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Audi celebrates second WEC season victory at Austin

- **Fässler/Lotterer/Tréluyer won turbulent race in Texas**
- **Audi took lead of the standings with second victory of the season**
- **Audi R18 e-tron quattro celebrates one-two victory**

Ingolstadt/Austin, September 20, 2014 – Audi has celebrated the second consecutive one-two win in the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC). Following their victory in the Le Mans 24 Hours in June, Marcel Fässler/André Lotterer/Benoît Tréluyer (CH/D/F) in the fourth race of the season at Austin prevailed again. A sudden downpour of rain, red flags after a series of spins and a tactically challenging course of the race on a drying track converted the night race in Texas into a real thriller. Lucas di Grassi/Löic Duval/Tom Kristensen (BR/F/DK) completed Audi's success by taking second place.

The 20th race in the young history of the WEC was a classic that remained open up to the very end. After six hours of racing, the victorious Audi driver trio prevailed with a very narrow margin of 53 seconds against their team-mates. The round at the Circuit of the Americas treated the spectators to supreme suspense up to the checkered flag. The race had a regular beginning in bright sunshine and temperatures of more than 30 degrees centigrade. Audi put down an early tactical marker, opted not to change tires at the first pit stop, and advanced position by position. One and a half hours into the race drizzling rain set in that soon changed into a downpour. Audi made a timely switch from slicks to wets on both R18 e-tron quattro cars. While Benoît Tréluyer took the lead and Tom Kristensen third place, numerous competitors slipped into the gravel and came to a halt in dangerous places. Therefore, race control decided to red flag the race.

About 50 minutes later, the teams resumed the race behind the safety car. Both Audi diesel hybrid sports cars kept their rain tires when the race was restarted on a wet track. Fifteen minutes later, Audi Sport Team Joest decided to switch car number 2 to intermediates. On the tires designed for mixed conditions, Benoît Tréluyer defended the lead before changing to slicks an hour later. In the case of the

sister car, the team opted for a different strategy. To save the switch to intermediates, the squad wanted to use the rain tires until conditions became dry enough for slicks. This tactical option resulted in one less pit stop. However, Tom Kristensen also had to first change to intermediate tires before being able to switch to slicks at the next pit stop. Following a recovery by Lucas di Grassi at the end of the race, car number 1 finished as the runner-up.

Audi decided the WEC race in North America in its favor last year as well. For Audi, this marked the 13th victory in 20 WEC races since the beginning of the World Championship in 2012. On achieving this most recent success the squad of Head of Audi Motorsport Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich and Chris Reinke, Head of LMP, after four of eight races, took the lead in the WEC manufacturers' standings for the first time. Round five on the WEC calendar will be held on the track at Fuji in Japan in three weeks from now.

Quotes after the race

Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "It was a very difficult race. The heavy downpour that washed some of the cars off track and our decision at the right moment to be the first to switch to rain tires all played a crucial part in our one-two victory. But so did our good pace. Everything perfectly fit: we had a good car, the drivers performed superbly and there were fast pit stops. We can enjoy this success. It's great that things are continuing so positively after Le Mans."

Chris Reinke (Head of LMP): "Following our victory at Le Mans, it was our aim to leave Austin as the leaders of the World Championship. We managed to do that. We delivered a commanding performance. We were briefly unfortunate in qualifying but regained our strength in the race. We acted sensibly in changing conditions because there were many obstacles to overcome. We clinched a well-deserved victory."

Ralf Jüttner (Team Director Audi Sport Team Joest): "It was a very turbulent race. When we used the tires for two stints we started to advance. In the rain, we made exactly the right decision this time. 'Thank you' to the spotter, who announced all the dangers to the drivers via radio transmission. After the interruption by the red flags we moved forward with an all-out attack. It was difficult because our rivals were very fast too. We were able to manage our tires well and had sensational drivers. The one-two victory is brilliant and we're heading the manufacturers' world championship. We wouldn't mind things continuing like this."

Marcel Fässler (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #2): "We're very happy because the victory was perfect – unlike our qualifying session. The race was a bit wild in the beginning,

with the rain shower in the early phase. But the Audi team did the best job of maintaining an overview of the situation and took the right actions. My team-mates drove brilliantly. Towards the end of the race, I still achieved an advantage knowing that I had to make a final splash-and-dash refueling stop. It's great that we managed to clinch a one-two victory."

André Lotterer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #2): "A superb result for the team. You can't wish for anything better than first and second place. The team performance today was superb. This also applies to our partner Michelin. The technical crew was confident that we'd only have to change the tires at every other stop. We didn't make any mistakes in the rain either. This was an important step in the Championship."

Benoît Tréluyer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #2): "It was a fantastic race. A lot happened. The number 8 Toyota was very fast in the beginning, but initially they always are. Then we had a good pace and were close to them. After the rain interruption we started at the front. That made it possible for me to control the pace and the advantage. I didn't take too many risks and am happy with my stint. André (Lotterer) and Marcel (Fässler) drove superbly too. As at Le Mans, we didn't touch any rivals. This is one of the key factors this year for mounting the very top of the podium."

Lucas di Grassi (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #1): "This was a repetition of Le Mans – first and second place. I'm very happy about this result after the difficult qualifying. We had a wrong tire choice in the rain about halfway through the race, so our strategy no longer fit and we needed an additional stop. The car was very good. I was able to overtake two cars on my stint. I'm happy about the podium. Two podium results within two weeks aren't too bad, are they?"

Loïc Duval (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #1): "A fantastic result for Audi, because now we're heading the manufacturers' standings. The race result, with first and second place, couldn't have been any better either. Our car number 1 was in contention for victory this weekend as well but there were too many incidents with the rain and the red flags. We were also lacking a bit of fortune and our tire strategy didn't pan out completely. But I'm happy about Audi's one-two victory."

Tom Kristensen (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #1): "What a race. The conditions were tough from the beginning to the end. A lot here depended on the strategy and tire choice. A one-two result following the difficult day in qualifying is fantastic. I'm already looking forward to the next race in Japan."



Race results

- 1 Fässler/Lotterer/Tréluyer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro), 157 laps in 6h 01m52.122s
- 2 Di Grassi/Duval/Kristensen (Audi R18 e-tron quattro) + 53.016s
- 3 Buemi/Davidson/Lapierre (Toyota) + 1m 03.945s
- 4 Dumas/Jani/Lieb (Porsche) – 1 lap
- 5 Bernhard/Hartley/Webber (Porsche) – 2 laps
- 6 Conway/Sarrazin/Wurz (Toyota) – 2 laps
- 7 Beche/Heidfeld/Prost (Rebellion-Toyota) – 8 laps
- 8 Bradley/Howson/Matsuda (Oreca-Nissan) – 12 laps
- 9 Mediani/Minassian/Zlobin (Oreca-Nissan) – 12 laps
- 10 Brown/Dalziel/Sharp (HPD-Honda) – 16 laps

– End –

The Audi Group delivered approximately 1,575,500 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2013. As one of the most successful models, the Audi A3 has been awarded the title of “World Car of the Year 2014” by an international jury of journalists (combined fuel consumption in l/100 km: 7.1 – 3.2; combined CO₂ emissions in g/km: 165 – 85). In 2013, the company reported revenue of €49.9 billion and an operating profit of €5.03 billion. The company 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 (China) and Jakarta (Indonesia). Since the end of 2013, the brand with the Four Rings has also been producing cars in Foshan (China). In 2015, Audi will start production in São José dos Pinhais (Brazil), followed by 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 Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. (Bologna, Italy), the sports motorcycle manufacturer. The company currently employs approximately 76,000 people worldwide, thereof more than 53,400 in Germany. Total investment of around €22 billion is planned from 2014 to 2018 – 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.