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Audi aims to shine around the Nordschleife

- **Four Audi R8 LMS at the 24 hour race at the Nürburgring**
- **High-caliber driver squad with Ekström, Scheider, Fässler & Co.**
- **ultra-lightweight and new safety features in GT3 sportscar**

Ingolstadt, June 18, 2011 – Audi sets its sights on overall victory in yet another endurance classic only two weeks after the tenth 24 Hours of Le Mans victory: the Audi Sport Teams Abt Sportsline and Phoenix, known from the DTM, will compete with four Audi R8 LMS in the 24-hour race around the famous Nürburgring-Nordschleife on June 25/26.

Audi supplies, through its sporting subsidiary quattro GmbH, the official cars since 2002 for the popular event in the Eifel which attracts more than 200,000 spectators every year. However, only once Audi has sent a factory squad into the “Green Hell”: In 2004 Audi competed with two modified DTM cars based on the Abt-Audi TT-R which finished fourth and eighth. In 2011 the team around Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich makes a second attempt with the Audi R8 LMS.

The fascinating GT3 sportscar is the first race car of the brand with the Four Rings that was specifically developed for customer racing and which is now fielded successfully by customer teams throughout the world. The R8 LMS powered by a near standard production V10 engine has already claimed 83 wins. More wins are added almost every weekend – at the beginning of 2011 this included victory in the 12-hour race at Bathurst in Australia.

The R8 LMS has already proved its qualities around the world’s toughest, and at 25.378 kilometers, the world’s longest track: the customer car has recorded two overall victories in the VLN endurance championship at the Nürburgring to date – most recently 14 days before the 24-hour race in its final test race.

Its record in the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring is also impressive: with factory support from Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm in 2009 and 2010 the ABT Sportsline and Phoenix Racing teams each took victory in the SP9 class for GT3 cars. In 2009



Christian Abt, Jean-François Hemroulle, Pierre Kaffer and Lucas Luhr took second place overall on the R8 LMS sports car's debut 24-hour race. Marc Bronzel, Luca Ludwig, Dennis Rostek and Markus Winkelhock raised a few eyebrows with their third position overall last year.

The goals are now set considerably higher: against the strongest of competition with cars from the brands BMW, Ferrari, Lamborghini, Mercedes-Benz, Porsche and Volkswagen, Audi aims to win the 39th running of the endurance classic and in doing so have its name etched for the first time on the winner's trophy and promote both the Audi R8 in general and the Audi R8 LMS specifically.

To achieve this ambitious goal nothing has been left to chance over the last few months. Various details of the R8 LMS were improved with a view to the Nordschleife races. In addition to pure performance the greatest attention was placed on reliability, which was checked in two 30-hour tests. To this end Audi used the tests scheduled for the Le Mans winning Audi R18 TDI in order to complete the endurance runs simultaneously.

This is not the only parallel between the Le Mans winning car and the R8 LMS: just like at Le Mans the Audi GT3 sportscar runs on Michelin tires in the Eifel. And exactly like at Le Mans, ultra-lightweight design and construction, an area of core expertise for AUDI AG, also plays an important role at the Nürburgring-Nordschleife. The Audi R8 LMS has a particularly light and strong aluminum chassis in Audi Space Frame (ASF) technology and a bodywork partly made from carbon fiber.

Audi sets standards in safety

During the GT3 sportscar's concept and design stage Audi already attached great value to maximum safety. The unique safety concept of the Audi R8 LMS with the fully functional standard Audi Space Frame crash structures including the side-impact protection, the sophisticated steel roll-cage and the 'splash-free' refueling system were complemented by another aspect in 2011.

Audi designed an innovative seat system to comply with the latest FIA regulations. It is the follow-up model to the seat system previously manufactured by suppliers. A modular manufacturing concept facilitates manufacture with far greater possibilities for individualization. The conventional seat shells of specialist suppliers were previously designed to a standard width; Audi can now offer and manufacture different seat widths. As a result, internationally active drivers can now make a selection optimized to suit their needs.



The seat is manufactured entirely from carbon-fiber, has a dual shell construction and therefore complies with the most demanding load cases. At the same time the already known longitudinal adjustability of the seat remains. Teams with drivers of differing stature can therefore achieve an ideal and safe seating position for each driver without losing time during driver changes. As a result, drivers of the Audi R8 LMS enjoy an advantage over the competition relying on seat box systems without longitudinal adjustment. Since the installation height of the seat allows the driver position to be lowered by around 60 mm the overall center of gravity also benefits from the new solution. This new seat system will be available in the future to all Audi Sport customer teams.

High-caliber driver squad

The driver squad, which Audi assembles for the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring, could hardly be more high-caliber. DTM stars like Mattias Ekström and Timo Scheider share driving duties with Le Mans winners like Marcel Fässler and Marco Werner and acknowledged Nordschleife specialists like Marc Basseng or Frank Stippler. Mike Rockenfeller, who is still recovering from the aftereffects of his severe accident during the 24 Hours of Le Mans, will not participate.

Rockenfeller will cheer on his Audi team mates from home where he will follow the event on television. As last year, SPORT1 plans comprehensive live coverage from Germany's largest motorsport event. Practice at the Nürburgring begins on Thursday. The race starts on Saturday, June 25 and 4:00 p.m.

Comments before the Nürburgring 24 Hours

Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "I assume that it will be just as close at the Nürburgring as it was at Le Mans. At least five different types of car can probably fight for overall victory. At the Nürburgring it will more than likely be down to finding a good combination of fast lap times and calculable risk. Just like at Le Mans it will be crucial to drive through the 24 hours without a technical problem; otherwise you won't have a chance of winning. Of course we'll only see during the race how the balance of performance of the various cars will work."

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Team Boss Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline): "The 24 hours is a real highlight. We still have a score to settle there, namely to win the race. We've already finished second overall on several occasions and we've also already won the GT3 class, but overall victory is still missing. We are well prepared and will of course

attempt to bring the R8 LMS right to the front. The team is fully motivated and has worked hard for this event between the DTM races.”

Ernst Moser (Team Boss Audi Sport Team Phoenix): “To contest a 24-hour race right on your doorstep is obviously our highlight. At the same time it’s also the biggest event of the year for us. Phoenix Racing was always a supporter of 24-hour races – the entire team is behind the event. It’s now an Audi factory backed race for the first time. We are extremely well positioned with our driver pairings and had a good dress rehearsal at the fourth VLN race. The drivers are very evenly matched, which is extremely important. They were able to collect enough experience in traffic around the track. The car also ran perfectly. We are well sorted for the 24-hour race. With this car, these drivers and our experience we have every chance of winning the race.”

Marc Basseng (32/D), Audi R8 LMS #14 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix)

- Was third four years ago with Frank Stippler and Marc Hennerici
- Celebrated overall victory with the Audi R8 LMS at the 12 hours Bathurst in February
- Currently lies second in the FIA GT1 World Championship
- Has already celebrated 21 endurance race victories on the Nordschleife

“It’s fantastic and I’m proud to be able to compete for the second time this year in such a big endurance race with the Audi R8 LMS. I’m particularly pleased that our car also has a Le Mans winner at the wheel. We were unlucky with our retirement in 2010. The goal is to get through without making any mistakes – only then do we have a chance of winning. We have the best starting point with Audi Sport Team Phoenix: it has already won the race twice and from the human and engineering sides is absolutely top for me. I’m delighted to be racing for a third time for this team.”

Marcel Fässler (35/CH), Audi R8 LMS #14 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix)

- Celebrated the greatest triumph of his career with Audi at Le Mans a few days ago
- Competes in three 24-hour races this year for Audi

“It’s the third time that we compete with the Audi R8 LMS around the Nordschleife. I really want to finally finish on the podium at this race. It’s clear that our target is to get a victory for Audi. We have four factory cars with strong driver teams on the grid – two with Phoenix and two with Abt. I believe we have a good chance.”

Frank Stippler (36/D), Audi R8 LMS #15 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix)

- Is part of the Audi R8 LMS driver line-up at the 24-hours Nürburgring since 2009

- Scored his best result to date four years ago with third place in the Eifel marathon

“I start for the third time in succession at my home event with the Audi R8 LMS. The car is better than ever before. The rivals and the competition will, however, also probably be tougher than ever before. That’s why you have to be very careful about making predictions. Winning the VLN race two weeks before the 24-hour race was an excellent warm-up for the Nordschleife. It’ll be intriguing to see how the race develops and which tactics we choose: should we rather drive conservatively? Or will it be a sprint? Whatever the case, the Audi R8 LMS has what it takes to master both tasks perfectly.”

Christopher Haase (23/D), Audi R8 LMS #15 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix)

- Has already won a European Championship title with the Audi R8 LMS
- Has been classified twice so far in the 24-hours Nürburgring

“We’ve prepared ourselves well for the 24-hours Nürburgring and we are very satisfied. I think that we have a good chance of fighting up the front with the big guns for victory. However, we are also expecting an extremely good field of runners, which makes it difficult to assess. The whole team is looking forward to the biggest motorsport event in Germany.”

Marc Hennerici (29/D), Audi R8 LMS #15 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix)

- Was already a Phoenix squad member last year in the Audi R8 LMS
- Finished on the podium four years ago at this 24-hour race

“Being born in Mayen the 24-hours Nürburgring is obviously the home race. I competed every year since I was 19 years old. I now compete for the ninth consecutive time. Before this I used to come to the race to spectate with my father, since I was six years old – so since 1988. I’m delighted about the fantastic opportunity to be able to fight for Audi with team Phoenix for a top result. We want to be at the front, but you can’t force this. The Audi R8 LMS is better than ever before and the short distance to Phoenix is also an advantage. Everything fits together and this must now link seamlessly with each other in the race. I’m motivated to score a better result than ever before in the Eifel.”

Markus Winkelhock (31/D), Audi R8 LMS #15 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix)

- Finished on the podium first time out last year as ‘Rookie’ and, in doing so, won the GT3 Class in an Audi R8 LMS
- Currently lies second in the FIA GT1 World Championship

“I come to the Eifel with significantly more experience than last year. I was actually at this race for the first time ever in 2010. The spectators who camp for a week, the carnival atmosphere, the smell of barbecues which wafts into the cars: there’s



nothing comparable. From the sporting side it'll be very demanding this time, the competition is strong this year. In the meantime I've picked up my pace through several sections of the track where I was still too slow twelve months ago. I aim to drive cleanly and without mistakes through the 24 hours with my three team mates Christopher Haase, Marc Hennerici and Frank Stippler with the aim of finishing on the podium again like last year. The most difficult aspect is to assess exactly how much risk to take when overtaking. You just lose too much time when you drive too cautiously."

Christian Abt (44/D), Audi R8 LMS #16 (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)

- Was second in the 24-hour race in 1997, 2003 and 2009
- The 2009 ADAC GT Masters Champion now aims to take the Nürburgring victory in the R8 LMS

"2011 is again a new chapter and a new race. After all the second places I also want to finally win this race. It's my great hope that we will be successful in this goal. We've prepared ourselves well in the endurance runs and VLN races. We've improved the car again compared to last year. It's prepared exceptionally well. There are many strong competitors but we face also a great, healthy internal competition between Abt and Phoenix. We've done everything. Now we just want to convert it and bring it home."

Mattias Ekström (32/S), Audi R8 LMS #16 (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)

- Has already started five times with an Audi for Abt
- Celebrated his first Nordschleife victory just a few days ago

"The 24 hours is a highlight of the year. We tried several times to win this race. This year Marco Werner, Timo Scheider, Christian Abt and I will do our utmost to drive a faultless race so we are ready to fight for victory at the end. It's difficult to judge just exactly where we stand from the lap time point of view, but also the performance over the entire distance. The competition also doesn't sleep. We hope and we wish that we win in the end."

Timo Scheider (32/D), Audi R8 LMS #16 (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)

- Celebrated overall victory in the Eifel in 2003
- The two-time DTM Champion also has excellent endurance qualities

"Since I've been at Audi I've had a new goal for this race: to take victory for the Four Rings. I've already won in smaller classes and in 2003 also took overall victory. I'm all the more motivated to claim the top step of the podium in the R8 LMS. The car has earned it. The commitment from AUDI AG, quattro GmbH and Abt, who competed privately for two years, is enormous. It would be fabulous to be in with a shot for the win. It's a very special race. For 24 hours there are many strategic

aspects to consider, not only pure speed over one lap. Marco, Mattias, Christian and I are one of the oldest Audi teams on the grid. It's incredible that I have to say this at just 32 years of age. This speaks for our experience. I hope that we can also make this pay off."

Marco Werner (45/D), Audi R8 LMS #16 (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)

- Contests the 24-hour race for the third time in succession with the Audi R8 LMS
- Put the Audi R8 LMS on pole position last year
- Scored his best Nürburgring result to date with second place in the Abt-Audi TT-R in 2003

"To drive the Audi R8 LMS around the Nordschleife is a great challenge. This car is demanding on this circuit. There's nothing better than driving this car on the Nordschleife. A lot connects me with this track. I drove my very first race here – oh yes, and also my first quick laps as a fourteen year old..... I love to come here. It's the world's most difficult and longest race track. I think Audi has a very high-caliber driver line-up and that team Abt is a very smooth operator. No question: We have a score to settle. Last year we set a lap record to take pole position. The potential is there. Our combination is capable of winning. Now we just need that little bit of luck."

Christer Jöns (23/D), Audi R8 LMS #17 (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)

- Contested the 24 hours Nürburgring for a customer team last year
- Finished fifth overall in the second best Audi R8 LMS

"The team is very well prepared. The fourth VLN race was our test as preparation for the 24-hour race. We sorted out quite a lot with the Audi engineers in the process. I'm intrigued to see how strong our rivals will be. I feel well prepared. We are well motivated to attack. It was great fun to drive the Audi R8 LMS on the Nordschleife again. Judging by the entry list it'll be the hardest race. In the race it'll be all about consistency."

Luca Ludwig (22/D), Audi R8 LMS #17 (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)

- Started last year for Phoenix and now for Abt Sportsline
- Took third place overall first time out in an Audi R8 LMS in the 24 hours Nürburgring

"I'm particularly looking forward to this year's 24 hour race because it's my first race for a factory. This professional cooperation promises a great deal. I can work with DTM drivers from whom I can certainly learn a lot. To work with Audi Sport and Abt Sportsline is also good reason to be excited. Everybody knows that the Nordschleife is the toughest and one of the most spectacular races in the world – and also one of the most dangerous. Last year showed that you don't win by speed but in fact by

consistency and durability. Thanks to this I finished third in 2010 in a Phoenix-Audi. Because of the competition it won't be enough to roll with the field this year. You'll have to be fast, but always keep in mind to look after the material."

Christopher Mies (22/D), Audi R8 LMS #17 (Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline)

- Started last year for Abt Sportsline in an Audi R8 LMS
- Scored his best result in the Eifel with fourth place in 2009
- Celebrated overall victory with the Audi R8 LMS at the 12 hours Bathurst in February

"We had a test race with the drivers for the 24-hour race. The cars ran superbly. For me the clear goal is to win the race. You need a fast car, a quick overall package and also plenty of luck along the way. Last year we saw that the top cars retired due to accidents. In such a huge field of cars luck is also required. If everything pans out, a place right at the front should be possible from my third start in this race. I started in a very small car and now drive a very fast one. I can judge both sides well as a result."

The Audi drivers in the 24 hours Nürburgring

Christian Abt (D): * 08.05.1967 in Kempten (D); residence: Kempten (D); married to Sandra, two daughters (Nina and Emily); height 1.74 m; weight: 75 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 0 (best result: 2nd)

Marc Basseng (D): * 12.12.1978 in Engelskirchen (D); residence: Neusalza (D); single; height: 1.83 m; weight: 76 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 0 (best result: 3rd)

Mattias Ekström (S): * 14.07.1978 in Falun (S); residence: Salenstein (CH); single (partner Heidi), one son (Mats); height: 1.83 m; weight: 79 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 0 (best result: 6th)

Marcel Fässler (CH): * 27.05.1976 in Einsiedeln (CH); residence: Gross (CH); married to Isabel, four daughters (Shana, Elin, Yael, Delia); height: 1.78 m; weight: 78 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 0 (best result: 4th)

Christopher Haase (D): * 26.09.1987 in Kulmbach (D); residence: Waging am See (D); single; height: 1.77 m; weight: 64 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 0 (best result: 24th)

Marc Hennerici (D): * 10.05.1982 in Mayen (D); residence: Bonn (D); single; height: 1.83 m; weight: 79 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 0 (best result: 3rd)

Christer Jöns (D): * 23.07.1987 in Wiesbaden (D); residence: Ingelheim am Rhein (D); single; height: 1.89 m; weight: 75 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 0 (best result: 5th)

Luca Ludwig (D): * 04.11.1988 in Bonn (D); residence: Bonn (D); single; height: 1.78 m; weight: 72 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 0 (best result: 3rd)

Christopher Mies (D): * 24.05.1989 in Velbert (D); residence: Heiligenhaus (D); single; height: 1.72 m; weight: 61 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 0 (best result: 4th)

Timo Scheider (D): * 10.11.1978 in Lahnstein (D); residence: Lochau (A); single (partner Jessica), one son (Loris); height: 1.78 m; weight: 74 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 1

Frank Stippler (D): * 09.04.1975 in Köln (D); residence: Bad Münstereifel (D); single; height: 1.89 m; weight: 77 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 0 (best result: 3rd)

Marco Werner (D): * 27.04.1966 in Dortmund (D); residence: Ermatingen (CH); married to Annett, one daughter (Janina); height: 1.75 m; weight: 66 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 0 (best result: 2nd)

Markus Winkelhock (D) * 13.06.1980 in Stuttgart (D); residence: Berglen-Steinach (D); single; height: 1.75 m; weight: 65 kg; 24 hour Nürburgring wins: 0 (best result: 3rd)

Every winner of the 24 hours Nürburgring (since 2000)

2000 Mayländer/Bartels/Alzen/Heger (Porsche)
2001 Zakowski/Bartels/Lamy (Chrysler)
2002 Zakowski/Lechner/Lamy (Chrysler)
2003 Reuter/Scheider/Tiemann/Strycek (Opel)
2004 D. Müller/J. Müller/Stuck/Lamy (BMW)
2005 Lamy/Said/D. Huisman/Priaulx (BMW)
2006 Luhr/Bernhard/Rockenfeller/Tiemann (Porsche)
2007 Bernhard/Lieb/Dumas/Tiemann (Porsche)
2008 Bernhard/Lieb/Dumas/Tiemann (Porsche)
2009 Bernhard/Lieb/Dumas/Tiemann (Porsche)
2010 J. Müller/Farfus/Alzen/Lamy (BMW)

Circuit information

Circuit length: 25.378 km

Race distance: 24 hours

Pole position 2010: Marco Werner (Audi), 14.05.10, 8m 24.753s (181.001 km/h)

Fastest lap 2010: Marc Lieb/Timo Bernhard/Romain Dumas/Marcel Tiemann
(Porsche), 15.05.10, 8m 28.587s (179.637 km/h)

Marc Basseng about the Nürburgring: "This circuit is unique. Of course it's about lap time, however, the Nordschleife offers much, much more. For example, the excellent sections to exploit the efficiency of the Audi R8 LMS. On downhill parts such as Wehrseifen, Breitscheid or Aremberg you can lift off earlier. As a result, you don't lose much time but the engine saves plenty of fuel. For the lap time the extremely quick sectors like Flugplatz, Schwedenkreuz, Metzgesfeld, Mutkurve, Pflanzgarten or Bergwerk are particularly important: if you are held up here you can quickly lose between five and seven seconds. For this reason the lap times between teams are difficult to compare: you never know who encountered which conditions on the 25 kilometers."

The Nürburgring schedule

Thursday, June 23

14:30–16:00 Free practice

19:30–23:30 Qualifying 1

Friday, June 24

16:55–18:55 Qualifying 2

Saturday, June 25

13:30–15:10 Grid formation

16:00 Start

Sunday, June 26

16:00 Finish



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.