

Ingolstadt, 11 March 2005

## Motorsport

### Audi R8 begins its farewell tour

- **Season opener at Sebring 12-hour race (USA)**
- **Audi works drivers strengthen Team ADT Champion Racing**
- **Jyske Bank and S line new partners**

The new sportscar season and Audi R8 farewell tour, which will be replaced by a new model next year, begins on Saturday 19 March with the 12-hour race at Sebring (USA). The most successful Le Mans prototype ever made its race debut exactly five years ago at Sebring. The Audi R8 remains unbeaten in the American endurance classic and has celebrated 52 wins in 62 sportscar races.

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Team ADT Champion Racing wants to continue this impressive winning streak with a driving squad that could hardly be of higher quality. With Frank Biela (Germany), Tom Kristensen (Denmark), Allan McNish (Great Britain), Emanuele Pirro (Italy) and Marco Werner (Germany), Audi loans the American team five of its most successful works drivers, who form a genuine "Dream Team" together with the Finn JJ Lehto. All six Audi drivers have won the 12-hour race at Sebring at least once. With his three overall victories Frank Biela actually tops the "all time winner list" and could become the first driver in history to score a fourth Sebring win.

At Sebring and also at the 24-hour race Le Mans, Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro receive support from DTM driver Allan McNish. JJ Lehto and Marco Werner start together with six-time Le Mans winner Tom Kristensen.

After taking the runners-up spot three times in succession, Team ADT Champion Racing, at home in Pompano Beach, Florida, targets its first win at its "home race" at Sebring and wants, in addition, to become the first American privateer team in history to win the 24 Hours of Le Mans (18/19 June). Dave Maraj's team receives support from two new partners in their quest: The Danish Jyske Bank, until now personal sponsor of Tom Kristensen, exploits the popularity of the American Le

Mans Series and the 24 Hours of Le Mans just as the quattro GmbH for their “S line” sport and tuning kits.

The 12-hour race at Sebring starts on Saturday 19 March at 10:45 a.m. local time. SPEED tv broadcasts the event live in the USA from 10:30 a.m. and Motors TV in Europe (also live). Qualifying is held on Thursday 17 March from 2:45 p.m. to 3:10 p.m. local time.

### Quotes before the race

**Tom Kristensen (Team ADT Champion Racing Audi R8 #1):** “I can’t imagine a better place to start the season. The first race of the year is always something very special, but Sebring is one of the genuine classics. It’s about time that Champion Racing finally wins this race. Obviously the same can be said about Le Mans. I will compete in both races for the team and will give everything. I drove in one ALMS race for Champion in 2002, which helped me then to win the title. Perhaps I can give something back to the team that competes in motorsport with so much enthusiasm and passion. I drove together with JJ in 1999. I drive with Marco for the first time – but I know just how quick he is in a sportscar.”

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**JJ Lehto (Team ADT Champion Racing Audi R8 #1):** “I have been with Champion Racing now for two years and we have been so close to winning in Sebring both of those years, but despite being the fastest car on the track, something unexpected has always happened which has robbed us of the top podium position. Hopefully this year with Tom, Marco and I we will be sufficiently strong to pull it off.”

**Marco Werner (Team ADT Champion Racing Audi R8 #1):** “The season kicks off with a highlight and a particularly hard one for us Europeans. We have to get adapted to a possible temperature difference of 35 degrees Celsius. Sebring is also always very strenuous because of the bumpy track. My main target this year is to win Le Mans. However, I would also like to win the ALMS for the third time in succession, and winning at Sebring we would be in a good position. It won’t be easy since we have a second R8 in the team. And if the fast Dyson-Lolas have sorted out their reliability problems they could be a real threat.”

**Frank Biela (Team ADT Champion Racing Audi R8 #2):** “Sebring is without doubt the highlight of the American Le Mans Series and is also rated very highly internationally. It is a very special event with a great atmosphere around the track. Obviously it would be fantastic to become the first driver to win the race four times. But first of all it’s important to set-up the car perfectly for the long race, and then we’ll see how things unfold. We were well sorted at the tests, but it will however be difficult since both cars in our team are very strong, and we should not underestimate the competitors.”

**Allan McNish (Team ADT Champion Racing Audi R8 #2):** “Last year, Sebring was my first race in the Audi R8 since 2000. Winning together with Frank Biela and Pierre Kaffer was the perfect way to return. In principle we have the same chances this time. However it will not only be a very tough race within the Audi team itself. I expect that we will have to pay more attention to the competition than last year since they have improved their cars and now use Michelin tyres just as we do.”

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**Emanuele Pirro (Team ADT Champion Racing Audi R8 #2):** “I can hardly wait for the season to start and that I can finally compete in a race with the Audi R8 again. We had a very good test in Sebring at the beginning of the year. I’ve just completed an intensive fitness training programme together with my team mates Allan and Frank. All three of us are in top form. The main goal this year is to win at Le Mans. But I’d also love to present the Champion team with the first home victory at Sebring.”

**Dave Maraj (Team Director Team ADT Champion Racing):** “We are really looking forward to seeing how the 2005 season develops and in particular the first race. We’ve finished second three-times in succession in Sebring. I have the feeling that with our two-car team and six of the world’s best drivers we finally have the chance to win this prestigious event.”

**Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** “Up till now the Audi R8 remains unbeaten in Sebring and this should also be the case in what is probably its last season. That’s why we have made five of our best works drivers, who all know how to win at Sebring, available for Team ADT Champion Racing. At the same time the team will use this race as preparation for the 24 Hours of Le Mans – a strategy that has often paid off in the previous years with a victory at Le Mans.”

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