



Communications Motorsport

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Audi driver Filipe Albuquerque in eager anticipation of WEC

- Portuguese is about to make his debut in the FIA WEC
- Significant differences to touring car program in the DTM
- Varied preparation at the beginning of sports car career

Ingolstadt, April 22, 2014 – Audi factory driver Filipe Albuquerque (Portugal) is facing a major challenge on switching from touring car to endurance racing. The Portuguese will contest his first race in the Audi R18 e-tron quattro diesel hybrid sports car at round two of the WEC at Spa (Belgium) on May 3.

Albuquerque competed for Audi in the DTM for three years and has clinched a class victory in the Daytona 24 Hours in the Audi R8 GRAND-AM GT sports car. Since last winter he has been familiarizing himself with Audi's third motorsport program. In the pinnacle event of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) season, the Le Mans 24 Hours, Albuquerque will be sharing the cockpit of the R18 e-tron quattro with Marco Bonanomi (Italy) and Oliver Jarvis (Great Britain).

Even before Filipe Albuquerque climbs into his #3 Audi R18 e-tron quattro his new task requires him to focus on different demands. "I changed my fitness training. Now I'm repeating specific exercises more frequently in order to more intensively train my muscles," says the 28-year-old professional race driver. "The lateral guidance forces are much higher in the LMP race car because we've got more downforce and are running with higher cornering speeds. Strong neck muscles and good physical stability are prerequisites for this."

Good body control is also required when getting in and out of the car to ensure impeccable driver changes without loss of time. After climbing into the cockpit, the driver finds himself surrounded by a complex workplace. "I first learned 37 switches and their functions – that's a lot more than in the DTM cockpit," he says, drawing a comparison between the cars.

While the regulations impose strict limits on technical development in the DTM, sports prototypes are regarded as the category that offers the greatest freedom in



terms of technology and one of the most advanced classes in worldwide professional racing. “We’re working together with a much larger number of engineers here because the R18 e-tron quattro is very complex,” explains Albuquerque. “Audi has superbly prepared me for this task.”

When Filipe Albuquerque competes in the R18 e-tron quattro, driving this race car significantly differs from anything he is used to. “The TDI power-plant is extremely quiet and the engine speed level much lower than with a gasoline unit,” says the Portuguese. “And the entire hybrid drive with the powerful torque assists us really well in overtaking maneuvers.”

By contrast, the on-track battle between different race car categories is not completely new for Albuquerque. “It’s true that there’s only one category in the DTM but I’ve previously won the GT class in the Daytona 24 Hours with Audi, where we were driving the GT race cars in the same field as the prototypes. In the WEC, four classes are on the grid,” says Albuquerque. “That’s why you almost never catch a clear lap. With an LMP1 race car like the R18 e-tron quattro we’re the fastest category in the field. We need to be on guard all the time and adjust our line also to the slower cars that we’ve got to avoid. To practice and continually improve such reflexes, Albuquerque, in a parallel commitment to the WEC, also competes for the privateer team Jota Sport in the European Le Mans Series this year.

Team-mates are a crucial success factor in endurance racing. With Marco Bonanomi Albuquerque finished the 2010 Italian GT Championship as the runners-up for Audi Sport Italia and with Oliver Jarvis he shared the cockpit on clinching success at Daytona. “Together, the three of us have to come up with a good setup. We have a similar feel as drivers and are jointly working on our aim of being successful at Le Mans. The rapport between us is excellent,” says Filipe Albuquerque, looking forward to his WEC debut at Spa on May 3.

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Note to editors: Every week until the Le Mans race on June 14/15, we will be providing you with new background information on the R18 project and Audi’s commitment in the world’s most famous endurance race. Next week’s topic: preview of the second WEC race at Spa.



The Audi Group delivered approximately 1,575,500 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2013. In 2013 the company reported revenue of €49.9 billion and an operating profit of €5.03 billion. The company is globally operating in more than 100 markets with 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 December 2013, the brand with the Four Rings has been producing cars also 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 more than 73,500 people worldwide, thereof more than 52,500 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.