



FORD FOCUS ST PUTS IN HOT LAPS ON AND OFF THE TRACK

- Ford's performance Focus records impressive sales in key European markets
- New lap record on the Nürburgring Nordschleife confirms performance credentials of the Focus ST
- Popularity extends to broader world markets

COLOGNE, February 21, 2007 – To mark record sales in its first full year of production, the Ford Focus ST has asserted its performance credentials with a new lap record at Germany's most famous road circuit.

Created by Ford TeamRS, the Focus ST performance model completed 2006 with global sales of 15,500 units, far exceeding Ford's expectations and sales targets. The model joined the Fiesta ST in late 2005 to introduce a new era of performance cars for Ford in Europe – and would go on to set a 'hot lap' in the sales race of 2006.

The turbocharged, 225-PS Focus ST was particularly popular in the major European markets. In the United Kingdom, Ford sold 6,800 Focus ST models, while German customers purchased 2,500 vehicles. In Switzerland, 1,100 Focus ST sales accounted for 29.3 per cent of last year's Focus sales in the Swiss market.

"Focus ST was developed by enthusiasts for enthusiasts," said Jost Capito, Director of Ford TeamRS. "Its popularity has greatly exceeded our projections, which indicates to us how well performance enthusiasts value its mix of gutsy power, exceptional handling and agility and everyday driving practicality."

Nürburgring Record for Focus ST

Building on the momentum of the strong sales performance and Ford's 2006 FIA World Rally Championship title, Ford celebrated by taking Focus ST onto the *Nordschleife* of Germany's famed Nürburgring circuit in December, 2006. Ford TeamRS was confident that Focus ST could set a new lap record for its segment, a move that would cement its performance credentials.



Experienced German racing driver Patrick Bernhard used an unmodified Focus ST model, as on sale at every Ford dealership, to make the record attempt over the legendary, 20.8-kilometre (12.9-mile), 73-turn circuit. Despite winter conditions, Bernhard was clocked with a lap time of just 8 minutes, 35 seconds – a new segment record for Focus ST.

Bernhard – familiar to motorsport fans from his exploits in Formula 3 and in his German Touring Car Championship Ford Focus – averaged 145.5 kph (90 mph) in the Focus ST road car during his record attempt. He credited the record lap as a “team result” for the entire TeamRS organisation responsible for creating Focus ST.

"It was amazing to achieve this with a series production car that is available to everybody," Bernhard said.

“This accomplishment is about more than putting in a fast lap time,” Capito said. “It is about showing the balanced performance strengths that has made Focus ST so appealing. Many have tried, but being the best around the Nürburgring Nordschleife is a validation of the attention to detail that TeamRS used to create this special car.”

Growing Popularity of Focus ST

Ford’s sales of Focus ST in 2006 were 50 per cent higher than Ford’s production estimates.

The Focus hot hatch not only sold well in Europe. Its appeal has extended around the globe to such diverse markets as South Africa, Australia, Japan, Taiwan and Mexico.

Order banks at Ford of Europe’s Saarlouis Assembly Plant – where Focus ST is manufactured alongside other Focus models – remain well-filled.

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