

**Communications Motorsport**

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## **Audi before thrilling DTM showdown**

- **Drivers from all three manufacturers with title chances**
- **DTM now without performance weights again**
- **Four more races to go this season: two at Spielberg, two at Hockenheim**

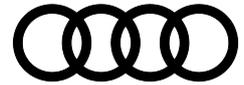
**Neuburg/Spielberg, September 18, 2017 – The DTM is seeing what will arguably be the most thrilling showdown in its history. Following the joint decision by Audi, BMW and Mercedes to scrap the additional weights, the title race is completely open. On the last two race weekends, drivers from all three manufacturers will still be able to decide the championship in their favor. The “fast and furious finale” will start with two races at the Red Bull Ring in Spielberg, Austria, on September 23 and 24. In the middle of October, the season’s last two races will be held at Hockenheim.**

112 points are yet to be awarded. As a result, only two of the 18 DTM campaigners are no longer in the title race. Realistically, ten drivers can still win the championship and leave Spielberg on Sunday night as the leader of the standings. Four of these ten drive an Audi RS 5 DTM: Mattias Ekström (Sweden/136 points), René Rast (Germany/124), Jamie Green (Great Britain/113) and Mike Rockenfeller (Germany/110).

Theoretically, the champion could be determined early at the Red Bull Ring on Sunday. However, in view of the variety in results the season has seen to date, it is more likely that the decision will not be produced until mid-October, in the finale at Hockenheim, and that the circle of candidates will only become smaller at the DTM’s Austrian round.

The circuit nestled in the picturesque mountains in Styria is one of the favorite tracks of nearly all the drivers. Audi and BMW have each won four DTM races since the premiere on the Red Bull Ring in 2011. Mercedes-Benz has not scored any victories there to date. Leader of the standings Mattias Ekström has the best Spielberg track record of the Audi drivers. In 2015, the Swede celebrated a dominant victory in a wet race, clinched his last pole position in the DTM to date at Spielberg and holds the DTM lap record in a race as well.

“I love Spielberg!” Ekström, who lives in Ellmau, Austria, enthuses. “The setting is unique and you feel the high quality standards everywhere. Racing at the Red Bull Ring is always a fantastic experience. The rhythm and the vertical differences of the track are huge fun and the extreme braking ranges allow thrilling overtaking maneuvers.”



René Rast, ranked third in the standings and as a resident of Bregenz living in Austria as well, has fond memories of Spielberg too. “In 2014, I won a race in the ADAC GT Masters in an Audi R8 LMS there, although nobody expected it. At that time, we were clearly heavier than the competition. Due to the vertical differences, you can feel the weight particularly at Spielberg.” Due to the performance weights having been scrapped, this concern is now a thing of the past. “Now the sporting competition has taken center stage again,” says a pleased Head of Audi Motorsport Dieter Gass. “In the DTM, the Red Bull Ring is the track with the largest proportion of full-throttle driving. There are only few bumps in the surface and following the changes made for the MotoGP, the curbs are flat as well. It’ll no doubt be a very thrilling event.”

ARD will broadcast the first race on Saturday starting at 2:30 PM (CEST) and round two on Sunday starting at 3:00 PM live from Spielberg. Tickets are available at [www.audi.com/dtm](http://www.audi.com/dtm).

#### **#DTMSpielberg: Did you know that ...**

... Audi in the 2017 season has won five DTM races to date, clinched pole position three times and in eleven of the 14 races posted the fastest race lap?

... top speed of 250 km/h at the Red Bull Ring is not reached at the end of the start-finish straight but before braking at the end of the long back straight?

... the circuit is situated on an elevation of 677 meters, the vertical difference amounts to 65 meters and the maximum incline to twelve percent?

... DTM rookie Loïc Duval only knows the Red Bull Ring from the simulator and has never raced in Austria?

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In 2016, the Audi Group delivered to customers about 1.868 million automobiles of the Audi brand, 3,457 sports cars of the Lamborghini brand and 55,451 motorcycles of the Ducati brand. In the 2016 fiscal year, AUDI AG achieved total revenue of €59.3 billion and an operating profit of €3.1 billion. At present, approximately 88,000 people work for the company all over the world, more than 60,000 of them in Germany. Audi focuses on sustainable products and technologies for the future of mobility.