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Audi drivers facing difficult task

- **Starting positions eight and nine in Detroit**
- **Rain hinders set-up work**
- **Luhr/Werner have chance to clinch title early**

Ingolstadt/Detroit – Like last year, the Audi drivers are facing an extremely difficult task in the race of the American Le Mans Series on the “Belle Isle Street Circuit” in Detroit (U.S. state of Michigan). Team Audi Sport North America’s pair of Audi R10 TDI prototypes will start Saturday’s race from the fourth and fifth row of the grid on the bumpy city street circuit.

The track at Detroit is considered to be one of the most challenging for the cars of the LM P1 class. In 2007, the gap between the two Audi R10 TDI prototypes and the lighter LM P2 cars was similar to that set today. From starting positions seven and eight, however, the two diesel-powered sports cars moved up to second and third place in the race.

Compared to last year’s Friday practice, this year the conditions were even worse due to changing weather. Both free practice sessions took place in the rain making a proper set-up work impossible. It was dry for qualifying but the track was extremely slippery due to the previous rain.

Team Audi Sport North America used the 20-minute qualifying session to prepare for the race. Set-up changes were made on both cars while all four drivers were in action, which is normally unusual in qualifying. Lucas Luhr and Marcel Fässler both completed their first dry laps on the “Belle Isle Street

Circuit" in qualifying. Nevertheless, Luhr was able to set the LM-P1 pole in 1m 15.879s.

On Saturday, Lucas Luhr and Marco Werner will start the third last race of the season with a 66-point lead having an early opportunity to clinch the LM P1 Drivers' title. If their advantage is a minimum of 55 points after the race in Detroit, they have secured the title.

The race in Detroit begins on Saturday at 2:35 p.m. local time (8:35 p.m. in Germany) and lasts 2 hours and 45 minutes. Audi is unbeaten on city street circuits in this year's American Le Mans Series and has scored five overall victories in the first eight races – most recently three in a row.

Quotes after the qualifying in Detroit

Lucas Luhr (Audi R10 TDI #2): "It's certainly not the best way to do your first dry laps on a new city street circuit in qualifying, but our car was also not so good. We have a lot to do before the race. The track is just very bumpy."

Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #2): "This was a day to forget with very difficult conditions. We had no time to work out a reasonable setup. It will be a tough race for us, but we will try to find something in the warm-up. Then let's see what happens in the race."

Marcel Fässler (Audi R10 TDI #1): "I could not do so many laps – and always under different conditions. But I have to live with that. In tomorrow's morning warm-up it will be dry and I'll get a few more laps. And the race is always a different story. I remain confident. "

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #1): "If you have to pick the worst conditions for our R10 TDI you can't chose a better day than this one. We like straights, smooth tracks and a lot of grip. Here we have tight corners, lots of bumps and no grip at all because it's been raining a lot. On this kind of tracks we need to quite a lot of set-up work to optimize the car. This was not the case because of the rain. We did what we could in qualifying. Tomorrow is another day. We showed many times that race day is really a different day for the Audis. We can only benefit from the track getting more rubber."



Dave Maraj (Team Director Audi Sport North America): "It was a very difficult day. There was no time to make a proper set-up and no time to get the drivers accustomed. I think there is still a lot more in the car."

The starting grid in Detroit

- 1 Brabham/Sharp (Acura/Honda) 1m 13.483s
- 2 de Ferran/Pagenaud (Acura/Honda) 1m 13.660s
- 3 Smith/Dyson (Porsche) 1m 14.209s
- 4 Fernandez/Diaz (Acura/Honda) 1m 14.380s
- 5 Rossiter/Montagny (Acura/Honda) 1m 14.446s
- 6 Dumas/Bernhard (Porsche) 1m 14.598s
- 7 Briscoe/Long (Porsche) 1m 15.476s
- 8 Luhr/Werner (Audi R10 TDI) 1m 15.879s (1st in LM P1)
- 9 Fässler/Pirro (Audi R10 TDI) 1m 15.923s (2nd in LM P1)
- 10 Franchitti/Leitzinger (Porsche) 1m 16.554s

- Ends -

Photographs and information available at www.audi-motorsport.info

AUDI AG sold a total of 964,151 cars in 2007 and thus achieved its twelfth consecutive record year. With revenue of € 33,617 million and profit before tax of € 2,915 million, the company attained its best figures ever. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). At the end of 2007, production of the Audi A6 started in Aurangabad, India. The company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include Automobili Lamborghini Holding S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese, Italy, and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Audi employs about 57,000 people worldwide, including 45,000 in Germany. The brand with the four rings invests more than € 2 billion each year in order to sustain the company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. Audi plans to significantly increase the number of models in its portfolio by 2015 to 40.