

EuroSpeedway, 30 April 2006

Motorsport

Tom Kristensen again leading Audi driver

- **Le Mans record holder second at EuroSpeedway**
- **76,000 spectators witness thrilling DTM weekend**
- **Ex-Champion Mattias Ekström unlucky again**

76,000 spectators witnessed a nerve-wracking DTM weekend at the EuroSpeedway Lausitz, in which the Audi drivers Tom Kristensen and Mattias Ekström played starring roles during the race. While the Le Mans record winner, in his Siemens A4 DTM, shone once again during his fight through the field to claim second as he did at the season opener in Hockenheim, ex-DTM Champion Mattias Ekström was again plagued by bad luck: The Swede had to retire his Red Bull A4 from second position with an empty tank two laps before the finish.

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Ekström had already forced his way from third to second at the first corner. A perfect strategy with two late pit-stops brought the Swede into an excellent position from which to push for victory. A problem with the refuelling tank at the second pit-stop meant that Ekström was left without sufficient fuel in the closing laps to finish the race.

Benefiting from this was Tom Kristensen, who, after initially dropping from fifth to sixth at the start, subsequently – as at Hockenheim – fought his way up to third place after posting constantly fast lap times, a good strategy and perfect pit-stops. The Dane was immediately behind Ekström when he ran out of fuel.

Also inheriting a point as a result of Ekström's bad luck was Martin Tomczyk, who finished eighth in his Red Bull A4 ahead of Timo Scheider, Pierre Kaffer and Frank Stippler. Heinz-Harald Frentzen was thirteenth after two bad pit-stops. Vanina Ickx finished her second DTM race ahead of her team mate Olivier Tielemans in 16th position. Christian Abt was forced to retire after losing the right-hand front wheel following his second pit-stop.

Quotes after the race

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “As at Hockenheim we put ourselves in a position where we were able to battle for the lead despite having started from two grid positions that weren’t exactly ideal. Unfortunately Mattias (Ekström) ran out of fuel. The final refill didn’t quite work as it should have. Tom (Kristensen) also had the right pace. In the end the deciding factor was whether the one or other driver could take new or used tyres at the final pit-stop. We are obviously not happy that only one of our A4s was right at the front at the chequer, but we saw an exciting race.”

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Tom Kristensen

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

2nd place, + 1.428s

“That was a good race for me, the strategy and pit stops were perfect, which shows me that I can rely one-hundred per cent on my team. My A4 was very fast, and I was able to overtake several other drivers, which was great fun. Unfortunately, we only had a single set of new tyres with which we could play with in the race. We could have won today if we’d had a second set. Even so I was quicker at the end than the leaders and Mattias, who was directly in front of me. I didn’t try to overtake him, but then he suddenly slowed down, which was lucky for me and means more important points. A pair of second places isn’t such a bad start to the season.”

Editorial notice: A long version including quotes from every Audi driver and the Team Directors will be available after 6:00 p.m.

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Photographs, sound bites and other information can be found in the Internet at: www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation required)

Results

- 1 Bernd Schneider (Mercedes), 48 laps in 1h 03m 35.042s
 - 2 Tom Kristensen (Siemens Audi A4 DTM), + 1.428s
 - 3 Mika Häkkinen (Mercedes), + 3.749s
 - 4 Jamie Green (Mercedes), + 3.889s
 - 5 Bruno Spengler (Mercedes), + 4.410s
 - 6 Alexandros Margaritis (Mercedes), + 8.924s
 - 7 Jean Alesi (Mercedes), + 23.549s
 - 8 Martin Tomczyk (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), + 26.468s
 - 9 Timo Scheider (Gebrauchtwagen:plus Audi A4 DTM), + 27.601s
 - 10 Pierre Kaffer (Castrol Audi A4 DTM), + 30.003s
 - 11 Frank Stippler (S line Audi A4 DTM), + 32.903s
 - 12 Stefan Mücke (Mercedes), + 43.864s
 - 13 Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Veltins Audi A4 DTM), + 47.436s
 - 14 Mathias Lauda (Mercedes), + 1m 05.150s
 - 15 Susie Stoddart (Mercedes), + 1m 17.449s
 - 16 Vanina Ickx (Original Zubehör Audi A4 DTM), - 1 lap
 - 17 Olivier Tielemans (Futurecom Audi A4 DTM), - 1 lap
 - 18 Mattias Ekström (Red Bull Audi A4 DTM), - 2 laps (fuel)
- Not classified:
- 19 Daniel la Rosa (Mercedes), - 16 laps
 - 20 Christian Abt (Playboy Audi A4 DTM), - 20 laps (right-hand front wheel loose)