

Communications Motorsport

Jürgen Pippig
Telephone: +49 (0)841 89 34200
E-Mail: motorsport-media@audi.de

Eva-Maria Veith
Telephone: +49 (0)841 89 33922
E-Mail: eva-maria.veith@audi.de

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Audi drivers hunting records in the USA

- **Seventh round of the American Le Mans Series at Road America**
- **Allan McNish and Audi R10 TDI hold track record**
- **LM P1 sportscars always quicker – also due to the tyres**

Ingolstadt – The Audi R10 TDI is the most successful car in the 2008 American Le Mans Series with three overall victories. The Audi drivers are particularly looking forward to the next race on 9 August: Road America in Wisconsin is not only regarded as one of the world’s most picturesque and challenging circuits. The track is also the fastest on the American Le Mans Series calendar.

Just like its predecessor, the R8, the Audi R10 TDI was specifically developed for the 24 Hours of Le Mans: The average speed around the high-speed circuit approaches 250 kph. Road America comes closest in this respect to Le Mans: Last year, Allan McNish took pole position at an average speed of 217.829 kph in the Audi R10 TDI. It is still the fastest lap for a Le Mans sportscar in the history of the American Le Mans Series.

The Audi drivers hunt this record at Road America. The probability is extremely high that it will be beaten – assuming the weather plays its part. Last year, the Audi Sport North America team actually still competed with the first generation diesel sportscar. The two cars to be fielded this time are of the latest technical configuration and are thus significantly quicker.

The tyres also play a large role in the LP P1 performance gain and faster lap times. “Our tyre partner Michelin is doing a fantastic job,” explains Audi factory



driver Marco Werner, who has already celebrated three overall victories in the 2008 American Le Mans Series together with Lucas Luhr. "The tyres have very good grip this years and are very consistent". In the last race at Mid Ohio, Luhr/Werner only had to change tyres once – this was impossible last year.

Almost 50,000 test kilometres went into the latest generation Michelin tyres. One-and-a-half hour's work goes into a single handmade tyre, which weighs approximately twelve kilograms and comprises of 150 different components. Its optimum operating temperature is about 80 degrees Celsius and the tyre itself is of great importance in the overall package of a race car. Compared to last year, the technical experts from Michelin calculated that the tyre alone was accountable for reducing lap-time by one second at the season opener at Sebring. To achieve this you need to increase engine power by about 40 hp or weigh 50 kilograms less.

Four different slick versions are available for the Audi Sport North America team: "soft", "medium", "hard" and "hot" – the last one is a version for higher temperatures. Two different rain tyres and intermediates for damp conditions complete the Michelin range.

The French company was Audi's exclusive tyre partner for the R8 project. Michelin was also integrated from the very beginning of the Audi R10 TDI development and broke new ground just like Audi Sport. "We made a lot of pioneering work together," stresses Head of Audi Sport Dr Wolfgang Ullrich. "The enormous torque produced by the TDI engine and the relatively high weight of a twelve-cylinder make great demands of the tyres."

Every track on the American Le Mans Series calendar is simulated weeks before the event by Audi Sport in Ingolstadt. Michelin give recommendations for air pressure and camber values based on this data.

Thanks to the computer simulations, Audi Sport knows before an event almost to the tenth-of-a-second what lap times are possible. "Often", grins Lucas Luhr, "we drive just a little bit quicker than the computer calculated."

Whether this will be the case this time will be revealed on Friday (8 August) at 3:30 p.m. local time (10:30 p.m. in Germany) when prototype qualifying is on the agenda. The race starts on Saturday at 4:00 p.m. (11:00 p.m. in Germany) and runs into the night. Swiss driver Marcel Fässler, who contests his first race with the Audi R10 TDI at Road America, is new in the Audi Team.



Facts & figures

The Audi driver line-up at Road America

#1 Marcel Fässler / Emanuele Pirro

#2 Lucas Luhr / Marco Werner

Emanuele Pirro about Road America: "Road America is one of the few tracks where you see the results on the stop watch if you risk something – this is very satisfying for a driver. The layout is also unique. Unfortunately, the spectators only get to see a small amount of this fantastic track."

Interesting facts

Marco Werner contests his 50th ALMS race at Road America ... Road America has staged six American Le Mans Series races to date, an Audi won on five occasions ... The Audi R8 remained unbeaten in its four races at Road America ... Audi celebrated a one-two with the R10 TDI in 2006, last year Dindo Capello/Allan McNish and Emanuele Pirro/Marco Werner were second and third respectively ... Allan McNish took pole position in 2006 and 2007 at Road America with the R10 TDI ... McNish holds the track record with a time of 1m 47.665s ... Marcel Fässler contests his first race in the USA at Road America and his first race with the Audi R10 TDI ... Emanuele Pirro participates in the "Tour de Road America" on Friday evening, a charity cycle race for the Lance Armstrong Foundation ... the Audi R10 TDI competes in the 1000-kilometre race at the Nürburgring only one week after the race at Road America.



The schedule at Road America

Thursday, 7 August

13:40 – 14:10	Test session (prototypes)
14:10 – 15:10	Test session
15:10 – 15:40	Test session (GT cars)

Friday, 8 August

10:00 – 11:00	Free practice
13:50 – 14:50	Free practice
15:00 – 15:20	Qualifying (GT cars)
15:30 – 15:50	Qualifying (prototypes)

Saturday, 9 August

11:05 – 11:30	Warm-up
16:00 – 20:00	Race (4 hours)

- 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.