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Audi celebrates class victories on the Nordschleife

- **Audi R8 LMS once again best GT3 sports car in 24h race**
- **Basseng/Fässler/Stippler third overall**
- **Audi TT RS best front-wheel drive car and SP 4T class winner**

Ingolstadt/Nürburg, June 26, 2011 – The Audi R8 LMS was once again class winner on its third outing in the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring. The mid-engine sports car from AUDI AG won the GT3 car class for the third time in succession and, like last year, finished third overall. The Audi TT RS also impressed in front of the 250,000 spectators: the quattro GmbH development demonstrator took the checkered flag in 14th position overall and won the SP 4T class as best front-wheel drive car in the field of 202 cars.

In a thrilling finale, the Audi R8 LMS #14 of Audi Sport Team Phoenix driven by Marc Basseng/Marcel Fässler/Frank Stippler passed the Mercedes SLS, class leader at that time, 43 minutes before the finish when it to pit with a technical problem. Christopher Haase/Marc Hennerici/Markus Winkelhock (Audi Sport Team Phoenix) and Mattias Ekström/Timo Scheider/Marco Werner (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline) completed the Audi one-two-three in the GT3 class after taking fourth and fifth positions overall at the finish.

The dream of a first overall victory for the brand in the endurance classic in the Eifel was, however, not fulfilled. The GT2 cars of Porsche, BMW and Ferrari were superior to the GT3 cars during the 39th running of the 24-hour race. “Qualifying had already signaled that our R8 LMS with the current balance of performance is not the fastest car,” explained Head of Audi Motorsport Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich. “This was confirmed in the race. Furthermore, none of our four factory cars made it through the race completely without incidents.”

Start number “14”, the best placed Audi R8 LMS at the finish, lost around four minutes due to a loose front splitter just before 21:00. Early on Sunday morning the



front splitter was changed , which meant an additional time loss of 2m 50s. Despite this, Basseng/Fässler/Stippler could still move up to third place.

In the opening stages of the race the second Audi Sport Team Phoenix Audi R8 LMS with start number “15” had contact which necessitated a quick repair. On Sunday morning Markus Winkelhock lost time in traffic because the high beam flash did not function and he was unable to warn the slower cars of his approach. The problem was solved after changing the steering wheel. Christopher Haase, Marc Hennerici and Markus Winkelhock dropped behind the sister car at the end on Sunday afternoon due, in part, because they lost time twice during refueling.

Mattias Ekström, Timo Scheider and Marco Werner held second place overall at times during the night in the Audi R8 LMS #16 entered by Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline, before Marco Werner was the innocent victim in a collision at 4:53 in the morning and in which the front end of the R8 LMS was badly damaged. The repair took just five minutes but threw the #16 out of the leading group.

The second Audi R8 LMS from Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline (#17) lost 20 minutes at the start of the third hour after a relay loosened and paralyzed the R8 LMS sportscar’s on-board electronics. After rejoining the race in 66th position Christian Abt, Christer Jöns, Luca Ludwig and Christopher Mies had scythed their way back up to eighth overall when Luca Ludwig became a victim of the ensuing drizzle and slipped off the track in the “Quiddelbacher Höhe” track section at 3:34. Repairs to the damage rear end cost 40 minutes. Start number “17” still managed to move up to twelfth position from 18th. As a result, all four factory R8 sportscars that started saw the checkered flag.

Audi race experience could also celebrate crossing the finish line: the Audi R8 LMS #28, in which professional race driver Frank Schmickler shared cockpit time with Audi driving experience customers, finished a remarkable 18th overall after a completely trouble-free race. The second R8 LMS had an accident as early as the eleventh lap after a tire failed at the “Tiergarten” section. Driver Chris Vogler was uninjured.

There was also joy and sorrow at Raeder Motorsport which fielded a brace of Audi TT RS on behalf of quattro GmbH. Despite a tire failure at the start of the race and a collision on Sunday morning, Michael Ammermüller, Frank Biela, Jens Klingmann and Martin Tomczyk made the finish as the best front-wheel drive car in an excellent 14th position overall and, in doing so, convincingly won their class in the development demonstrator. Christian Hohenadel/Jimmy Johansson/Miguel Molina



Andrea Piccini lost 75 minutes in the second TT RS early on due to a faulty wastegate valve on the turbocharger and more time just before the end of the race because of a gear shift problem.

The Audi Group sold around 1,092,400 cars of the Audi brand in 2010. The Company posted revenue of €35.4 billion and an operating profit of €3.3 billion in 2010. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). Aurangabad in India saw the start of CKD production of the Audi A6 at the end of 2007, of the Audi A4 in early October 2008 and of the Audi Q5 in July 2010. Production of the new Audi A1 has been running at the Brussels plant since May 2010. The Company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include AUDI HUNGARIA MOTOR Kft., Automobili Lamborghini Holding S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese (Italy) and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Audi currently employs around 60,000 people worldwide, including around 46,600 in Germany. Between 2011 and 2015 the brand with the four rings is planning to invest around €11 billion, mainly in new products, in order to sustain the Company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. By 2015, Audi plans to increase the number of models in its portfolio to 42.

Audi has long been fulfilling its social responsibility on many levels – with the aim of making the future worth living for generations to come. The basis for Audi's lasting success is therefore formed by environmental protection, the conservation of resources, international competitiveness and a forward-looking human resources policy. One example of AUDI AG's commitment to environmental issues is the newly established Audi Environmental Foundation.