

EuroSpeedway, 18 May 2007

Motorsport

Audi heads leader board in the Lausitz

- **Mattias Ekström runs at front after two DTM races**
- **Good chances for 'second-hand' Audis**
- **Duel between Audi A4 DTM and Red Bull Formula 1**

The first two races of the 2007 DTM have demonstrated just how rarefied the atmosphere is in the most popular international touring car race series. Almost every driver in the 20 car field has a chance of finishing on the podium. The smallest details are the difference between victory and defeat. It is already plain to see that every point will count in the title battle.

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The next clash between the spectacular touring cars is staged between the 18 and 20 May at the EuroSpeedway Lausitz. 76,000 spectators poured through the gates last year. In 2007, the motorsport fans can look forward to a modified first corner which should encourage overtaking – and something exceptional to savour: Mattias Ekström, EuroSpeedway winner in 2005, goes head to head in a drag race with his Audi A4 DTM against the Red Bull Formula 1 car. The “Puhdys”, the new German States’ most famous rock group, are charged with livening things up before the start.

Audi driver Mattias Ekström arrives at the EuroSpeedway as championship leader – and also aims to leave the Lausitz as front runner. However, this is easier said than done: His team mate Martin Tomczyk (Germany) and Paul di Resta (Scotland) are both equal on points at the head of the table with the Swede, who actually leads the championship as a result of his better individual results. Gary Paffett (Great Britain) trails by a single point.

Because the new Audi A4 DTM was more successful than the new Mercedes C-Class at the first two races it is by far the heaviest car in the field – as stipulated by the regulations. As a result, the year-old cars, which compete with less weight, could again play a starring role. At Oschersleben, in only his second DTM race, the 23-year old Mike “Rocky” Rockenfeller

(Germany) demonstrated exactly what is possible with an Audi used car – the youngster showed a two-time Formula 1 World Champion absolutely no respect on his way to claiming a joyful podium position.

At the EuroSpeedway Lausitz, Markus Winkelhock (26), Formula 1 test driver for Spyker, deputises for Le Mans record winner Tom Kristensen in the Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline. Tom Kristensen is still recovering following his serious accident in the season opener at Hockenheim. The Frenchman Alexandre Prémat is, however, fit to race again.

Things really heat-up for the first time at the EuroSpeedway on Saturday (19 May) at 1:30 p.m. in the three-part “shoot out” qualifying session. The race starts on Sunday at 2:00 p.m. ARD TV broadcasts both events live as usual on “Das Erste”. Tickets can be ordered by telephone by calling +49 (0)841 9047777 or in the Internet at www.audi-dtm.de.

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Quotes before the race at the EuroSpeedway

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “The EuroSpeedway has been modified since last year’s race. So, we have a similar situation to Oschersleben where we have to busy ourselves with a new circuit layout. For our 2007 cars it will quite literally be heavy going at the EuroSpeedway. In contrast, our used cars should have a good chance. We will try to take as many points as possible back home.”

Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #3): “The EuroSpeedway Lausitz has always been one of my favourite circuits. I claimed my first podium there and won after a fantastic fight with Gary (Paffett) in 2005. Even though the first corner is new the rest of the circuit is unchanged. I go with high hopes to the Lausitz. However, we should keep our feet firmly on the ground: It will be an incredibly tough weekend for us.”

Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #4): “The races at the EuroSpeedway have always been exciting. It certainly isn’t beneficial that we must start with significantly more weight than the new Mercedes. However, I believe that we can be competitive in spite of the additional weight. As always we’ll be doing our best.”

Markus Winkelhock (Siemens Audi A4 DTM #7): “I’m extremely happy to get this chance from Audi – even though I know how difficult it will be. I’ve followed every race since I left the DTM. The difference in performance between the cars is now miniscule, especially this year. As I hear it is particularly difficult to get the best out of the tyres. Of course things aren’t made any easier for me since I was unable to test beforehand. However, I’m a driver who can normally get used to new cars, new circuits and environments very quickly. I hope that I live up to my own expectations and can produce the best for Audi. Nevertheless, I’m really looking forward to join this fantastic team.”

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Timo Scheider (Gebrauchtwagen:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM #8): “We simply have to extract the maximum from everything at the EuroSpeedway. I hope that we can position the additional weight in such a way that it doesn’t harm us too much. Obviously, it won’t be easy to finish on the podium. But let’s not forget that nothing is impossible in the DTM!”

Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM #11): “I already know the EuroSpeedway Lausitz like the back of my hand since I have competed in several racing series there. The new first corner is the only unknown factor, but it’s the same for everybody. We are all highly motivated after the boost in Oschersleben and will attempt to bring home a similar result.”

Lucas Luhr (Philips Audi A4 DTM #12): “I’ve never been to the EuroSpeedway before and therefore don’t know much about the circuit. I’m nevertheless looking forward to the next race. After things didn’t go so well at Oschersleben I’m itching to get a better result. In general we should be in top form.”

Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM #16): “Unfortunately we came away empty-handed from Hockenheim and Oschersleben even though we had good chances. The conditions for the EuroSpeedway are even better, points should finally be on the cards there – I’m really looking forward to the race.”

Alexandre Prémat (Audi Bank Audi A4 DTM #17): “I’ve been working for some time now on improving my fitness, from weight training to jogging. The rehabilitation programme was very intensive. I’m one thousand per cent motivated! I’m really very relieved to be able to return so soon after such a heavy accident. I’m looking forward to seeing my team again and returning to the Audi family. I want to get a good result at the EuroSpeedway after having been away from the DTM scene for a month. Three drivers of older cars locked out the podium last time out at Oschersleben, which I obviously liked a lot. This shows that the DTM concept works. Practically every driver can score points.”

Adam Carroll (Audi A4 DTM #20): “I drove three laps around the EuroSpeedway in a DTM car in 2003 – at least I know which way it goes. The circuit looks interesting. It has a mix of fast and slow corners and we run on a part of the oval in the banking. If we find car’s the sweet spot we should have another good weekend.”

Vanina Ickx (Audi A4 DTM #21): “I still don’t know the EuroSpeedway as well as I’d like, but my engineer knows the track extremely well. Perhaps it’ll bring me some luck.”

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): “We want to collect as many points as possible at the EuroSpeedway Lausitz. The situation is very difficult for us, but we have to make the best of it. We still lead the Drivers’ and Team championships. Our goal is to defend and retain our lead.”

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): “I think we have good chances with both drivers at the EuroSpeedway. We are fully motivated. If everything runs smoothly we could score points with both cars. We intend to do this.”

Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg): “I’m really looking forward to the EuroSpeedway Lausitz. We finished third at Oschersleben and now have an even more favourable platform. It could be quite amusing.”

The schedule at EuroSpeedway

Friday, 18 May

09:00 – 09:15	Roll-out
10:15 – 11:45	Test 1
14:00 – 15:30	Test 2

Saturday, 19 May

10:10 – 11:10	Free Practice
13:30 – 14:17	Qualifying

Sunday, 20 May

10:00 – 10:30	Warm-up
14:00	Race

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TV schedule

Saturday, 19 May

13:30 – 14:25	Das Erste (ARD), qualifying live
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Sunday, 20 May

13:45 – 15:15	Das Erste (ARD), race live
21:30 – 22:00	DSF, highlights

Point standings after 2 of 10 races

Drivers' Championship

1	Mattias Ekström	Red Bull Audi A4 DTM	12
2	Paul di Resta	Mercedes	12
3	Martin Tomczyk	Red Bull Audi A4 DTM	12
4	Gary Paffett	Mercedes	11
5	Mike Rockenfeller	S line Audi A4 DTM	6
6	Daniel la Rosa	Mercedes	6
7	Alexandros Margaritis	Mercedes	6
8	Timo Scheider	GW:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM	5
9	Bernd Schneider	Mercedes	5
10	Jamie Green	Mercedes	3

Team Championship

1 Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline	24
2 stern/Laureus AMG Mercedes	17
3 TV-Spielfilm/JAWA.de AMG Mercedes	12
4 TrekStor/Trilux AMG Mercedes	6
5 Audi Sport Team Rosberg	6
6 Audi Sport Team Abt	5
7 Originalteile/DaimlerChrysler Bank AMG Mercedes	5
8 Salzgitter/AMG Mercedes	3

Car weights

Audi A4 DTM 2007	1,084 kg
Mercedes 2006	1,074 kg
Mercedes 2007	1,056 kg
Mercedes 2005	1,054 kg
Audi A4 DTM 2006	1,046 kg
Audi A4 DTM 2005	1,026 kg

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Photographs, sound bites and further information can be found in the Internet:
www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation necessary)

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