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Motorsport

Audi wants to defend lead in the DTM

- **Mattias Ekström comes to Oschersleben as the leader**
- **“Home race” for last year’s winner Tom Kristensen**
- **2004-spec A4 DTM drivers want to score further points**

Same procedure as last year? Head of Audi Motorsport Dr Wolfgang Ullrich wouldn’t mind that at all: last year, Tom Kristensen and Martin Tomczyk clinched a double victory for Audi at the Motopark Oschersleben – the first of three consecutive one-two wins that paved the way for Audi’s title win in Europe’s most popular touring car series. After the double victory at Brno, Audi is this time returning to the ‘Motopark’ as the leader of the standings– to contest an event which last year’s victor, Tom Kristensen, regards as his “home race” because Oschersleben is the DTM venue that is closest to his home, Denmark. The Le Mans record winner is ranked in third place of the standings, only five points behind the leader, Mattias Ekström, and two behind Gary Paffett.

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The 3.667-kilometre circuit at Oschersleben suited the A4 DTM particularly well last year. However, after the double victory at Brno, the four new Audi A4 DTM cars entered by Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline are required to start with ten kilograms of additional ballast. This rule does not apply to the four 2004-spec A4 cars entered by Audi Sport Team Joest. Hence, Rinaldo Capello has a good chance of clinching his first DTM points as well – should this occur, all eight Audi drivers will have points.

The race at Oschersleben is scheduled to start at 2 p.m. on Sunday, 26 June. ARD will broadcast the race live from the Motopark starting at 1.45 p.m. and the Qualifying practice starting at 2 p.m., Saturday, 25 June.

Quotes before the race at Oschersleben

Mattias Ekström (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline #1): “I felt very comfortable at Oschersleben last year. But at that time, we were entering the crucial phase of

the fight for the title, that's why there were a lot of tactics involved. This time, the name of the game is simply "maximum attack" so that we'll defend the lead in the championship."

Martin Tomczyk (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline #2): "My goal is quite clear: I finally want to clinch my first podium position this season here at Oschersleben. We'll be driving with the same weight as Mercedes, which means that this duel will probably be even closer than before. And Opel, also, were very strong at Oschersleben last year. Now – thanks to their weight advantage –it's likely that they'll be among the front runners again."

Tom Kristensen (Audi Sport Team Abt #5): "In the last race we showed that the new Audi A4 DTM is very competitive. Now, a circuit follows at which I celebrated my first DTM victory and which is closest to Denmark. That's why I'm particularly looking forward to this race. Before Brno, we had a good test, and at Brno I already had the speed to win ..."

Allan McNish (Audi Sport Team Abt #6): "I know Oschersleben from the FIA GT Championship. The layout of the track should make for tight conditions in the race. There are a lot of slow corners, that's why good traction is important. If it gets hot, this will put a heavy strain on the drivers. By now, I'm feeling very comfortable in the Audi A4 DTM, that's why I feel confident that I'll be able to score a good result."

Christian Abt (Audi Sport Team Joest Racing #14): "Oschersleben is generally a good track for us, the circuit suits our Audi extremely well. In the previous races, we achieved very good results here, and of course I'd like to repeat these. If everything goes perfectly for us all the way through, we'll have a good chance of claiming another fourth place, as we did in the Hockenheim season opener. But only if we don't make any mistakes."

Pierre Kaffer (Audi Sport Team Joest Racing #15): "I have very fond memories of Oschersleben, because this is where I won in Formula 3. I hope that I'll have a bit more racing luck than in the previous round at Brno. The circuit should suit our 2004-spec A4 well."

Rinaldo Capello (Audi Sport Team Joest #18): “I’ve never driven at Oschersleben, but I’ve watched last year’s race on a DVD several times. It looks as though our 2004-spec Audi ‘likes’ this track very much. After we made a lot of progress with my car at Brno, it’s now my goal to finish in the points. I feel very confident.”

Frank Stippler (Audi Sport Team Joest #19): “I haven’t been at Oschersleben for ages and need to get my bearings first. As always, I’m going to give my best to achieve a good result. Yet the advantage we had with our ‘used car’ at the beginning of the season is slowly disappearing – because the new cars are becoming faster and faster.”

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): “We only have the best memories of our double victory last year and that’s why we’re pleased to return to Oschersleben. Our success at Brno has given the whole team another motivation boost. Now, we’re trying to bring the perfect package we had at Brno to Oschersleben as well and to repeat our exploit.”

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest): “I hope that we’ll continue at Oschersleben where we left off at Brno – that is with positions in the points. For ‘Dindo’ (Capello) in particular I’m wishing for a place among the top eight, because in this case all of our drivers will have scored points. Our philosophy is the same as always: it’s better not to finish in the top ten in Qualifying, but among the top runners in the race.”

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “Last year, things went extremely well for us at Oschersleben as they did at Brno. I hope that this time it will be the same. We want to defend the lead in the standings at Oschersleben. In the DTM every single point counts, that’s why we want to make even better use of our chances than we last did at Brno.”

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