

Hockenheim, 14 October 2007

## Motorsport

# Mattias Ekström clinches DTM title for Audi

- **Captivating finale in front of record crowd at Hockenheim**
- **Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline wins Teams' title**
- **Timo Scheider claims first podium finish in the DTM**

At the finale at Hockenheim Mattias Ekström in front of a record turnout of 152,000 spectators clinched the DTM title for Audi. After 2004, the Swede won the most popular international touring car racing series for the second time. For AUDI AG, after 1990, 1991, 2002 and 2004, this is already the fifth DTM title. In addition, Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline secured a commanding title in the team classification.

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“All Audi employees and Audi customers can be proud of this triumph, which is the crowning of our successful 2007 motorsport season,” commented Rupert Stadler, Chairman of the Board of AUDI AG, who witnessed the thrilling finale live at the circuit. “Winning the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the American Le Mans Series and the DTM in the same year is a fantastic team achievement.”

After Mattias Ekström had started to the 2007 DTM season with a victory at Hockenheim in April, the Swede needed no more than a third place in the finale to win the title. After 37 captivating laps the Audi driver crossed the finish line in the final race by 0.434 seconds ahead of Mercedes driver Bruno Spengler, thus relegating him to the position of the runner-up in the Championship.

Straight from the beginning, Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline had focused Ekström's strategy on Spengler. After starting from the second row, the 29-year-old took the lead on lap one. When he came under aggressive attack by Mercedes driver Jamie Green, he let him pass in a clever way without putting up much of a fight. Ekström came in very late for his two mandatory pit stops in order to have as clear a track as possible – a strategy that

worked out. His rival Bruno Spengler on the other hand pitted very early for the first time and then had to tediously make up ground.

Ekström managed to keep Spengler at bay in the final phase, although he was complaining about extreme oversteer throughout the race. With a flawless drive and perfect pit stops by his team the feat of clinching the Championship was performed nonetheless.

The set-up of his team colleagues Timo Scheider and Martin Tomczyk was better for the temperatures that were considerably higher during the race than they had been on the practice days and in the warm-up. Scheider claimed second place, which is the best result so far in his DTM career and first ever podium finish. Tomczyk, who had chances of winning the title prior to the finale as well, became entangled in a collision on the starting lap through no fault of his own, which caused him to drop back to the rear of the field. The fact that he still managed to make up ground again to ninth place, and thus into the points, shows how quick his Red Bull Audi A4 DTM was in the race.

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Tom Kristensen completed Audi's triumph at Hockenheim by finishing sixth. Lucas Luhr (Audi Sport Team Rosberg) in twelfth place was the best driver of an A4 from last year. His teammate Mike Rockenfeller ran out of fuel on the lap of his second scheduled refuelling stop.

## Quotes after the race

**Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** "It was a great finale for the spectators with thrilling touring car racing at its best from the beginning to the end. Mattias (Ekström) took the decision into his own hands and managed to bring home the title. I think we deserve the championship and are a worthy champion. We did a great job. I want to thank all the members of the teams who had a part in this. Unfortunately, this was not a rewarding race for Martin (Tomczyk) – he suffered a lot of misfortune this weekend, although he was strong."

**Timo Scheider (Gebrauchtwagen:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM #8)  
2nd place, + 3.696s**

“That was really cool – I didn’t know on what side of the podium I had to climb. Right or left? I’m not that familiar with the conditions up there, but now I know that I want to be up there more often in future. My car was sensational after I was having a bit of trouble during the warm-up. My thanks go to Audi and Abt! The race was eventful. I had a good start and took the lead. Then a group of us were approaching the hairpin, which was very tight. I was very careful and watching Martin (Tomczyk). I ran wide, across the kerbs, to make room for him, something that Jamie Green obviously didn’t do. At some point I had to leave the grass again to return to the track and brushed him. Martin says it was less my fault than Jamie’s.”

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**Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #3)  
3rd place, + 7.235s**

“My race was very difficult from the beginning. When the situation had calmed down a little bit I was able to drive very fast and the car was good. But after six, seven laps it started oversteering. It got worse and worse. I fought and fought – and, still, the situation got really close in the end. That I managed to see the chequered flag in front of Bruno (Spengler) was simply nice. So far I haven’t even really relished the feeling because the race was so exciting. I’ll only be able to truly fathom this exploit a few hours from now.”

**Tom Kristensen (Siemens Audi A4 DTM #7)  
6th place, + 19.658s**

“The start from the pole position turned into a fight in the turns that followed. When I saw Mattias (Ekström) behind me, he had a chance to attack me. After the safety car I had to pit early. For my personal race that was no advantage but of course it benefited Mattias. I fought with a few Mercedes rivals and overtook them. On new tyres my car was good, afterwards it started oversteering.. In the Mercedes Arena I made a mistake. But today we saw the real champion. Congratulations to Mattias, to Team Abt and to Audi. It was a difficult season for me. I missed half of it, and I’m still feeling some symptoms. Now I’m looking forward to a quiet winter in order to reach 100 percent again as soon as possible. By clinching the pole position I showed that it’s possible.”

## **Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM #4)**

**9th place, + 33.185s**

“Unfortunately, the title fight for me only lasted up to the third turn. Too bad that I was again hit in an unfortunate situation. I wasn’t able to do anything, I was simply sandwiched between Timo (Scheider) and Jamie (Green). Of course I’d been hoping for more, as I showed this weekend – again – how quick I am. After this superb start everything would have fit perfectly if it hadn’t been for that collision. But congratulations to Mattias, to Audi and to Abt! If anyone deserved the champion’s title, it’s us – the brand with the four rings. We’ll celebrate that tonight. I scored points only five times and finished the Championship in third place after all. I can be satisfied with that.”

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## **Lucas Luhr (Philips Audi A4 DTM #12)**

**12th place, + 36.532s**

“My sincere congratulations to Mattias (Ekström) and to Audi. A superb performance and a well deserved Champion’s title. I hope I was able to be of help a couple of times here and there.”

## **Markus Winkelhock (Audi A4 DTM #20)**

**13th place, + 46.171s**

“The race was very turbulent. My start wasn’t perfect. Although I managed to pass Alexandre (Prémat), I lost a position again when Christian Abt overtook me. I was extremely cautious on the first lap and didn’t want to take any risk. On the first set of tyres the car was oversteering heavily and I lost a lot of time. The second set worked better, the third less.”

## **Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM #16)**

**15th place, + 57.407s**

“My last DTM race was very emotional! After the first lap I thought this would be a really cool race. But I had slight body contact and then the door opened. This caused me to lose downforce at the rear and the car was oversteering extremely. After two laps my lap times hit rock bottom. I stayed out of everything because I wasn’t able to compete. When ‘Eki’ became the Champion that was one of my most stirring moments. Now we’ve won four Championships with Audi, one of them I won. What else

could you wish for in these nine years? A nice career in this top-calibre touring car racing. So now it's over but I'm happy."

**Alexandre Prémat (Audi Bank Audi A4 DTM #17)**

**16th place, + 57.832s**

"I'm absolutely happy for Audi about the title win and for Mattias Ekström, who is truly a personality. I'd rather not comment on my own race, it was the worst since the beginning of the year at Hockenheim."

**Vanina Ickx (Audi A4 DTM #21)**

**18th place, + 1m 31.967s**

"That was something very special: I crossed the finish line on the same lap as the victors, Audi became the Champion and I'm experiencing a special feeling, as this was my last DTM race. These were the two toughest and demanding years of my career. This is also the end of my membership in a large family and a period that was a dream in my career."

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**Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM #11)**

**Not classified (lack of petrol)**

"Up to my retirement the race was quite okay. In the beginning, I had to fight a bit and lost a few positions. I managed to recapture some places again and then fought some duels with Di Resta. I came close to him. Unfortunately, I ran out of fuel immediately before my second pit stop."

**Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Director Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline):** "I think this was one of the greatest days in my life, for Audi, for Dr Wolfgang Ullrich. Together, we proved our potential. We brought the title home to Ingolstadt, Neckarsulm and Kempten. We're simply celebrating now, because we're so incredibly happy. I want to thank Audi and the entire team. And everyone who believed in us. In motorsport you can only clinch a title like this if there are people who stand behind you. Today we were the 'brand of hearts'. That's why I'm saying: we deserve the title!"

**Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix):** "We achieved what we wanted to achieve together. My sincere congratulations to Audi on winning the Championship! It was a tough fight with Mercedes. We were able to make a small contribution to the positive result that came out in the

end. Our own speed today wasn't enough. We made the best of it even though that wasn't all that much for the team."

**Arno Zensen (Team Director Audi Sport Team Rosberg):** "Sensational – Audi is the Champion. Today we were able to contribute something to that as a team. The strategy was top-notch. Unfortunately, 'Rocky' stopped on the track with an empty tank and we need to find out why that happened. But he, too, contributed his share to the fact that we've got a reason to celebrate today – and that was great. My thanks to the whole squad and to Audi."

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## The result at Hockenheim

- 1 Jamie Green (Mercedes), 37 laps in 1h00m19.948s
- 2 Timo Scheider (GW:plus/Top Service Audi A4 DTM), + 3.696s
- 3 Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), + 7.235s
- 4 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes), + 7.669s
- 5 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes), + 11.079s
- 6 Tom Kristensen (Siemens Audi A4 DTM), + 19.658s
- 7 Alexandros Margaritis (Mercedes), + 23.174s
- 8 Paul di Resta (Mercedes), + 29.158s
- 9 Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), + 33.185s
- 10 Daniel la Rosa (Mercedes), + 34.792s
- 11 Mathias Lauda (Mercedes), + 35.753s
- 12 Lucas Luhr (Philips Audi A4 DTM), + 36.532s
- 13 Markus Winkelhock (Audi A4 DTM), + 46.171s
- 14 Susie Stoddart (Mercedes), + 49.560s
- 15 Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM), + 57.407s
- 16 Alexandre Prémat (Audi Bank Audi A4 DTM), + 57.832s
- 17 Mika Häkkinen (Mercedes), + 1m 03.036s
- 18 Vanina Ickx (Audi A4 DTM), + 1m 31.967s

**Not classified:**

- Mike Rockenfeller (S line Audi A4 DTM), - 5 laps (lack of petrol)  
Gary Paffett (Mercedes), - 37 laps

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