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Audi drivers in fitness check

- **Audi race driver winter camp at the Sonnenalp**
- **Endurance training and team building in focus**
- **Team physician Dr. Christian John draws positive summary**

Ingolstadt, February 24, 2011 – The 18 Audi drivers who will form the driver squad for the factory supported events in the DTM and sportscar races with the new Audi R18 completed a fitness check combined with team building at the Sonnenalp in Ofterschwang under the watchful eyes of Head of Audi Motorsport Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich and team physician Dr. Christian John.

Mattias Ekström, Tom Kristensen, Timo Scheider & Co were on trial at the Allgäu sport and wellness hotel. Throughout the week it was not only about analyzing the physical and mental condition of the professional race drivers under medical supervision. “An extremely important objective of our winter camp was to ensure that the team gels and to fully integrate the four new drivers who will strengthen our team this year,” stresses Head of Audi Motorsport Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich. “This is why the Team Bosses also traditionally attend the winter camp.”

“The core team has grown over time to around 20 people,” says Dr. Christian John. “This is already a pretty big team and no longer comparable with just a small handful of drivers with whom we were together for fitness training in Engadin. At that time it was still primarily about improving stamina. Today every driver has a high level of basic fitness. We see the results of our many years of work.”

To start the winter camp the drivers were subject to a medical examination, in which the blood values and the stamina were checked on a bicycle ergometer. “For every driver who has already been with a number of years it’s possible to draw good comparisons over that time which highlight where there are perhaps still deficits,” says Dr. John. “We’ve often won races over the last few years, particularly at Le Mans, because our drivers are fit and can drive four consecutive stints at night without any problems. The competition has caught up a little in this respect – but I believe we are still a little bit ahead.”

The daily program at the Sonnenalp was always in two parts: in the mornings 30 minutes stretching followed by endurance training with the focus on skating, cross country skiing and “snow shoe” hiking. In the afternoon team sports like football tennis or volleyball.

It is general knowledge that race drivers are elite athletes and must be extremely fit. “Stamina and muscular endurance are of particular importance in motorsport,” explains Dr. John. “And the same goes for the DTM as it does for Le Mans. In the DTM, drivers must cope with high cockpit temperatures. The races are, however, not so long. At Le Mans more stamina over several hours is required.”

With the Le Mans drivers, the team doctor currently has his eye on the fact that Audi competes with a closed sportscar for the first time since 1999. “The regulations indeed stipulate that the cockpit temperature may not exceed a certain value,” says Dr. John. “But the air in the cockpit is, however, drier and warmer than with an open sports prototype, which is why it will be important to carry a drink bottle on board.”

In general race drivers must be able to drink a lot of fluid before a race to withstand the heat. “Endurance training helps the body to compensate for both,” says Dr. John. The second major subject is the nape of the neck. “A driver’s neck is heavily loaded, which is why the neck and shoulder muscles must be specially trained. There are exercises and devices specifically for this which all our drivers have at home.”

In general it is important that drivers keep their bodies fit and train regularly. “Arms, legs and the neck must all be seen as one,” explains Dr. John. “Long-distance running is a particularly good exercise for race drivers, which is why I am very pleased that many of our drivers regularly take part in marathons.”

His summary after one week at the Sonnenalp is positive: “We saw a very high fitness level,” says Dr. Christian John. “The drivers who have recently joined us integrated quickly and fully into the team. From my point of view the 2011 season can begin.”



The Audi Group sold around 1,092,400 cars of the Audi brand in 2010. The Company posted revenue of €29.8 billion and an operating profit of €1.6 billion in 2009. 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 €11.6 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 AG will present the full results for the 2010 fiscal year at its Annual Press Conference on March 8, 2011.

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 Audi Environmental Foundation.