

Communication Motorsport

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Audi drivers look forward to start of DTM season

- **Successful tests at Mugello, Italy**
- **Audi drivers among the front runners in all weather conditions**
- **All nine factory drivers took part in the three-day tests**

Ingolstadt/Mugello – The Audi drivers are looking forward to the DTM season opener at Hockenheim on 13 April with increasingly eager anticipation: during the first official tests at Mugello, Italy, the nine factory drivers completed their extensive work programme without significant interruption. This first “matching of strengths” with the competition saw them among the front runners in any of the changing weather conditions.

After internal testing the outings at Mugello marked the first meeting of the newly developed Audi A4 DTM with the competition. However, the three test days in Italy were not primarily focused on setting top times. More importantly, the drivers were to familiarise themselves in greater depth with the new generation of the DTM champion car. At the same time, newcomers Oliver Jarvis and Katherine Legge made their début at the official tests.

“After our joint winter camp training this was my first real running as a member of the Audi family. I felt very comfortable straight from the start,” said a pleased Katherine Legge. The 27-year-old Brit immediately showed a strong performance. “The test was very positive for me: although I drove only on a wet track, I learnt something new on every lap.”



Alexandre Prémat, who was among the “surprises” as early as in last year’s field of drivers, managed a successful start to his second DTM season as well. In all weather conditions the Frenchman displayed his strength and achieved the day’s best time on Tuesday. “These were great days of testing. We were at the front of the field in all conditions. That’s a tremendous feeling and inspires even more enthusiasm for the new season,” reported Prémat.

Champion Mattias Ekström, who at Mugello left the pitlane for the first time in his Audi A4 DTM bearing the number “one”, is another driver now eagerly awaiting the season opener: “On the three test days we had all kinds of weather conditions like rain, sun and a drying track – that’s perfect for working, because it allows you to try out all the options. The best part about it, though, is that the start to the season has come a bit closer again. All the mechanics, engineers and drivers are incredibly excited about the upcoming race at Hockenheim.”

Together with Mattias Ekström, his colleagues from Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, Tom Kristensen, Timo Scheider and Martin Tomczyk, tested at Mugello. On Monday, Scheider experienced a moment of shock when he hit a kerb on the wet track and slid backwards into the guard rails with his test prototype. For Audi Sport Team Rosberg, Mike Rockenfeller and Markus Winkelhock took part in the tests, while Oliver Jarvis and Alex Prémat took the wheel for Audi Sport Team Phoenix. In addition to factory driver Katherine Legge, Christijan Albers tested for the Audi customer team Futurecom TME.

Before its racing début at the Hockenheimring on 13 April, the new Audi A4 DTM will have completed several thousand kilometres of testing, including endurance runs. Further official ITR tests are scheduled at Oschersleben during the week preceding the DTM presentation in Düsseldorf on 6 April.

Photographs and information can be obtained at www.audi-motorsport.info