



**Communications Motorsport**

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## **Audi in WEC opener at Silverstone on second and third rows of the grid**

- **Difficult qualifying conditions in changeable weather**
- **Tom Kristensen/Loïc Duval third in best Audi R18 e-tron quattro**
- **Benoît Tréluyer thrown back due to software error**

**Ingolstadt/Silverstone, April 13, 2013 – At the opening round of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) at Silverstone, Audi experienced a turbulent qualifying session in which changeable weather made a precise tire choice impossible. In the end, the session resulted in grid positions three and five for Audi.**

Premiere in the WEC: For the first time, two drivers were nominated for qualifying, with each of them having to complete two timed laps. With only 20 minutes duration and a rain shower setting in, Audi did not manage perfect timing. Both Audi R18 e-tron quattro cars started the qualifying session on untreaded intermediate tires, but returned to the pits due to a shower. When they went out again to chase for times on rain tires, the rain stopped and the track quickly dried off.

Loïc Duval on treaded tires achieved the fourth-best time twice. He turned over his number 2 Audi to Tom Kristensen, who went out on intermediate tires. The average time, which determines the grid position, achieved by the duo resulted in grid position three with a 3.2-second gap.

The sister car's situation was less fortunate. Benoît Tréluyer in car number 1 complained about a malfunction of the traction control system that cost him a significant amount of time compared to car number 2. His team-mate André Lotterer achieved the third-fastest time on his first outing and ultimately set the best time of his group. On average, these performances resulted in grid position five. Despite the adverse conditions Audi is looking toward the race with optimism, as the balance of both Audi R18 e-tron quattro cars gives rise to expecting a thrilling competition over the six-hour distance.



The race at Silverstone starts on Sunday at 12:00 local time. The racing action can be watched on the internet by live streaming on [www.audi-liveracing.com](http://www.audi-liveracing.com) and on [www.fiawec.com](http://www.fiawec.com). Eurosport will broadcast parts of the race live on television as well. In Germany, Eurosport 2 will air coverage from 13.00 to 13.30 and from 15.00 to 15.30. Eurosport 1 will show the final phase of the race from 18.00 to 19.00.

### **Quotes after qualifying**

**Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** “We knew that the qualifying format wouldn’t be easy. In addition, rain set in today on the first lap. We started on intermediate tires with both cars in order to take advantage of the just partially damp track. The rain was very heavy at two locations of the track and after receiving feedback from the drivers we switched to rain tires. But then the rain abruptly stopped and our drivers had to finish their two laps on their treaded tires. Our competitor Toyota opted for untreaded tires. In the qualifying session of our second drivers we were no longer able to recover the big time difference. Tom Kristensen and André Lotterer achieved good lap times nonetheless. Our grid positions aren’t ideal but at a 6-hour race the starting positions aren’t the most important thing.”

**Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest):** “New rules for the first time plus changeable weather. That was a bit difficult. We did the right thing by starting on intermediates but both drivers on their warm-up lap said that it was too wet. These were borderline conditions and we didn’t make optimum use of them. Today, a lot of luck was involved. In retrospect, we were a bit too conservative in our tire choice.”

**Loïc Duval (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #2):** “In addition to the new qualifying mode, there were other incalculable factors. I was driving in relatively heavy traffic plus rain set in. After we changed to rain tires the track dried off surprisingly fast. With only 20 minutes of time for two drivers we didn’t have a chance to make another tire choice. Tom Kristensen then had better chances on untreaded tires and made good use of them.”

**Tom Kristensen (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #2):** “A very intensive qualifying session! Only 20 minutes for two timed laps of two drivers, respectively. On intermediate tires I encountered a relatively dry track. My car was very good when I caught a Toyota on my second lap and lost time. I even drove another lap but the tires had already gone past their best point. I’m looking forward to a nice, tough competition in the race.”

**Allan McNish (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #2):** “For two days there’s unsteady



weather all the way into qualifying and it's very cold. It wasn't easy to warm up the tires; that's why we weren't able to make optimum use of them right from the beginning. The balance of our car though is very good. I'm expecting a tough rival on Sunday and believe we haven't seen the full potential yet – neither with Toyota nor with us.”

**Marcel Fässler (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #1):** “The conditions were relatively difficult for my team-mates after heavy rain had set in. In addition, Benoît Tréluyer wasn't able to exploit our car's full potential. André Lotterer then managed two good laps.”

**André Lotterer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #1):** “I was driving on untreaded intermediate tires on a relatively dry track. The times were good and we were able to reduce our gap. Benoît Tréluyer had a problem with the setting of the traction control. That's why he had no chance of achieving good times. But we're in for a long race and we know how fast our car is.”

**Benoît Tréluyer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #1):** “Unfortunately, there was a small software problem with the traction control so that I wasn't able to perfectly accelerate. We're going to analyze the error in detail. In addition, there was the challenging tire choice. It's nice that André Lotterer caught up again with excellent times.”

### **Qualifying results**

- 1 Lapierre/Wurz (Toyota) 1m 48.021s
- 2 Buemi/Davidson/Sarrazin (Toyota) 1m 49.995s
- 3 Duval/Kristensen/McNish (Audi R18 e-tron quattro) 1m 51.283s
- 4 Heidfeld/Jani/Prost (Lola-Toyota) 1m 52.124s
- 5 Fässler/Lotterer/Tréluyer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro) 1m 53.488s
- 6 Beche/Belicchi/Cheng (Lola-Toyota) 1m 53.835s
- 7 Graves/Pizzonia/Walker (Oreca-Nissan) 1m 55.148s
- 8 Brundle/Heinemeier-Hansson/Pla (Morgan-Nissan) 1m 57.629s
- 9 Conway/Martin/Rusinov (Oreca-Nissan) 1m 57.697s
- 10 Baguette/Gonzalez/Plowman (Morgan-Nissan) 1m 58.729s

– End –



The Audi Group delivered more than 1,455,100 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2012. In 2012, the Company posted revenue of €48.8 billion and an operating profit of €5.4 billion. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). The Audi Q7 is built in Bratislava (Slovakia). In November 2012, CKD production of the Audi Q7 was added to the existing Audi A4, A6 and Q5 manufacturing operations in Aurangabad (India). At the Brussels plant, production of the Audi A1 has been running since 2010, while production of the new A1 Sportback began in 2012. The Audi Q3 has been built in Martorell (Spain) since June 2011. The Company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include AUDI HUNGARIA MOTOR Kft. (Győr, Hungary), Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. (Sant'Agata Bolognese, Italy), AUDI BRUSSELS S.A./N.V. (Brussels, Belgium), quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm and the sports motorcycle manufacturer Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. (Bologna, Italy). Audi currently employs more than 68,000 people worldwide, including around 50,000 in Germany. The brand with the four rings plans to invest a total of €11 billion by 2015 – mainly in new products and the expansion of production capacities – in order to sustain the Company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" claim. Audi is currently expanding its site in Győr (Hungary) and will start production in Foshan (China) in late 2013 and in San José Chiapa (Mexico) in 2016.

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. Within the context of "Vorsprung durch Technik", which extends far beyond its products, the Company is directing its activities toward a major goal – comprehensive CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral mobility.