

Le Mans, 4 June 2006

Motorsport

Audi R10 TDI makes strong impression

- **Successful Le Mans dress rehearsal for new diesel sportscar**
- **Dindo Capello second fastest at test day**
- **“Final Countdown” for the race on 17/18 June**

The Audi R10 TDI made a strong impression on its first laps on the “Circuit des 24 Heures” at Le Mans. All six Audi factory drivers were enthused about the new diesel sportscar at the end of the official test day. Italian Dindo Capello set the second fastest time in 3m 32.090 at the wheel of the number 7 Audi R10 TDI. Frank Biela completed the Le Mans dress rehearsal in the number 8 sister car in fourth position (3m 33.160s).

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Audi Sport Team Joest entirely concentrated on the new sport-prototype’s fine-tuning for the race on 17/18 June as the test day offers the only possibility to test and collect important data on the 13.650km Le Mans circuit. Audi was leading the field for almost the entire day. Just shortly before the end of the practice, the Pescarolo team set a fastest time of 3m 30.195s.

For Audi Sport, more important was the fact that the two new R10 TDI sportscars ran almost trouble-free and completed 162 laps (2211 km). There were only two unscheduled pit-stops. A repair of the hydraulic system cost Frank Biela, Emanuele Pirro and Marco Werner some time in the morning session, while some shifting problems had to be cured on the R10 TDI of Dindo Capello, Tom Kristensen and Allan McNish.

With the official test day, the “final countdown” for the Le Mans 24 Hours has started. Qualifying will take place on Wednesday and Thursday (14/15 June). The start of the race is scheduled for Saturday (17 June), 1700 hrs. The race will be covered “live” and in full length by various TV stations world-wide.

Quotes after the test day at Le Mans

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “That was a positive test day for us. We had a huge programme for both cars and we managed to work through all points without any trouble. We are satisfied with the performance and with everything we have achieved during this day.”

Frank Biela (Audi R10 TDI #8): “We solved a lot of things during the latest tests so that we came to Le Mans with a well prepared car. I had a good balance with race tyres this afternoon and so I’m satisfied with the debut of the R10 TDI at Le Mans.”

Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #7): “I’m happy with our car today. First we did quite a lot of laps with the same set of tyres, but still the grip was very good at the end. Also with the race tyres the setup was perfect in the afternoon. It always depends also on the traffic on the circuit, who sets the fastest lap at Le Mans.”

Tom Kristensen (Audi R10 TDI #7): “I’m really impressed to be here at Le Mans with the Audi R10 TDI for the very first time. What comes to my mind first is going through the Porsche corners in fourth gear and you don’t hear the sound of the diesel engine at the back. That was a completely new experience for me. The balance of the car was immediately very good. We may not be the fastest on the straights but we have very good handling and for sure we have good fuel economy. We are well aware of the speed of our competitors but I’m sure we will have a strong race with our Audi R10 TDI.”

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #7): “This circuit is the natural home of the Audi R10 TDI. This car was designed with the Le Mans 24-hour race in mind. My feelings about today are very positive. In terms of performance we are closer to our competitors as we have been at the same time one year ago. And also in terms of the balance and the tyres we are already doing the fine tuning. So as far as car number seven is concerned, we are ready for the race.”

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #8): “I was looking forward to driving the Audi R10 TDI at Le Mans for a long time. And our car didn’t disappoint me because it’s really a pleasure to drive it. I felt comfortable and could push right from the beginning. This day was a learning day for us and it was a very good one.”

Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #8): “You feel that the Audi R10 TDI has been made for the race at Le Mans because it is even nicer to drive than on some tracks we’ve been testing before. Our lap times were quite okay, although they could have been better without traffic. Of course we still have to fix some details but this we will easily manage during the race week.”

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest): “We had some small issues today which luckily did not prevent us from completing the whole test programme we had scheduled. I’m very happy that we now know everything we wanted to know, as we had a lot of things on our list. The speed is good, but it’s even more important that all six drivers are happy with the car. We expected the competition to be strong, which has been proved today. We are looking forward to a hot race.”

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Test day results

- 1 Helary/Montagny (Pescarolo-Judd) 3m 30.195s
- 2 Capello/Kristensen/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) 3m 32.090s
- 3 Bouchut/Collard/Comas (Pescarolo-Judd) 3m 32.205s
- 4 Biela/Pirro/Werner (Audi R10 TDI) 3m 33.160s
- 5 Gounon/Kurosawa/Nakano (Courage-Mugen) 3m 33.511s
- 6 Lammers/Yoong (Dome-Mugen) 3m 35.209s

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www.audi-motorsport.info (Accreditation necessary)