

Communications Motorsport

Jürgen Pippig
Telephone: +49 (0)841 89 34200
E-mail: motorsport-media@audi.de

Stefanie Höcker
Telephone: +49 (0)841 89 38053
E-mail: stefanie.hoecker@audi.de

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New Audi A4 DTM sets standard at Mugello as well

- **Day's best time despite 20-kilogram handicap weight**
- **Title defender Mattias Ekström quickest on Friday**
- **Solid team performance by Audi squads**

Ingolstadt/Mugello – The new Audi A4 DTM remains the car to be beaten at its third running in a racing event as well: title defender Mattias Ekström set the day's best time of 1m 44.651s at the DTM round at Mugello on Friday.

The Swede, who started from the pole position at Mugello last year, was 92 thousandths of a second quicker than Paul di Resta in the best Mercedes – despite the fact that the new Audi A4 DTM cars, due to their two victories at Hockenheim and Oschersleben, have to run with 20 kilograms more weight than the 2008-spec Mercedes cars.

In addition, the four Audi teams on Friday fully focused on their setup work for the race on Sunday. "That was truly a good day," said Mattias Ekström. "In the morning, I drove a long run, with which I was very satisfied. In the afternoon, we refined this setup. The outcome of this effort makes me feel optimistic."

But not only the new Audi A4 DTM cars should be counted on at Mugello. The slightly lighter cars from last year were quick on Friday as well. The best time (1m 44.964s) was set by Markus Winkelhock, despite the fact that he spent about 30 minutes in the pit lane due to a defective strut of the air jack system.

Another driver picking up more and more momentum is Katherine Legge: the Brit in her 2006-spec A4 was not only the quickest lady in the field on Friday. She also outperformed a total of four 2007-spec Mercedes cars.



"All in all, this was a very cohesive team performance today," praised Audi Head of Motorsport Dr Wolfgang Ullrich. "We were able to build upon last year's data and also completed a very good long run. Today we worked out a base for the race on Sunday. Tomorrow we'll concentrate on the qualifying practice. Generally speaking, it seems that Mugello continues to be a circuit that suits our Audi A4 well."

The free practice session on Saturday morning will be broadcast live on the Internet on www.dtm.tv, qualifying on TV channel "Das Erste" starting at 1:30 p.m. For Saturday, similarly good weather as on Friday has been forecast for Tuscany.

Photographs and information available at www.audi-motorsport.info

AUDI AG sold a total of 964,151 cars in 2007 and thus achieved its twelfth consecutive record year. With revenue of € 33,617 million and profit before tax of € 2,915 million, the company attained its best figures ever. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). At the end of 2007, production of the Audi A6 started in Aurangabad, India. The company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include Automobili Lamborghini Holding S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese, Italy, and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Audi employs about 54,000 people worldwide, including 45,000 in Germany. The brand with the four rings invests more than € 2 billion each year in order to sustain the company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. Audi plans to significantly increase the number of models in its portfolio by 2015, from the 26 currently on offer to 40.