

Istanbul, 30 September 2005

Motorsport

Tom Kristensen quickest Audi driver at Istanbul

- **DTM drivers enthralled by new circuit in Turkey**
- **Frank Stippler clocks best time in first test**
- **16 cars within one second on Friday**

The new Grand Prix circuit at Istanbul enthralled the DTM drivers, as well: after the first day of testing in the DTM's "guest performance" in Turkey, all eight Audi works drivers raved about the 5.228-kilometre circuit. That the DTM fans can look forward to another thrilling race became equally obvious on Friday: at the end of the two 90-minute test sessions at "Istanbul Park", the quickest 16 cars were all within one second of each other.

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The best time in the first test in the morning was clocked by Frank Stippler in last year's A4 of Audi Sport Team Joest. Allan McNish in the Audi A4 DTM entered by Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline came merely 0.059 seconds behind Stippler in second place. Quickest Audi driver in the second test in the afternoon was Le Mans record winner Tom Kristensen in tenth place.

The leader of the standings, Mattias Ekström, finished 17th on Friday. However, like his team-mates, the title defender was concentrating mainly on gathering as much data as possible about the track which is new to all DTM drivers. Saturday's qualifying is going to show who will have made the best of this overnight. ARD will broadcast live from Istanbul, starting at 2 p.m. (local time).

Quotes after Friday's tests

Tom Kristensen (Audi Sport Team Abt #5)

9th place / 10th place, 1m 47.987s

"The track is incredible – the best new circuit I've ever driven on. Of course, being merely tenth as the quickest Audi driver is not what I'd been wishing for. But we did a lot of work on the car today. The performance window is very small at this circuit. I'm sure we'll be part of the action tomorrow."

Frank Stippler (Audi Sport Team Joest #19)

1st place / 12th place, 1m 48.153s

“The track is very difficult but, so far, I’ve been able to deal with it pretty well. This morning, in particular, things were going well. Now we’ll have to work hard to make sure that we’ll be able to sustain this result. As always, the field is very tight here.”

Allan McNish (Audi Sport Team Abt #6)

2nd place / 13th place, 1m 48.191s

“The circuit is interesting and demanding from a technical point of view. I like that. In the beginning, my A4 was oversteering a bit, but we corrected this as the day went on. For me, it was a pretty good Friday.”

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Pierre Kaffer (Audi Sport Team Joest Racing #15)

16th place / 14th place, 1m 48.317s

“Driving here is great fun. I feel very comfortable on this circuit and the car, too, is running well. Now we need to see what we can do in tomorrow’s qualifying. The long straights aren’t our ‘favourite thing’, but in Turn 8 we can make up quite a bit of ground.”

Mattias Ekström (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline #1)

8th place / 17th place, 1m 48.460s

“The circuit is very demanding. We tried out a lot of things today and learned quite a bit in the process. Now we need to draw the right conclusions for tomorrow from the data we collected.”

Martin Tomczyk (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline #2)

19th place / 18th place, 1m 48.623s

“The circuit at Istanbul is really fantastic and lots of fun. My car is actually handling the track quite well but I’m simply still lacking a bit of speed at the moment. We’re going to work on this by tomorrow.”

Christian Abt (Audi Sport Team Joest Racing #14)

20th place / 19th place, 1m 49.198s

“The track is great but, for some reason, today just wasn’t my day. For the race, we’ve found a good set-up, for the qualifying, we still need to come up with something.”

Dindo Capello (Audi Sport Team Joest #18)

12th place / 20th place, 1m 49.395s

“This morning, my car was understeering a bit too much. In the second test, we improved the set-up. On old tyres, I drove very good lap times but with new tyres I was a lot slower. Something just wasn’t right then.”

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): “Istanbul is new to everyone. The circuit is very demanding and an enrichment to the DTM calendar. Today, it was primarily about trying out as many different things as possible and collecting data. That’s what we did.”

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Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest): “This morning, we had a few minor problems, which we managed to resolve in the afternoon. I don’t think we’ll be able to make it into the Super pole here – but the top ten have never brought us any luck anyway.”

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “Today, everyone was trying to get to know the new circuit and collect as much data as possible. This data we now have to analyse to make the best of it in the qualifying tomorrow. We need to consider, though, that the track was developing more and more grip during the course of the day.”

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