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All four Audi R8 LMS cars on the first five rows of the grid for the Nürburgring 24 Hours

- **Pierre Kaffer best Audi driver in final qualifying**
- **Audi Sport Team WRT on rows three and four**
- **Only 2.4 seconds separate the ten best teams over 25 kilometers**

Ingolstadt, May 15, 2015 – The new Audi R8 LMS has passed its initial ‘field assessment’ in the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring. With a gap of only 1.6 seconds, Pierre Kaffer (D) for Audi Sport Team WRT achieved fifth place in the individual time trials of the top-30 qualifying session. His team-mate Nico Müller (CH) trailed him by merely 0.379 seconds on the 25.378-kilometer Nordschleife. Audi Sport Team Phoenix completed the results in positions nine and ten.

The Audi teams thoroughly prepared for the demanding endurance race and used the practice sessions to set up the Audi R8 LMS for the Nordschleife in different weather conditions. “I’d like to thank Audi Sport customer racing and Audi Sport Team WRT that did an excellent job of developing and preparing the Audi R8 LMS,” said Pierre Kaffer. “My first lap in qualifying was good and I even improved some more on the second lap. But contesting the race as a balanced driver squad is a lot more important than a single fast lap.” For the professional race driver from Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler, things will have come full circle in this race. “In 1994, I was working on Kurt Thiim’s race car as a mechanic. Now I’m racing together with his son, Nicki Thiim, who was five years old back then, for the first time. Christer Jöns and Laurens Vanthoor are completing our squad.” Vanthoor (B) is also competing in the sister car with Nico Müller (CH), Christopher Mies (D) and Edward Sandström (S).

René Rast (D) took ninth place for Audi Sport Team Phoenix, trailed in tenth place by Frank Stippler (D) with a gap of merely 30 thousandths of a second. As a result, all four of the new Audi R8 LMS cars have qualified in the group of the ten best race cars. “The extremely narrow gaps show that the cars of the best teams are very balanced with respect to a lap,” says Romolo Liebchen, Head of Audi Sport customer racing. “But the picture in the race will be determined by additional factors. We’re competing with a fundamentally new race car, whereas our rivals are intimately familiar with their cars which they’ve been racing for years. We did everything to

thoroughly prepare for the first 24-hour race of our new GT3 model. But with the benefit of plenty of experience on the Nordschleife we also know how unpredictable and tough this race is. We have strong rivals whose performances we greatly respect.”

Three other Audi driver squads are completing the line-up of the Audi Sport customer racing teams. In the combination of the first two qualifying sessions, Team Twin Busch Motorsport took 23rd place. The Audi race experience with Franky Cheng (CN), Marchy Lee (HK), Shaun Thong (HK) und Alex Yoong (MAL) achieved 24th place and the sister car with Niki Mayr-Melnhof (A), Micke Ohlsson (S), Rod Salmon (AUS) and Ronnie Saurenmann (CH) took 28th place. The 43rd running of the 24-hour race will start on Saturday at 16.00, local time, with more than 13 hours of live coverage to be aired by the TV channel Sport1.

Qualifying results

- 1 Augusto Farfus (BMW #26) 8m 17.394s
- 2 Adam Christodoulou (Mercedes #2) 8m 18.341s
- 3 Jens Klingmann (BMW #20) 8m 18.814s
- 4 Dirk Müller (BMW #19) 8m 18.886s
- 5 Pierre Kaffer (Audi R8 LMS #29) 8m 19.058s
- 6 Maxime Martin (BMW #25) 8m 19.323s
- 7 Nico Müller (Audi R8 LMS #28) 8m 19.437s
- 8 Lance David Arnold (Bentley #84) 8m 19.592s
- 9 René Rast (Audi R8 LMS #1) 8m 19.766s
- 10 Frank Stippler (Audi R8 LMS #4) 8m 19.796s

– End –

In 2014, the Audi Group delivered approximately 1,741,100 cars of the Audi brand to its customers. The company achieved revenue of €53.8 billion and an operating profit of €5.15 billion in 2014. Audi operates globally in more than 100 markets and has production facilities in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Brussels (Belgium), Bratislava (Slovakia), Martorell (Spain), Kaluga (Russia), Aurangabad (India), Changchun and Foshan (China) as well as Jakarta (Indonesia). The brand with the Four Rings will start producing cars in Curitiba (Brazil) this year and in San José Chiapa (Mexico) in 2016. Wholly owned subsidiaries of AUDI AG include quattro GmbH (Neckarsulm), Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. (Sant'Agata Bolognese, Italy) and sports motorcycle manufacturer Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. (Bologna, Italy). The company currently employs approximately 80,000 people worldwide, thereof around 58,000 in Germany. Total investment of about €24 billion is planned from 2015 to 2019 – primarily in new products and sustainable technologies. Audi is committed to its corporate responsibility and has anchored the principle of sustainability for its products and processes in its strategy. The long-term goal is CO₂-neutral mobility.