

Mattias Ekström wins Race of Champions

- Audi driver prevails over Mick Schumacher in the final
- Mattias Ekström “Champion of Champions” for the fourth time
- Audi delights fans with demo laps of RS Q e-tron and Sport quattro S1

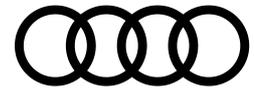
Neuburg a. d. Donau, January 15, 2023 – Mattias Ekström has once again demonstrated his world class and versatility: In his Swedish homeland, the rally and circuit pro driver won the “Race of Champions”, a traditional competition between the world’s best motorsport drivers, on an icy track. The two-time DTM champion and rallycross world champion had particularly emotional words for his opponent in the final, Mick Schumacher, whom Ekström defeated despite a short burst of smoke in his race car.

Hot temperatures around Pite Havsbad’s “Frozen Ocean”: In the individual classification of the best drivers on Sunday, the 44-year-old Audi factory driver beat all the opponents he encountered. In the quarter-finals, he prevailed against his compatriot Johan Kristoffersson, who, like himself, is a former World Rallycross Champion. In the semifinals, Ekström met Thierry Neuville, a multiple World Rally Championship runner-up. The Belgian also lost out to the Swede. The final was marked by special emotions: After Mattias Ekström had prevailed over Michael Schumacher in London in 2007 and in Beijing in 2009, thus winning two of his first three ROC titles to date, he now met Michael’s son Mick in the decisive contest.

In the Polaris race car, the Swede was 0.348 seconds faster than the German in the first competition. In the second race, this time in the 320-hp Supercar Lites model, Ekström was involuntarily “on fire”: after half a lap, smoke came out of the fuse box, which did not faze the pro racer. “My co-driver wanted to stop, but I wasn’t that interested in doing so,” he confessed amusedly at the finish after removing the fuse at full speed. Without stopping, he continued to follow the track on the ice rink and was still 1.3 seconds faster than Schumacher.

“What a fabulous result, and this in my Swedish homeland,” said a delighted Mattias Ekström. “The competition with Mick was all the more special because I’ve already won twice against Michael Schumacher. I’m really proud. Mick is a very big talent and he made it to the final of the Race of Champions. He represents the next generation of motorsport drivers, but I’ll keep racing for as long as I can.”

The fourth victory of the Swede, who beat World Rally Champion Sébastien Loeb at the ROC organized by Fredrik Johnsson for the first time in Paris in 2006, was not the only reason for joy for the many Swedish motorsport fans. On Saturday and Sunday, Mattias Ekström thrilled the spectators with demonstration laps of legendary, more than 500 hp Group B Audi Sport quattro S1 car. His Audi teammate, 14-time Dakar record winner Stéphane Peterhansel, also caused goose bumps: He chased around the ice track of Pite Havsbad in the innovative Audi RS Q e-tron rally prototype, which led the Dakar Rally for the first time a few weeks ago.



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