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Audi R10 TDI sets best time at Le Castellet

- **Audi Sport Team Joest dominates test day of Le Mans Series**
- **Day's best time for Allan McNish**
- **Both Audi R10 TDI cars at the front of the field**

Ingolstadt/Le Castellet – Audi Sport Team Joest clearly set the pace at the official tests of the Le Mans Series (LMS) at Le Castellet (Southern France). At the end of the first test day both Audi R10 TDI cars had a commanding lead in the sportscar field. The fastest time was set by Allan McNish. The Scot was the only driver on Sunday to break the sound barrier of 1.40 minutes.

For Audi Sport Team Joest, the test at Le Castellet served as the roll-out for the racing cars fielded in the Le Mans Series that starts with the 1,000-kilometre race at Barcelona (Spain) on 6 April. The two newly prepared Audi R10 TDI cars reeled off a total of 162 laps (almost 1,000 kilometres) without any major problems. "The morning started off a bit slowly but in the afternoon and evening the drivers were very satisfied with the cars," said Ralf Jüttner, Technical Director of Audi Sport Team. "It was good to have the opportunity to extensively test the cars before the first race at Barcelona."

All four LMS drivers, Dindo Capello, Allan McNish, Alexandre Prémat and Mike Rockenfeller, participated in the test. With 1m 39.705s, McNish on soft tyres clearly set the day's best time. Prémat in the "sister car" set the quickest time on a slightly harder tyre compound with 1m 40.777s. The Frenchman was at the



wheel of an R10 TDI for the first time after more than six months and drove some additional laps at night in darkness.

All four Audi drivers completed different programmes and were obviously impressed with the 2008-spec Audi R10 TDI. For the 2008 season, the diesel-powered sportscar was subjected to further development in certain details including optimised aerodynamics, lower weight and a revised engine.

On Monday, Audi Sport Team Joest will not be testing any more at Le Castellet as the material for the 12-hour race at Sebring (USA) has to be delivered to the Frankfurt airport on Tuesday. At the American Le Mans Series season opener on 15 March two other newly prepared Audi R10 TDI cars will be used.

Quotes of the Audi drivers after the tests at Le Castellet

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #1): "Generally speaking, I'm delighted that competing in the LMS gives me the chance to contest a racing series in Europe again. The test today went well. We were able to work out a basic set-up with the new car. I was also quite happy with the new Michelin tyres."

Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #1): "This was a good test day which helped us to gain a better understanding of this year's car. We managed to complete our test schedule without any major problems. I'm happy, as well, to be racing in Europe again."

Alexandre Prémat (Audi R10 TDI #2): "I'd almost forgotten how much fun the Audi R10 TDI is. The speed of the car is incredible. It was great being able to drive the R10 TDI again because the last time I drove it was at Le Mans. Now I'm really looking forward to the season opener at Barcelona."

Mike Rockenfeller (Audi R10 TDI #2): "The 2008 Audi R10 TDI has a very good balance, I felt comfortable straight away. You can feel the changes made compared with last year. We tried out a few things today and are well prepared for the season. Our goal is to win the championship for Audi."



The quickest times on Sunday

1 Audi R10 TDI #1	1m 39.705s
2 Audi R10 TDI #2	1m 40.777s
3 Courage-Oreca-Judd #5	1m 42.631s
4 Creation-AIM #14	1m 43.285s
5 Pescarolo-Judd #16	1m 43.473s
6 Lola-Aston Martin #10	1m 43.598s

Photographs and information can be obtained at www.audi-motorsport.info