

Hockenheim, 7 April 2006

## Motorsport

### Kristensen fastest Audi driver in DTM start

- **Hockenheim DTM season opener at rising temperatures**
- **Last year's cars among front runners**
- **Vanina Ickx ahead of Mathias Lauda in afternoon session**

Le Mans record winner Tom Kristensen was the fastest Audi driver in the DTM season opener at Hockenheim on Friday. In the Siemens Audi A4 DTM entered by Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline the Dane in the afternoon clocked the day's fifth-best time overall in 1m 35.021s. Merely six thousandths of a second slower was Pierre Kaffer, who at the wheel of the Castrol Audi A4 DTM fielded by Audi Sport Team Phoenix suggested that the cars from last year will be serious contenders in the 2006 DTM season as well.

AUDI AG  
Kommunikation  
85045 Ingolstadt  
[www.audi.com](http://www.audi.com)

In her DTM debut, Vanina Ickx improved by more than one second from the first to the second test. In the afternoon the Belgian was quicker than Mathias Lauda.

After the first test in the morning had been run in extremely cold weather, afternoon temperatures went up notably, thus creating clearly different conditions. What is more, the second test had to be red-flagged shortly before the end because a Mercedes had gone up in flames.

For Saturday's qualifying which will feature the new "shoot-out" format for the first time, further temperature increases have been predicted. ARD TV will broadcast the eagerly awaited fight for the best grid positions on "Das Erste" live from Hockenheim, starting at 1:35 p.m. (local time).

### Quotes after Friday's tests

**Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** "We gathered a lot of crucial information today, particularly since the track temperature changed by nearly 20 degrees between this morning and this afternoon. Our major focus was on working out a set-up on the track which will give us no tyre problems over the race

distance. This is what all drivers concentrated on today. Tomorrow will be about finding the right speed for the qualifying.”

## **Tom Kristensen**

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

**6th place / 4th place, 1m 35.021s**

“Of course the first day at Hockenheim is always a test. Still, the car feels a lot better already than it did in the race last year. In winter a lot of positive changes were made which, naturally, have merely a minor impact because of the regulations. The trend shows that everything will definitely be very close.”

## **Pierre Kaffer**

**Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Castrol Audi A4 DTM #14**

**3rd place / 13th place, 1m 35.027s**

“I’m quite happy with the start. We were able to try a few things which we already applied to the track during the tests. The boys have done a super job and I get along well with the car.”

## **Mattias Ekström**

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

**4th place / 11th place, 1m 35.224s**

“It was a good day particularly at the end. Today started with a few difficulties, but after the second test I’m happy. I’m very excited about tomorrow and look forward to the new qualifying format.”

## **Heinz-Harald Frentzen**

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

**5th place / 16th place, 1m 35.239s**

“Today I experienced my first kilometres with a new team in the Audi A4 DTM on a race weekend. It was a pretty good day, we were able to fully test the set-up for the race. That was very conclusive. The car was running super, the boys prepared it well.”

## **Frank Stippler**

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

**16th place / 7th place, 1m 35.366s**

“Because of a gearbox problem I didn’t get to do much driving this morning. Somehow this seems to be following me a bit this year. The second test was much better. That’s exactly where we’re going to continue tomorrow and then tackle the qualifying.”

## **Martin Tomczyk**

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

**11th place / 10th place, 1m 35.695s**

“The car responded to the changes exactly the way we thought it would. Unfortunately, I wasn’t able to fully use my lap on new tyres because I was obstructed. But our projections of the lap time that is possible make me feel optimistic.”

AUDI AG  
Kommunikation  
85045 Ingolstadt  
[www.audi.com](http://www.audi.com)

## **Christian Abt**

**Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Playboy Audi A4 DTM #12**

**10th place / 15th place, 1m 35.657s**

“We found out everything we wanted to know. For the race, we tried a lot of things, and for the qualifying as well. Too bad that the test was aborted towards the end when I had just gone out on fresh tyres. But I believe the car’s performance is good.”

## **Timo Scheider**

**Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Gebrauchtwagen plus Audi A4 DTM #16**

**12th place / 14th place, 1m 35.882s**

“Unfortunately we had a few problems in the first practice session which is why we couldn’t get as much driving in as we’d been wanting to. In the second session we managed to run the kilometres but something with the rear suspension set-up wasn’t quite clear. We know what we need to do, that’s why I’m relatively optimistic for Saturday.”

## **Vanina Ickx**

**Futurecom TME, Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM #20**

**19th place / 18th place, 1m 36.989s**

“It’s fantastic that the DTM season has started now. My day was a bit hectic. Compared with a test, running on a race weekend is altogether different. I’m not overwhelmed about my performance yet. There are still quite a few things to be worked on – not just in the car, but in the whole team.”

## **Olivier Tielemans**

**Futurecom TME, Futurecom Audi A4 DTM #19**

**20th place / 20th place, 1m 37.836s**

“It’s been a great first day in the DTM. I’ve never seen so many people in the paddock on a Friday, and the whole atmosphere is simply super. I still need to learn a lot – about my Audi A4 as well as about the circuit here at Hockenheim. But I’m giving my best and look forward already to the next practice session tomorrow morning.”

**Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline):** “We concentrated on the race because in this year’s DTM you need to think about saving your tyres as well. That’s why in the end we no longer focused on qualifying times – we’re going to do that tomorrow.”

**Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix):** “The first test went well. In the second session long-runs were on the agenda, with which we were not completely satisfied yet. That’s why we primarily concentrated on this subject. When we fitted new tyres at the end of the session, the test was aborted.”

**Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg):** “We’ve put some strenuous weeks behind us. Considering how short the preparation time was, I’m very satisfied. I would like to thank Audi for their fantastic support without which none of this would have been possible. The entire squad performed an incredible job.”

## **Communication Motorsport**

**Telephone +49 (0)841 89 34200, fax +49 (0)841 89 38617**

**E-Mail [motorsport-media@audi.de](mailto:motorsport-media@audi.de)**

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