

Communications Motorsport

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Audi trio in front in qualifying at Zandvoort

- **Thriller with Mattias Ekström, Timo Scheider and Tom Kristensen**
- **New Audi A4 DTM clinches fourth pole position**
- **Oliver Jarvis best driver of a year-old car for fourth time**

Ingolstadt/Zandvoort – The qualifying at the sixth DTM race weekend at Zandvoort was marked by nail-biting suspense when as many as three Audi drivers fiercely fought for the pole position. In the end, Mattias Ekström prevailed as the front runner with a lead of more than two tenths of a second, thus setting a new track record on the Dutch dune circuit. Timo Scheider and Tom Kristensen completed the trio on the top grid positions.

Up to the last second, fans lining the 4.307-kilometre circuit were watching with bated breath: shortly before the end of the qualifying Tom Kristensen was running in front when Timo Scheider outperformed him by three tenths of a second. Then, Mattias Ekström managed a further remarkable improvement: last year's DTM Champion was yet another 219 thousandths of a second faster than the German. This meant that for the first time this year Scheider was not the best Audi driver in qualifying. With his lap time of 1m 31.012s, Ekström topped the previous qualifying track record from 2006 by more than 1.1 seconds.

After the top results at Hockenheim, Oschersleben and Mugello at the beginning of the season, Audi clinched the fourth top qualifying time of the 2008 season and the brand's 41st pole position in the history of the DTM. For Mattias Ekström, who had last started from the top grid position at Mugello one year ago, this marked



the tenth pole position in his DTM career. Martin Tomczyk on position six completed an Audi quartet on the first three rows.

Further strong performances were shown by the drivers of older model years: DTM newcomer Oliver Jarvis was the best driver of a year-old car for as much as the fourth time this year, with Audi now leading this particular ranking for the fifth time in 2008. Jarvis clinched third place in the second qualifying segment. This meant that the Brit was the only driver of a “used car” to make it into the last qualifying segment, which he finished in eighth place. Three further drivers of year-old Audi cars, Markus Winkelhock, Mike Rockenfeller and Alexandre Prémat, followed in the subsequent positions.

Local hero Christijan Albers from the Netherlands in the two-year-old Audi A4 DTM made it into the second qualifying segment, which he finished in 14th place, thus equalising his previous best results. His British team-mate Katherine Legge clinched 16th place on her 28th birthday, marking her best DTM qualifying performance since her début in April.

The DTM race at Zandvoort will start at Zandvoort at 1:03 p.m. local time on Sunday. ARD will broadcast live on “Das Erste” from the North Sea coast starting at 12:45.

Quotes after Qualifying

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “I’m very satisfied. We showed that our new Audi A4 DTM feels absolutely at home here at Zandvoort as well. The boys used the full potential in qualifying. After the second session it almost looked as though the result could even be topped. But I don’t want to be immodest: the result is a great starting base for the race on Sunday, which – nevertheless – will be a tough task.”

Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #1): “I enjoyed every metre in my new Audi A4 DTM today. The car and my driving style are in perfect harmony, so it’s really fun. My last pole dates back a year ago almost to the day – that makes me even happier about this exploit and makes me look forward to the race with even greater anticipation.”



Timo Scheider (GW:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM #10): "Congratulations to Mattias (Ekström), who drove a fantastic lap. I've been on pole at Zandvoort twice in the past, but have never won there – so maybe position two is a good omen. Now I'm hoping for dry weather tomorrow – particularly for the fans. And of course I'm wishing for three Audi drivers to be standing on the podium after the race on Sunday."

Tom Kristensen (Audi A4 DTM #9): "First, second and third place in qualifying – that's an outstanding result for Audi. Perhaps I could personally have achieved a better result yet, but this way I've definitely got an excellent starting base for the race on Sunday."

Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #2): "Congratulations to 'Eki', who drove a superb lap. Unfortunately, things weren't going that well for me."

Oliver Jarvis (Best Buddies Audi A4 DTM #15): "It's always nice to make it into the last qualifying. However, I'd been hoping to finish in fifth or sixth there. But the group of front runners is always very competitive and I'm happy to be the best driver of a year-old car."

Markus Winkelhock (Playboy Audi A4 DTM #19): "The qualifying was okay, but not perfect. I'd been hoping to finish among the top eight. Unfortunately, I didn't quite make it. But from ninth position and with a good strategy I should be able to score points tomorrow."

Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM #18): "I could have probably done better than position ten. I hit the gravel with two wheels and damaged the rear bodywork. Despite the missing rear body panel, which destroyed the aerodynamics, I still finished tenth on the second set of new tyres."

Alexandre Prémat (Audi Bank/Shell Helix Audi A4 DTM #14): "We were close to a place among the top eight. Unfortunately, it didn't work out all the way because the car responded a bit nervously to braking. But for the race I do expect something."

Christijan Albers (Audi A4 DTM #21): "The qualifying was good. It was a tough job, but I made it into the second session. Because more than 14th place was hardly possible, we decided not to attack any more and to save the set of tyres for the race."



Katherine Legge (Audi A4 DTM #20): "I'm pleased with my best result in a DTM qualifying. First it looked as though I might be able to make it into the second qualifying but, unfortunately, my car started oversteering. If we manage to get a handle on this by tomorrow, we should have some chances in the race tomorrow."

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): "Three cars in front, that's a tremendous result! You can't wish for more than that. Now we need to translate this into exploits tomorrow. The prerequisites for doing that are perfect. Congratulations to everyone. The whole team got everything right today and clinched a great result for Audi."

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): "We're very satisfied with the whole day. In free practice Alex was the second-quickest. Of course, after that we'd been hoping that he'd make it into the top eight in qualifying as well, but that didn't quite work out. Instead, we made it with Oliver. Making it into the third qualifying session with a car from last year in this highly competitive field was definitely a top-class performance."

Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg): "Actually, places nine and ten aren't that bad but there was a little more potential. Congratulations to Audi on clinching grid positions one, two and three. And, I take my hat off to Oliver Jarvis. His showing – particularly in the second qualifying – was really a class act."



The starting grid at Zandvoort

- 1 Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM) 1m 31.012s
- 2 Timo Scheider (GW:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM) 1m 31.231s
- 3 Tom Kristensen (Audi A4 DTM) 1m 31.563s
- 4 Jamie Green (Mercedes) 1m 31.600s
- 5 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes) 1m 31.709s
- 6 Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM) 1m 31.731s
- 7 Paul di Resta (Mercedes) 1m 31.815s
- 8 Oliver Jarvis (Best Buddies Audi A4 DTM) 1m 32.037s
- 9 Markus Winkelhock (Playboy Audi A4 DTM) 1m 32.319s
- 10 Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM) 1m 32.642s
- 11 Alexandre Prémat (Audi Bank/Shell Helix Audi A4 DTM) 1m 32.705s
- 12 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes) 1m 32.808s
- 13 Gary Paffett (Mercedes) 1m 33.165s
- 14 Christijan Albers (Audi A4 DTM) 1m 33.231s
- 15 Mathias Lauda (Mercedes) 1m 33.644s
- 16 Katherine Legge (Audi A4 DTM) 1m 33.681s
- 17 Maro Engel (Mercedes) 1m 33.691s
- 18 Susie Stoddart (Mercedes) 1m 33.873s
- 19 Ralf Schumacher (Mercedes) 1m 33.980s

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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.