

Estoril, 1 May 2004

Frank Biela about Estoril

For the first time the new DTM (German Touring Car Masters) races at Estoril. But the drivers will race on known terrain: A lot of them used the official DTM tests in mid-March to get used to the challenging track close to Portugal's capital city Lisbon. Audi driver Frank Biela talks about the 4.183 kilometre long circuit.

After the tests, this is only your second time with the DTM in Estoril. What is your impression of the circuit?

Frank Biela: "For sure it will be tougher than the season opener at Hockenheim because the track is very demanding. There are some fast corners with a lot of G-force. And you also get shaken by the bumps on the track."

Is the Circuito do Estoril a difficult circuit?

Frank Biela: "Yes, because there are a series of uphill and downhill banking corners with high G-forces. And the narrow, slow chicane looks very simple at first sight, but you can lose a lot of time there. A perfect set-up is important on every track but especially here at Estoril."

What are the most important areas from your point of view?

Frank Biela: "Definitely the last corner before the start-finish line. In this long, right hand corner it is very important to 'carry' as much speed as possible onto the straight. And also the chicane: You think that you can't do too much wrong because it is so slow but the opposite is in fact true – you have plenty of time to make a mistake."

Where is it possible to overtake at Estoril?

Frank Biela: "We will see during the race! I think it should be possible at the end of the start-finish straight and perhaps also at the end of the opposite straight. With a little luck the area before the uphill chicane also looks good for overtaking."

How important is the start?

Frank Biela: "The danger of a crash in the first corner is very high. Compared to Hockenheim you have much less space when you brake into the first corner."

Does the weather play an important role on Sunday?

Frank Biela: "Not more than on other tracks. But if it is wet on Sunday I hope we will have the opportunity to race one of the practice sessions under similar conditions. Because none of us DTM drivers ever raced at Estoril when it's wet so far."

A circuit map indicating gear shift points and speeds, photographs and further information is available in the Internet:

www.audi-sportpress.com (accreditation necessary)