor showing. As early as in the free practice we failed to achieve any balance. We’re at odds with the grip on the track and are unable to improve the car. Neither of the two trials in the qualifying worked. In addition to a lack of grip we had vibrations on the front suspension. It’s more than disappointing that we didn’t get beyond the first qualifying session. We’ve got to be better in the race now.”

Jeroen Bleekemolen

Futurecom TME, Futurecom Audi A4 DTM #19
17th place, 43.341s

“In the final corner of the last lap I made a mistake and lost a tenth of a second. That’s a shame because otherwise we could have been part of the next qualifying group. At least we were the best in a 2004-spec car the first weekend of my return to the DTM. Now we need to improve in the overall standings.”

Vanina Ickx

Futurecom TME, Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM #20
20th place, 43.661s

“Brands Hatch Indy is an action-packed circuit! I did my best and avoided making any mistakes. Looking at my personal best sector times, the time I could have set theoretically could have been better. I’m making consistent progress of closing the gap to my rivals in front.”

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): “That was a turbulent qualifying, in which we did a good job of standing our ground. Pole for Tom, third place for Heinz-Harald, fourth place for Mattias – that’s a team with striking power. For the first time this year, several of our cars are in positions at the very front of the field. I’m satisfied and looking forward to the race. The team is highly motivated, and this includes getting Heinz-Harald’s prepared again for the race.”

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): “We focused our work precisely on the qualifying and came very close to making it into the top eight this time. It would have been nice if we could have made it this time, but both

drivers lost it all in the first sector of their last outing. Both will be starting on the right-hand side of the track where grip is better. I'm hoping this will help us move towards the front."

Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg): "Too bad, I would have expected more after the free practice session. Frank damaged the front splitter while driving through the gravel trap. After that he wasn't able to improve any more and barely missed the last qualifying segment. Timo got into traffic and complained about heavy oversteer. I'm not particularly satisfied with this result."

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

The starting grid at Brands Hatch

- 1 Tom Kristensen (Siemens Audi A4 DTM), 42.406s
- 2 Jamie Green (Mercedes), 42.654s
- 3 Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Veltins Audi A4 DTM), 42.696s
- 4 Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), 42.699s
- 5 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes), 42.740s
- 6 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes), 42.771s
- 7 Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), 42.896s
- 8 Mika Häkkinen (Mercedes), 1m34.878s
- 9 Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM), 43.073s
- 10 Frank Stippler (S line Audi A4 DTM), 43.085s
- 11 Pierre Kaffer (Castrol Audi A4 DTM), 43.115s
- 12 Jean Alesi (Mercedes), 43.157s
- 13 Daniel la Rosa (Mercedes), 43.166s
- 14 Alexandros Margaritis (Mercedes), 43.203s
- 15 Timo Scheider (Gebrauchtwagen:plus Audi A4 DTM), 43.238s
- 16 Stefan Mücke (Mercedes), 43.293s
- 17 Jeroen Bleekemolen (Futurecom Audi A4 DTM), 43.341s
- 18 Mathias Lauda (Mercedes), 43.443s
- 19 Susie Stoddart (Mercedes), 43.496s
- 20 Vanina Ickx (Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM), 43.661s

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