

Hockenheim, 28 October 2006

Motorsport

First pole position for Audi driver Frentzen

- **Qualifying thriller in DTM's final round at Hockenheim**
- **Audi beats Mercedes in fight for best qualifying time**
- **Three Audi A4 DTM cars on top five grid positions**

Heinz-Harald Frentzen clinched the top grid position for Audi in a nail-biting qualifying for the DTM's final round at Hockenheim. This means that for the first time, the former Formula 1 star will start from pole in his 32nd DTM race this Sunday (live coverage on "Das Erste" starting at 1:45 p.m. local time). With Martin Tomczyk and Tom Kristensen on places four and five, three Audi A4 DTM cars run by Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline are occupying the top five positions on the starting grid.

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The crucial factor in Saturday's qualifying was the perfect teamwork between Frentzen and his race engineer. After finishing 16th in the first section of the three-part shoot-out for the top starting positions, the Audi driver had his crew change the set-up of his Veltins Audi A4 DTM. This made it possible for Frentzen to improve by more than a second in the third part, and to put his car on pole.

Merely 253 thousandths of a second slower was Martin Tomczyk in the Red Bull Audi A4 DTM. The winner of the Barcelona round was the quickest contender in the second part of the qualifying, was able to improve some more in the last section, and will start from fourth position on Sunday. Tom Kristensen secured position five on the grid despite the fact that the inboard camera in the cockpit of his Siemens A4 had suddenly come off, hitting his helmet.

Quickest driver of a 2005-spec Audi A4 DTM was Christian Abt (Audi Sport Team Phoenix), who took tenth place. After an accident during the free practice session in the morning, Vanina Ickx was not able to participate in the qualifying. Her A4 will be ready to run in the race on Sunday, though.

Quotes after qualifying

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “I’m very happy for Heinz-Harald (Frentzen) as well as for the whole Audi squad. In the DTM simply everything has to fit together perfectly if you want to clinch the pole position, and this was the case today. It requires a lot of work and concentration. I’m particularly pleased about the result, knowing how much Heinz-Harald was focused on it. This is a good starting base for tomorrow’s race.”

Heinz-Harald Frentzen

Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Veltins Audi A4 DTM #6

1st place, 1m 34.758s / 1m 34.009s / 1m 33.518s

“Things went superbly. Setting the best time probably came as a bit of a surprise because I barely made it through the first qualifying section. In the beginning, we hadn’t completely finished fine-tuning our set-up after the conditions on Friday and Saturday morning were never clearly dry or wet. During the season we modified the car and that’s why we couldn’t resort to the set-up used in the season opener.”

Martin Tomczyk

Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #4

4th place, 1m 34.133s / 1m 33.781s / 1m 33.771s

“It was incredibly good fun driving the car today. In the final qualifying section I lost some time in the first sector, but it was a good lap anyhow. I’m satisfied with four place on the grid, I think that’s a good starting base. Congratulations to Heinz-Harald (Frentzen) – that’s a nice result.”

Tom Kristensen

Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Siemens Audi A4 DTM #7

5th place, 1m 34.393s / 1m 33.872s / 1m 33.777s

“The qualifying didn’t start very well because on my first flying lap the onboard camera suddenly came off and crashed against my helmet. It was a very close fight. Even though I set good sector times, I didn’t have a single lap that was good throughout. Tomorrow things won’t be easy for us. But perhaps the weather will be playing into our hands.”

Christian Abt

Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Playboy Audi A4 DTM #12

10th place, 1m 34.561s / 1m 34.258s

“The situation was tight again. In my first run everything was okay but then I was simply lacking several tenths because I slipped once. Too bad, but that’s the way things are in the DTM.”

Mattias Ekström

Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #5

11th place, 1m 34.403s / 1m 34.349s

“That was a disappointing end of the qualifying. I was quick but made a mistake when braking into the second corner in the second session. That was it because there was no more time left for another lap.”

Timo Scheider

Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Gebrauchtwagen:plus Audi A4 DTM #16

12th place, 1m 34.209s / 1m 34.568s

“Things started well. Considering the free practice, fifth place straight in the first section was not very likely. The car had clearly been improved for the qualifying and was really good. In the last outing I unfortunately made a braking mistake at the entrance to the Mercedes arena. I’m very sorry about that because a place among the top eight would have been possible.”

Pierre Kaffer

Audi Sport Team Phoenix, Castrol Audi A4 DTM #14

13th place, 1m 34.419s / 1m 34.637s

“Unfortunately, we didn’t manage to make it into the final section. But I do want to thank my team because in each qualifying we at least made it into the second section. Today, more would have been possible but it didn’t work out.”

Frank Stippler

Audi Sport Team Rosberg, S line Audi A4 DTM #15

14th place, 1m 34.632 / 1m 34.838s

“I’m disappointed because I was running really well in my last outing. In the previous practice sessions we used to have problems with the undertray but this time the car was running like a charm. Elated by this feeling, I made a mistake in

the Mercedes arena when the display was already showing a time that was better by five tenths.”

Thed Björk

Futurecom TME, Futurecom Audi A4 DTM #19

18th place, 1m 35.463s

“My feeling with the car wasn’t all that good in the beginning, so I flat-spotted two tyres. I had the tyres changed and the second set felt good. But when I really went to the limit on the next set of tyres, there was less grip. Now I’ve got a long race ahead of me before I can make up for this gap.”

Vanina Ickx

Futurecom TME, Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM #20

20th place, no qualifying

“Unfortunately, I lost control of the car during free practice. The accident damaged the car so severely that I wasn’t able to participate in the qualifying. That’s too bad for the team which now has a lot of work.”

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): “That was a real thriller. It’s absolutely fantastic for Heinz-Harald (Frentzen) to have clinched his first pole position in the DTM. He did a superb job, congratulations, also, to the team. Now I’m hoping that we’ll be able to apply this success in the race.”

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): “In the first session everything was okay. In the second session I thought that Christian (Abt) had definitely improved. In his second trial he had a problem with his rear tyres, otherwise he would have probably achieved a better result. With Pierre (Kaffer), it was always close. My expectations today had been higher.”

Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg): “Too bad, a better result would have been possible. But we know that we’re strong in the race. We’re hoping that our set-up is good enough to make up some positions towards the front of the field.”

The starting grid at Hockenheim

- 1 Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Veltins Audi A4 DTM), 1m 33.518s
- 2 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes), 1m 33.626s
- 3 Jamie Green (Mercedes), 1m 33.639s
- 4 Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), 1m 33.771s
- 5 Tom Kristensen (Siemens Audi A4 DTM), 1m 33.777s
- 6 Mika Häkkinen (Mercedes), 1m 33.797s
- 7 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes), 1m 33.880s
- 8 Daniel la Rosa (Mercedes), 1m 35.433s
- 9 Stefan Mücke (Mercedes), 1m 34.256s
- 10 Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM), 1m 34.258s
- 11 Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), 1m 34.349s
- 12 Timo Scheider (Gebrauchtwagen:plus Audi A4 DTM), 1m 34.568s
- 13 Pierre Kaffer (Castrol Audi A4 DTM), 1m 34.637s
- 14 Frank Stippler (S line Audi A4 DTM), 1m 34.838s
- 15 Jean Alesi (Mercedes), 1m 34.759s
- 16 Alexandros Margaritis (Mercedes), 1m 34.867s
- 17 Mathias Lauda (Mercedes), 1m 35.321s
- 18 Thed Björk (Futurecom Audi A4 DTM), 1m 35.463s
- 19 Susie Stoddart (Mercedes), 1m 35.618s
- 20 Vanina Ickx (Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM), no time

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