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Audi R10 shows potential for first time

- **Last year's Sebring pole time beaten**
- **First outing in hot conditions for V12 TDI engine**
- **Interview with Ulrich Baretzky, Head of Engine Technology**

The new Audi R10 grabbed the headlines once again on second day of the American Le Mans Series' (ALMS) "Winter Test" in Sebring. Audi driver Dindo Capello gave the first glimpse of the new diesel sportscar's potential: With his fastest lap of 1m 48.816s, the Audi driver dipped under last year's pole position time by almost one second. Ulrich Baretzky, Head of Engine Technology at Audi Sport, talks about the 650 hp V12 TDI engine's course of development and the Audi R10 test at Sebring.

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What does the lap time set by Dindo Capello mean?
Ulrich Baretzky: "Not a great deal. It wasn't our target to set a competitive lap time at any cost here. For us it is a question of gathering data and to sort out the car. The time obviously shows that we are heading down the right path with the R10 concept. You have to take into account that this is only our third test with a completely new car. There's a long way to go before Le Mans, it's not just about doing one fast lap there, but reliability is of far more importance."

It would appear to be a surprise for many people that the V12 TDI engine in the R10 is not only very quiet, but that it produces absolutely no smoke…
Baretzky: "From the very beginning it was our target that our diesel was unrecognisable, in much the same way as our production cars, as a diesel – particularly not by a cloud of smoke, but in fact through its low noise level, by its low consumption and its performance. Our goal was to develop a low emission diesel engine and we chose to go without one or two horsepower for the benefit of smoke free running. We are also using new particle filters here at Sebring for the first time, which have proven to be extremely effective till now. My colleagues from the chassis side aren't quite as fond of them as they are actually fairly big. However, you come away with clean fingers even if you rub the tail pipe after 20 laps. This is exactly what we wanted to achieve. Our TDI engine is powerful and clean."

The V12 TDI engine powering the R10 already appears to be extremely reliable. Was this to be expected?
Baretzky: “Nothing can be taken for granted. The R10 project is very ambitious, particularly as we have broken completely new ground, there were a lot of unanswered questions and there still are. In contrast to the development of the R8 we had the added advantage that we had gathered experience on the dynamometer, which we didn’t posses seven years ago. Here at the track, we can concentrate on things that could not be simulated on the dynamometer – including bumpy circuits and heat.”

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The R10 was tested under very hot conditions at Sebring for the first time. What were the results?
Baretzky: “There were quite a few surprises – however, all mainly of a positive nature. The cooler configuration and the entire diesel fuel-system number among the things that can not be simulated on the test bench. You can’t simulate an engine cover or a headwind, a pit lane or the track temperature. You simply can’t simulate everything under a laboratory environment. You also need the track tests.”

Problems arose in Sebring which had previously not been encountered at the two European tests.
Baretzky: “That’s exactly why we are here. We want to sort out the teething problems, and the Sebring circuit is perfectly suited for this. I would have been worried if nothing had happened. The earlier we find the weak points the sooner we can solve them. After all we don’t want a trouble free run during testing, but in fact during the race in Le Mans.”

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Photographs of the new Audi R10 test at Sebring can be found in the Internet at: www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation required)