

**Communications Motorsport**

Jürgen Pippig

Telephone: +49 (0)841 89 34200

E-mail: [motorsport-media@audi.de](mailto:motorsport-media@audi.de)

[www.audi-motorsport.info](http://www.audi-motorsport.info)

Eva-Maria Veith

Telephone: +49 (0)841 89 33922

E-mail: [eva-maria.veith@audi.de](mailto:eva-maria.veith@audi.de)

## **Audi R18 TDI to compete in record market China**

- **Finale of the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup (ILMC) at Zhuhai**
- **Record result for Audi in the world's largest single market**
- **Grand appearance also for the Audi R8 LMS**

**Ingolstadt, November 4, 2011 – On November 13, at the close of a successful motorsport season, highlighted by the tenth triumph at the Le Mans 24 Hours and the title win in the DTM, Audi is contesting the 6-hour race at Zhuhai, China, the country that has meanwhile evolved into AUDI AG's largest sales market.**

As early as in the first week of October the brand with the four rings equaled the Chinese sales record from the entire year of 2010. In 2011, Audi expects sales to reach the level of more than 300,000 vehicles there for the first time. For Audi, the finale of the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup (ILMC) at Zhuhai is thus a fitting occasion to celebrate the Chinese record.

The brand's success in China is also rooted in motorsport. In 1985 and 1986, the legendary Audi quattro won the Hong Kong–Beijing Rally two consecutive times. Audi competed with the A4 DTM at Shanghai twice. And on the debut of the sports prototypes at Zhuhai last year the spectators were thrilled by the Audi R15 TDI.

Now the Chinese fans can look forward to the Audi R18 TDI, the vehicle that is arguably the world's most fascinating race car in terms of technology. It embodies the company's ultra-lightweight design technology and demonstrates downsizing at the highest level. Although the engine's cubic capacity was reduced from last year's 5.5 to 3.7 liters the R18 TDI is hardly slower than its predecessor. And it impressively proved that it is possible to win the Le Mans 24 Hours even with an ultra-compact diesel engine. In 2006, Audi was the first automobile manufacturer to win the Le Mans 24 Hours with a diesel-powered vehicle. Since June 2010 Audi has been the first brand to have entered its name on the winners' list of the world's most important endurance race with a V6 TDI engine. And the preparations for the

2012 season have long been in full swing at Audi Sport in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm.

But before the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup becomes the FIA World Endurance Championship next year, which upgrades the sports prototypes even further, Audi is making every effort to close its successful motorsport season at Zhuhai with a victory. There is no doubt about the Audi R18 TDI having the potential to do so. Most recently, though, it had been lacking a tiny bit of the necessary racing luck.

Yet the fans at Zhuhai will not only have the opportunity to experience the two LMP1 sports cars that will again be driven by Timo Bernhard (D)/Marcel Fässler (CH) and Tom Kristensen (DK)/Allan McNish (GB). The Audi R8 LMS, which has meanwhile become one of the world's most successful GT3 sports cars with a track record of over 100 victories, will make a grand appearance at the ILMC finale as well. A total of three R8 LMS, fielded by Asian Audi customer teams, will be on the grid. Audi Sport customer racing China is relying on Edoardo Mortara (I)/Darryl O'Young (HK)/Alexandre Imperatori (CH). Audi race experience China is competing with Jeffrey Lee (CN)/Florian Gruber (D). Driving duties of the R8 LMS from Hitotsuyama Racing are shared by Akihiro Tsuzuki (J)/Michael Kim (USA)/Carlo van Dam (NL). Their rival in the GTC class is the former Formula One World Champion Mika Häkkinen, among others.

Audi fans around the world will be able to watch the ILMC finale live on the internet on Audi.tv. The broadcast from Zhuhai will start at 11 a.m. local time (4 a.m. CET) on November 13 and can be accessed at <http://microsites.audi.com/lemans/>. Eurosport will broadcast the final stages of the race live from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. (CET).

#### **Topics of the weekend**

- Will Audi Sport Team Joest manage to repeat their Le Mans victory?
- Will Tom Kristensen and Allan McNish be able to end their string of misfortune?
- Will the Audi R8 LMS be able to repeat its 2010 victory in the GTC class?

#### **Quotes by the officials**

**Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** "The 6-hour race at Zhuhai marks the close of a long, tough, but very successful season for Audi Sport. We won the most important race of the year – the Le Mans 24 Hours – with the Audi R18 TDI, the Spa 24 Hours with the R8 LMS and the DTM with the A4. We still have some

unfinished business in the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup. That's why I'm wishing for a race with a fair sporting competition at the end of the season and a bit more fortune than we last had at Silverstone and Road Atlanta. It would be nice if we could close the year with a success in what has meanwhile become the world's largest single market for Audi."

**Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest):** "When we arrived at Zhuhai in 2010 everything was new to us. With the knowledge we gained last year many things will be easier. We know what to expect. And we're aiming to win the season finale after not having had any chance at Road Atlanta due to too much misfortune, aggravating situations and accidents. We were quick enough there and are hoping to be able to convert that into victory in China. Twelve months ago the Audi R15 TDI was fast at Zhuhai as well, even though it had not been designed for slow corners. The current R18 TDI is even better in tight corners than the R15 TDI. So good lap times should be possible. I'm expecting similarly close gaps as at all the races this year. If, on top of that, we've got that necessary bit of racing luck and fair play prevailing in the field, then I think we'll have good chances."

#### **Facts and quotes by the Audi drivers**

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

- Most recently, at Road Atlanta, started from the front row together with Marcel Fässler

"I've never driven at Zhuhai before and have never been to China in my career before either. That's why I prepared for the track with onboard camera footage. On location, you walk the track before you drive it the first time. As a professional, you're able to quickly implement the things you've learned in the cockpit. The many tight turns after the long straights will be rough on the brakes. But that also makes nice passes under braking possible. The fact that only 29 cars will be on the grid will help us after almost twice as many were in the field most recently. The risk of accidents thus clearly drops. Our lap times were absolutely competitive at the past two races but we often found ourselves in the wrong place at the wrong time. I'm hoping for better racing luck in China. It's nice that we're arriving as a strong squad. At Audi, we never give up and always support each other a lot."

**Marcel Fässler (35/CH), Audi R18 TDI #1 (Audi Sport Team Joest)**

- Took the lead after eight laps at Road Atlanta
- Is aiming for his second victory of the season in the R18 TDI after the Le Mans 24 Hours

“I’m already very much looking forward to competing at Zhuhai again. When the circuit was inaugurated in the nineteen-nineties we drove in the Formula Campus there. Rolled sod alongside the track that would get caught in the radiator and workmen with bamboo poles – that was definitely adventurous back in those days. Meanwhile the track has established itself on the international calendar. The last race I drove in China was in 2004, in the DTM, at Shanghai. It would be nice if we could be as competitive with the Audi R18 TDI at the ILMC finale as we were at Silverstone and Road Atlanta. At Silverstone we saw that the R18 TDI is very competitive even in slow corners. Zhuhai has several very slow corners. We are expecting strong competitors and I’m hoping for a fair and nice sporting decision at the end of the season.”

**Tom Kristensen (44/DK), Audi R18 TDI #2 (Audi Sport Team Joest)**

- The eight-time Le Mans winner just barely missed victory last year
- “I’m already looking forward to the last ILMC race in history. Next year the series will become a world championship. Last year I drove at Zhuhai for the first time. The track is narrow and has quick, longer straights and many very slow corners. The brakes have to work hard and good traction is important. The crowd was incredibly enthusiastic. I’m looking forward to seeing the fans again. As their interest in our sport keeps growing, so do their knowledge and enthusiasm. And China has meanwhile become the number one market for Audi in terms of deliveries. It’ll definitely be a very exciting race for us.”

**Allan McNish (41/GB), Audi R18 TDI #2 (Audi Sport Team Joest)**

- Finished the race at Zhuhai as the runner-up last year
- “While our rivals have decided the title among themselves I’ve got one goal left: to win the last race of the year. After Audi was the winner of the Le Mans 24 Hours I’d like to end what personally has been a rather frustrating year on a strong, positive note. The Audi R18 TDI has been updated since Le Mans and at Silverstone and Atlanta we saw that our pace was really good. We’ve always battled for victories but they were thwarted by incidents. In China I’m again expecting a thrilling battle between Peugeot and us, like last year. In 2010, a safety car cost us a lot of time and our rival also made a few doubtful moves to slow us. Zhuhai has some narrow corners whereas the R18 TDI tends to be designed more for fast turns like those at Le Mans. But maybe the weather will also be playing a crucial role.”

## **The Audi drivers at Zhuhai**

**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; ILMC races: 8; ILMC victories: 0; pole positions: 1; fastest laps: 0; best result at Zhuhai: –; victories at Zhuhai: –

**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; ILMC races: 6; ILMC victories: 1; pole positions: 0; fastest laps: 0; best result at Zhuhai: –; victories at Zhuhai: –

**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; ILMC races: 9; ILMC victories: 0; pole positions: 0; fastest laps: 0; best result at Zhuhai: 2; victories at Zhuhai: –

**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: 58 kg; Audi driver since 2000; ILMC races: 9; ILMC victories: 0; pole positions: 1; fastest laps: 0; best result at Zhuhai: 2; victories at Zhuhai: –

## **All winners of the ILMC race at Zhuhai (since 2010)**

2010 Franck Montagny/Stéphane Sarrazin (Peugeot)

## **Track info**

Track length: 4.319 km

Race duration: 6 hours

Pole position 2010: Stéphane Sarrazin (Peugeot), 1m 21.868s = 189.920 km/h  
(November 06, 2010)

Fastest lap 2010: Franck Montagny (Peugeot), 1m 22.296s = 188,933 km/h  
(November 07, 2010)

**Tom Kristensen about Zhuhai:** “Zhuhai is a friendly city, and it is much larger than you think. You travel there by ship via Hong Kong. The temperatures in November are perfect with a little humidity. The track is very tight and the circuit layout not exactly fluid. This is due to the slow corners at the end of the long straights. It’s also very hard on the brakes. You can take the fast corners 2 and 6 flat out. I like corners

10 and 14 the most. The turn 5 chicane is very aggressive and gives good feedback to the cockpit. The pit lane entry is the quickest one on the whole calendar. At Zhuhai it's about having very high-quality and durable brakes combined with good traction and acceleration. In a nutshell: I'm convinced that the Audi R18 TDI is the best solution ..."

**ILMC LMP1 manufacturers standings after 6 of 7 rounds:**

1 Peugeot, 182 points; 2 Audi, 108

**ILMC LMP1 team standings after 6 of 7 rounds:**

1 Peugeot Sport Total, 97 points; 2 Audi Sport Team Joest, 74; 3 Team Oreca Matmut, 47; 4 Rebellion Racing, 41; 5 Oak Racing, 25; 6 Aston Martin Racing, 15

**Schedule (local times)**

**Friday, November 11**

10:30–12:00 Free practice 1

15:00–16:00 Free practice 2

**Saturday, November 12**

10:15–11:15 Free practice 3

14:15–14:35 Qualifying (GT vehicles)

14:50–15:10 Qualifying (prototypes)

**Sunday, November 13**

08:00–08:20 Warm-up

11:00–17:00 Race

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.