

Comeback in Europe's most popular touring car series

Audi in the DTM

AUDI AG returns at factory level to Europe's most popular touring car race series more than ten years after the Audi V8 quattro racer's triumphant winning streak in the German Touring Car Championship (DTM). Six newly developed Audi A4 DTM cars start in the 2004 DTM (German Touring Car Masters) season. The Audi factory teams Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline and Audi Sport Infineon Team Joest assume responsibility for the races.

Audi A4 a perfect base

Audi banks on the current A4, Audi's best selling model in Germany, for the works comeback in the DTM. "The A4 fits perfectly in the new DTM technical regulations," explains Audi Motorsport Head Dr Wolfgang Ullrich. "On top of this, the Audi A4 already has a long tradition in touring car sport." From 1995 to 1999, the Audi A4 quattro was the world's most successful Super Touring Car. The Audi A4 STCC won the Swedish Touring Car Championship (STCC) in 2003.

Development at Audi Sport in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm

The Audi A4 DTM was developed by Audi Sport in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm, creating a completely new touring car and borrowing much know-how from the Audi R8. The most successful sports prototype of the modern era won the legendary 24 Hours of Le Mans three times in succession in 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Abt and Joest: two strong partners

The homework completed by Audi Sport must be implemented at the circuit by two strong partners: The factory teams of Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline and Audi Sport Infineon Team Joest have prepared themselves meticulously for the 2004 season. Hans-Jürgen Abt's team, which sensationally won the 2002 DTM against the might of the works teams, enters four A4 DTM cars divided in two teams. Reinhold Joest's team, an AUDI AG partner since 1998 and a team which has played a decisive role in the successful R8 project, assume responsibility for the entry of two more A4 DTM cars.

High-calibre driver squad

The six man Audi driver squad is a high-calibre mix of former Audi sports prototype and touring car drivers. Frank Biela (Germany), Tom Kristensen (Denmark) and Emanuele Pirro (Italy) together won the 24 Hours of Le Mans three times in succession with an Audi R8. Christian Abt (Germany), Mattias Ekström (Sweden) and Martin Tomczyk (Germany) raced for Team Abt Sportsline in the DTM in previous years.

Audi already triple DTM Champion

Frank Biela was already in the thick of the action when Audi made their first assault on the DTM. After Hans-Joachim Stuck had brought the 1990 championship title back to Ingolstadt in Audi's debut year with the Audi V8 quattro, Frank Biela triumphed in 1991. Audi, thus became the first manufacturer to successfully defend a DTM title. With a total of 27 victories, 21 pole positions and 22 fastest race laps, Audi is one of the most successful makes in DTM history – thanks also to the victories achieved over the last few years by Audi customer team Abt Sportsline with the compact Coupé based on the Audi TT.

Hotly contested 2004 DTM

For the factory based return to the DTM, the target for the Audi Sport squad is self-explanatory. "Audi does not compete just to make up the numbers," says Audi Motorsport Head Dr Wolfgang Ullrich. "As far as our DTM comeback is concerned we want to be capable of winning immediately to enable us to fight for the title. However, we know that things are really close in the DTM and our competitors are very strong. The DTM fans can look forward to an exciting season. At the first combined test at Estoril the cars of all three manufacturers were separated by only a few hundredths of a second. We will only know where we really stand at the season's opening race at Hockenheim."