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Audi is ready for the race of the year

- **Three Audi R18 TDI cars at the 79th edition of the Le Mans 24 Hours**
- **Successful final tests**
- **Audi seeking tenth Le Mans victory**

Ingolstadt, June 3, 2011 – Exactly 183 days after its world debut in Ingolstadt the new Audi R18 TDI is facing a truly serious challenge: When the starting lights at the legendary Le Mans 24 Hours switch to green at 3 p.m. on June 11, Audi will have the chance for its tenth victory at the world's most important endurance race.

In the past twelve years Audi has won the Le Mans 24 Hours nine times in races that have included extremely strong rivals and has underlined its role as a technology leader in the process. The successes of the brand with the four rings have repeatedly been accompanied by technical innovations. In 2001 Audi combined turbocharging with direct injection technology. The TFSI, which made the Audi R8 nearly unbeatable, today plays a major part in downsizing production engines. In 2006 Audi achieved the first Le Mans success of a diesel-powered vehicle. And on the occasion of last year's one-two-three result, when the brand beat the distance record that had been in existence for 39 years, turbochargers with variable turbine geometry (VTG) were used.

The Audi R18 TDI is yet another car packed with technical innovations – ranging from the compact 3.7-liter V6 TDI engine with a mono-VTG turbocharger to full LED headlights through to its ultra lightweight design which at the 2011 race at Le Mans will also be visually evident: The three vehicles fielded by Audi Sport Team Joest sport plenty of puristic carbon fiber. Carbon fiber reinforced plastic (CFRP) is considered an important material with respect to the coming electrification of production vehicles. Audi started to use the extremely light-weight, high-strength material in motorsport as early as in the nineteen-eighties.



Despite the reduction in power output due to the smaller, highly turbocharged engines prescribed in 2011 the Audi R18 TDI thanks to efficient aerodynamics achieves the same top speed at Le Mans as the predecessor model, the R15 TDI, did. The lap times set on the 13.629-kilometer race track during the test day in early May were already impressive. According to the projections of Audi Sport's engineers the new LMP1 sports car should have made even further steps regarding speed and consistency.

6,000 kilometers without any problems

During the last tests which followed the R18 TDI's racing debut at the 1,000-kilometer race at Spa-Francorchamps the squad at Monza and Le Castellet primarily focused on reliability and on performance to be as consistent as possible. As the acid test for Le Mans, the car had to cover a distance of 6,000 kilometers – about 600 more than it did when it clinched last year's record victory. The R18 TDI mastered this requirement without any problem and while fine-tuning the car the team achieved another perhaps crucially important final step.

After the race at Spa Francorchamps the three race cars bearing chassis numbers R18-104 (Timo Bernhard/Romain Dumas/Mike Rockenfeller), R18-106 (Marcel Fässler/André Lotterer/Benoît Tréluyer) and R18-105 (Dindo Capello/Tom Kristensen/Allan McNish) were completely dismantled at Audi Sport in Ingolstadt and reassembled with utmost care, as the most minute detail could ruin the work of months.

From Spielberg to Le Mans

The three Audi R18 TDI cars have already arrived at Le Mans where they will be presented to the Technical Stewards for scrutineering in the city center of Le Mans on Monday afternoon starting at 16:20 p.m. Audi will be the penultimate team to be inspected as a part of the squad will travel to Le Mans directly from the DTM race at Spielberg – including Head of Audi Motorsport Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich and Mike Rockenfeller, one of the three drivers that won last year's race.

The vehicles will be in action for the first time in the free practice session that starts at 4 p.m. on Wednesday afternoon. The first qualifying session is on the agenda for the evening of the same day. The final grid positions will only be determined at midnight on Thursday. The race is scheduled to start at 3 p.m. on Saturday.

At its tenth Le Mans run with a factory commitment Audi is supported by strong partners: The roles of Alpinestars, Bosch, Castrol EDGE, MAHLE, Michelin, O.Z. and TAG Heuer largely exceed those of classic sponsors. Most of them have also been providing technical support to Audi Sport for many years – for example Bosch as a supplier of numerous important engine and electronic components and Michelin as a proven tire supplier. Like Audi both are using Le Mans for the technology transfer between motorsport and the production side of the house.

Before the race, spectators on location will again be able to catch a glimpse of the future of the automobile and of the Le Mans 24 Hours. As part of the presentation billed as “Le Mans vers le futur” the Audi e-tron Spyder and the Audi Q5 hybrid will be showcased – both as examples of the future electrification of the powertrain which Audi is consistently driving forward.

In addition, on the day before the race, Audi will present a particularly exciting new road-going sports car at Le Mans: the R8 GT Spyder which reflects ultra lightweight technology in many details.

The “Audi ultra lightweight technology” inscriptions will be featured around the race track as well. Audi is expecting about 1 200 guests – more than ever before – at the venue on the race weekend. For this purpose an additional mobile Audi Terminal was established in the area of the braking zone after the start and finish from which the guests will be able to enjoy a completely new view of the track. In total, the organizer expects a turnout of more than 250,000 spectators. Millions of fans around the world will watch the “race of the year” on TV.

Quotes before the Le Mans 24 Hours

Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “Le Mans poses a completely new challenge every year and is a completely different race every time. This particularly applies in 2011 due to the new regulations. The downsizing of the engines leads to new technical requirements which are right in line with the central theme of our motorsport commitment: to test forward-thinking technology, which we can subsequently make available to our customers, in racing at the Le Mans 24 Hours. Furthermore, Le Mans is one of the most important races that exist in the world. That you can nearly cover the distance of an entire Formula One season on a single weekend with the same car without any technical modifications makes the whole project so special. The nine Audi victories since 2000 did not occur by chance. Yet despite optimal preparation there is no guarantee for success in sport in general and at Le Mans in particular. It is our aim to fight for Audi’s tenth Le Mans victory with

the innovative R18 TDI. Before the race we did everything within our means to be able to achieve this.”

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest): “The Audi R18 TDI marked a huge step within the sports car project. The entire development of this ambitious concept was under immense time pressure. In addition, Audi Sport Team Joest has increased the number of its regular employees. The whole squad has been sticking together, has been away from home a lot during the past few months, and has been going through a tough time. While we were testing most recently at Le Castellet another part of the crew was doing an equally great job of producing the parts in Ingolstadt. Now everyone is just dying for Le Mans to start. Together we have achieved the state you wish for before a 24-hour race. We’re returning with the same strong driver line-up we had last year. They are nine known quantities that we can rely on. We also know what we can expect of the R18 TDI. At the preliminary test we could see that it fits the purpose for which it has been developed. But there’s no reason to stop being careful. We’re in for a tough battle. My personal forecast is that any car that requires maintenance for just a few minutes longer than it takes to perform a normal pit stop will probably no longer be in contention for victory.”

Timo Bernhard (30/D), Audi R18 TDI #1 (Audi Sport Team Joest)

- Achieved his first victory at Le Mans last year
- Contests the 24-hour classic with Audi for the third time

“For the first time we’re contesting Le Mans with the “number 1” car. Last year we traveled to Le Mans more or less as underdogs or as an ‘insiders’ tip.’ This year, victory will be the benchmark we’ll be measured by. The focus is on us and we’re the hunted. And that’s exactly what we want to be! It’s been ten years that I contested the first 24-hour race in my career, and that was at the Nürburgring. Yet despite all the routine and experience the game starts from scratch again each time. This year I’m expecting a very close race between Audi and Peugeot. We’re in for 24 hours in which the smallest mistake can be crucial. In Audi Sport and Team Joest I’ve got a very strong squad backing me. Up to the last minute the crew, my team-mates and I continued to optimize and adjust everything. In addition, there was the pre-test in April which Audi didn’t have at Le Mans in the two previous years. We’re traveling to the most important race of the year thoroughly prepared.”

Romain Dumas (33/F), Audi R18 TDI #1

- Like Timo Bernhard celebrated victory last year on his third run with Audi at Le Mans
- Since last year has been enjoying particular attention with his compatriots as the first French Le Mans winner since 1999

“I’m traveling to Le Mans with a good feeling. All of our tests went well. Since the race at Spa we’ve again improved the set-up of the R18 TDI. The car is now even a little easier to drive. We’d very much like to give Audi another victory. I also wouldn’t mind sitting in this car again ... I’ll continue to engage in sports activities up to the week of the race. But I’ve laid the most important physical foundation for the tough race week when I ran in the Paris Marathon in April. At Le Mans we’ll meet the same main rival again as in the previous years. Like we, they’re racing with a newly designed car. It’ll be a tough race. The motto for Saturday and Sunday at Le Mans will be: stay on track and don’t make a single mistake.”

Mike Rockenfeller (27/D), Audi R18 TDI #1

- Will travel directly from the DTM race at Spielberg to scrutineering at Le Mans
- Like Marcel Fässler is contesting two 24-hour races within two weeks for Audi at Le Mans and at the Nürburgring
- Is competing for Audi on six consecutive race weekends

“Obviously it’s very nice to run at Le Mans in the ‘number 1’ car but it makes only a relatively small difference compared to previous runs. It’s true that the pressure of having to win this race once has ceased to exist. But that doesn’t change anything with respect to the competitiveness of the field in 2011. I’m eager to see how close the competition will be this year. Even the Audi line-up with its nine drivers is well balanced. In addition, there’s the typically strong competition. I’m contesting the DTM in Austria immediately before the Le Mans week. But right after the race at Spielberg on Sunday afternoon I’ll make a complete mental switch to Le Mans. I’m incredibly excited about the 24 Hours, we’re well prepared. The most important moment is always when the sun rises on Sunday morning. If you’ve made it through the night alright and are running on a promising position you’re in for a thrilling final phase.”

Marcel Fässler (34/CH), Audi R18 TDI #2

- Is contesting three 24-hour races for Audi this year, at Le Mans, Nürburgring and Spa-Francorchamps
- After Le Mans will be sharing a cockpit with Timo Bernhard at the remaining ILMC races

“Le Mans will be great again this year. At our last test two weeks before the race we made another step forward. Compared with last year there are several major

differences: In addition to the Audi R18 TDI being a brand new car we had our first experience with it on the Le Mans track at the pre-test in April. That's why we're going into the first free practice session with different prerequisites this time. I personally reeled off a large number of kilometers in the R18 TDI too. I think that this year it'll be even more important to drive fast and without making the slightest mistake. Compared with last year, for us in car 'number 2,' there's only one possible improvement. Since the Le Mans week is very strenuous you've got to do a good job of managing your energy."

André Lotterer (30/D), Audi R18 TDI #2

- Is only contesting Le Mans for the third time
- Spent the time before the race in Southern France and Belgium

"For Le Mans I came up with a very special form of preparing myself this year. After clinching a victory in the Formula Nippon I decided not to race in Japan again on the weekend immediately before Le Mans. Instead, I'm concentrating all my energy on being successful with Audi. After our test I spent some time in Southern France together with my team colleague Benoît Tréluyer. I then enjoyed nature riding my bicycle in Belgium in order to recharge my batteries. It was of great value for me to be able to live my life the way I like in this important phase before the race. In a sporting and technical sense we're traveling to Le Mans really well prepared. The car is fast and we learned a lot in April at Le Mans and at the most recent test. Furthermore, my two team-mates are now driving with the same seat insert which will be helpful at the pit stops."

Benoît Tréluyer (34/F), Audi R18 TDI #2

- Hails from Alençon, 50 kilometers north of Le Mans
- Like André Lotterer only contests Le Mans for the second time for Audi

"We're arriving at Le Mans superbly prepared. Our tests have been properly finished and are going into the 24-hour race with a good feeling. We've become thoroughly familiar with the R18 TDI. Externally, the closed body is the biggest difference for the fans. Of course we drivers have to adjust to that as well. But the biggest difference from the R15 TDI is that the car is much easier to drive. That's a major advantage for this endurance race. We're facing the most important week of the year. I'll take a whole week off before then to get some good rest. I'm traveling to Le Mans with confidence. Last year was our year of learning as the new driver squad in the team. It would be great if we could improve by one position in the final results this year."

Dindo Capello (46/I), Audi R15 TDI #3

- Has three wins at the 24-hour race on the Sarthe under his belt
- Will celebrate his 47th birthday five days after the race

“The level of excitement about the greatest race of the year is steadily rising. At the last test with the Audi R18 TDI we managed to make another step forward. You can immediately feel it: The car is now easier to drive at consistently high speeds. As always, the week at Le Mans will be long. And the long wait builds up higher pressure than when you’re sitting in the car and are driving it. Now I’m allowing myself to relax before the race, which is also why I’ve decided not to contest the next race of the Italian GT Championship at Misano in the Audi R8 LMS.”

Tom Kristensen (43/DK), Audi R18 TDI #3

- With eight victories at just 14 events remains the all-time record holder of the race that has been held since 1923
- Is contesting Le Mans as the team-mate of Dindo Capello and Allan McNish for the sixth time in a row

“Every year Le Mans is the most important race on the calendar and every year the aims remain the same for Audi: shooting for victory. With the new Audi R18 TDI this edition of the classic race is guaranteed to be another exciting one. During each week that we drove this car we were able to continue to improve it. The tests went very well which gives us a good feeling before the race. Audi Sport has done a fantastic job. Now it’s up to the team and us drivers to make use of this potential in the race. Last year a slight misunderstanding threw us out of contention for victory. For this year we’re hoping for a flawless race. We’re willing to give everything.”

Allan McNish (41/GB), Audi R18 TDI #3

- Clinched his first victory at Le Mans 13 years ago
- Has his 30th season in racing this year (including his time in kart racing)

“This time Le Mans will be even more difficult than before for a number of reasons. On the official test day in April the top five cars were within one second of each other, on a lap distance of 13.6 kilometers! I think that the pace of Audi and Peugeot in qualifying and in the race will be very similar. That means that we’ve got to handle our pit stops in a sure and absolutely precise manner and that we need a good race strategy. Lap times are crucial, but so is the efficient use of fuel and the tires. Since November we’ve been completing tests that were focused on lap times as well as on durability. On the test day at Le Mans we were first and second and finished our race debut at Spa in third place. We’ve finished all preparations and are fully concentrating on the race.”

The Audi drivers at Le Mans

Timo Bernhard (D): *Feb 24, 1981 in Homburg (D); residence: Dittweiler (D); married to Katharina; height 1.73 m; weight: 61 kg; Audi driver since 2009; Le Mans victories: 1; Le Mans races: 5; pole positions: 0; fastest laps: 0.

Dindo Capello (I): *Jun 17, 1964 in Asti (I); residence: Canelli (I); married to Elisabetta, one son (Giacomo); height: 1.72 m; weight: 66 kg; Audi driver since 1994; Le Mans victories: 3; Le Mans races: 12; pole positions: 3; fastest laps: 0.

Romain Dumas (F): *Dec 14, 1977 in Alès (F); residence: Basel (CH); single; height: 1.74 m; weight: 60 kg; Audi driver since 2009; Le Mans victories: 1; Le Mans races: 10; pole positions: 0; fastest laps: 0.

Marcel Fässler (CH): *May 27, 1976 in Einsiedeln (CH); residence: Gross (CH); married to Isabel, four daughters (Shana, Elin, Yael, Delia); height 1.78 m; weight 78 kg; Audi driver since 2008; Le Mans victories: 0 (best result: 2); Le Mans races: 5 pole positions: 0; fastest laps: 0.

Tom Kristensen (DK): *Jul 07, 1967 in Hobro (DK); residence: Monaco (MC); single (partner Hanne), two sons (Oliver and Oswald) and one daughter (Carla Marlou); height: 1.74 m; weight: 72 kg; Audi driver since 2000; Le Mans victories: 8; Le Mans races: 14; pole positions: 1; fastest laps: 3.

André Lotterer (D): *Nov 19, 1981 in Duisburg (D); residence: Tokyo (J); single; height 1.84 m; weight 74 kg; Audi driver since 2010; Le Mans victories: 0 (best result: 2); Le Mans races: 2; pole positions: 0; fastest laps: 0.

Allan McNish (GB): *Dec 29, 1969 in Dumfries (GB); residence: Monaco (MC); married to Kelly, one son (Finlay), one daughter (Charlotte Amelie); height: 1.65 m; weight: 60 kg; Audi driver since 2000; Le Mans victories: 2; Le Mans races: 11; pole positions: 1; fastest laps: 2.

Mike Rockenfeller (D): *Oct 31, 1983 in Neuwied (D); residence: Altnau (CH); single; height 1.75 m; weight 67 kg; Audi driver since 2007; Le Mans victories: 1; Le Mans races: 6; pole positions: 0; fastest laps: 0.

Benoît Tréluyer (F): *Dec 7, 1976 in Alençon (F); residence: Gordes (F); married to Melanie, 1 son (Jules); height 1.78 m; weight 68 kg; Audi driver since 2010; Le Mans victories: 0 (best result: 2); Le Mans races: 6; pole positions: 0; fastest laps: 0.



All winners of the Le Mans 24 Hours (since 2000)

2000 Biela/Kristensen/Pirro (Audi)

2001 Biela/Kristensen/Pirro (Audi)

2002 Biela/Kristensen/Pirro (Audi)

2003 Capello/Kristensen/Smith (Bentley)

2004 Ara/Capello/Kristensen (Audi)

2005 Kristensen/Lehto/Werner (Audi)

2006 Biela/Pirro/Werner (Audi)

2007 Biela/Pirro/Werner (Audi)

2008 Capello/Kristensen/McNish (Audi)

2009 Brabham/Gené/Wurz (Peugeot)

2010 Bernhard/Dumas/Rockenfeller (Audi)

Track info

Track length: 13.629 km

Race distance: 24 hours

Qualifying record set on this track: Stéphane Sarrazin (Peugeot), June 11, 2008, 3m 18.513s (247.16 km/h)

Race record set on this track: Loïc Duval (Peugeot), June 13, 2010, 3m 19.074s (246.463 km/h)

Pole position 2010: Sébastien Bourdais (Peugeot), June 09, 2010, 3m 19.711s (245.677 km/h)

Fastest lap 2010: Loïc Duval (Peugeot), June 13, 2010, 3m 19.074s (246.463 km/h)

Romain Dumas about Le Mans: "Le Mans with its mix of country roads and race track is a very special circuit. The long straights are characteristic features of this track. They demand a car with extreme top speed. In addition, there are very fast turns like Indianapolis where downforce is crucial. So, the set-up is always a compromise. As far as I'm concerned, to be successful on this track you need a car that's easy to drive and has very good balance. On a track that has a length of more than 13 kilometers there are many opportunities for overtaking such as in front of the two chicanes on the Hunaudières straight. While heading for the Porsche turns you can pass a few rivals as well. These turns are the key places for me: It's the most difficult section on the whole track."

ILMC LMP1 manufacturers standings after 2 of 7 rounds:

1 Peugeot 55 points; 2 Audi, 38.

ILMC LMP1 team standings after 2 of 7 rounds:

1 Peugeot Sport Total, 27 points; 2 Audi Sport Team Joest, 19; 3 Team ORECA Matmut, 18 points, 4 Rebellion Racing, 12.

The schedule at Le Mans

Sunday, June 5

14:30 – 19:00 Technical and administrative scrutineering

Monday, June 6

09:30 – 17:30 Technical and administrative scrutineering
(Audi Sport Team Joest 16:20 – 17:10)

Tuesday, June 7

17:00 Autograph session

Wednesday, June 8

16:00–20:00 Free practice
22:00–24:00 Qualifying

Thursday, June 9

10:00 ACO press conference
19:00–21:00 Qualifying
22:00–24:00 Qualifying

Friday, June 10

10:00–20:00 Pitwalk
14:00 Audi press conference
18:00–20:00 Drivers parade

Saturday, June 11

09:00–09:4 Warm-up
14:22 Beginning of starting procedure
15:00 Start

Sunday, June 12

15:00 Finish
approx. 15:30 ACO press conference



Note to editors:

The Audi press conference will be held at the Audi Racing Arena at the Parc du Raccordement at 2 p.m. on Friday, June 10. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 2 and 3 p.m., respectively, the Audi drivers and officials from Audi Sport and Audi Sport Team Joest will be available for interviews at a “Meet the Audi Team” event at the Audi Team & Media Hospitality in the paddock. A PDF version of the Audi-MediaInfo Booklet on Audi’s sports prototype commitment and extensive Audi R18 TDI footage is available on the internet for downloading at www.audi-motorsport.info. In addition, the “Audi Sport” iPhone app will keep you up to speed in mobile mode.

The Audi Group sold around 1,092,400 cars of the Audi brand in 2010. The Company posted revenue of €35.4 billion and an operating profit of €3.3 billion in 2010. 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 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 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 newly established Audi Environmental Foundation.