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## **Motorsport / 13 days until the start of the 2006 DTM Three generations of Audi A4 DTM cars**

- **From the “R11” to the “R12 plus”**

When the new DTM season kicks off at Hockenheim on April 9th, three different generations of the Audi A4 DTM will be starting from the grid. Vanina Ickx and her team-mate Olivier Tielemans will be driving two A4 DTM cars from the 2004 season, internally designated as “R11” by Audi Sport. The two new factory teams, Phoenix and Rosberg, will be competing with 2005-spec vehicles (“R12”).

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The latest-generation Audi A4 DTM cars will be run by Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline. While Audi Sport developed an all-new DTM car for the 2005 season, last winter – owing to the regulations which largely froze the technology – was merely used to subject the cars from the previous version to further development. That is why the 2006-spec A4 DTM was not given a project number of its own, but designated “R12 plus”.

From the outside, the modifications are hardly detectable even for experts. “We are talking about fine-tuning,” says Wolfgang Appel, Head of Vehicle Technology at Audi Sport. “95 percent of the vehicle we weren’t allowed to touch, and you shouldn’t expect too much of the remaining five percent. A 2006-spec car must weigh ten kilograms more than a 2005-spec car. Depending on the circuit, this amounts to between one tenth and 15 hundredths per lap and, considering the minor changes permitted by the regulations, we can compensate for this, but that’s about all.” Greater yet is the weight advantage of the 2004-spec cars: they weigh 50 kilograms less and should therefore cause a surprise here and there.

### **Tomorrow: From a mechanic to an Audi factory driver**

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