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Audi R8 LMS defends title at Bathurst

- **Christopher Mies/Darryl O'Young celebrate second victory in Australia**
- **Christer Jöns and Phoenix Racing win on making their Bathurst debut**
- **Performances by Mark Eddy/Craig Lowndes/Warren Luff went unrewarded**

Ingolstadt/Bathurst, February 26, 2012 – The Audi R8 LMS remains “King of the Mountain” at Bathurst. On Australia’s most challenging race track the successful GT3 sports car from Audi Sport customer racing defended its title at the 12-hour race. Christer Jöns (D), Christopher Mies (D) and Darryl O’Young (HK) won the endurance classic at Mount Panorama in extremely difficult conditions. Rain, fog, several lead changes and numerous safety car periods repeatedly interrupted the young trio’s race rhythm. But in the end they won with a 1m 13s advantage.

Audi remains unbeaten at Bathurst: For the second time in succession, the R8 LMS prevailed in the most important GT endurance race on the fifth continent. Conditions were far more difficult than they had been a year ago. Varying intensities of rain and dense fog at times caused a number of spins, excursions and yellow periods. The first four hours of the race alone saw the three different vehicles take turns in leading the race. From the fourth hour onward, Phoenix Racing prevailed at the front. Both R8 LMS cars of the squad from Meuspath (Germany) fought a thrilling battle for the top position. Even a spin and an excursion into the gravel trap that temporarily relegated the black number “1” R8 LMS to third place could not prevent Jöns/Mies/O’Young from taking victory. On Saturday, the trio had already been the measure of all things by setting the fastest time in qualifying and capturing position one on the grid. Victory on Sunday completed a perfect weekend. The triumph at Bathurst marked as much as the 119th win in the three-year career of Audi’s successful customer race car.

The second Audi R8 LMS from Phoenix Racing was less fortunate. The Australian trio Warren Luff/Craig Lowndes/Mark Eddy had initially shown a strong performance, advancing to the front of the field after having started from fifth place. In the fourth and fifth hour of the race the number “2” R8 LMS was even the leading car. A



five-minute time penalty for a severed refueling hose though caused the white Audi to lose four laps at about the race's mid-point. Afterward, on lap 157, Mark Eddy lost control of his car in dense fog and heavy rain. He crashed into a concrete wall with the left side of the car on "The Dipper" track section. He was forced to retire with front and rear suspension damage. As early as on lap 60 the Audi R8 LMS of Team United Autosports had become victim to the treacherous conditions as well. Frank Yu from Hong Kong spun and damaged the frame of the vehicle on hitting a wall. Neither of the two drivers sustained any injuries.

Audi has now won four major endurance races within twelve months, having recorded two successes at the Bathurst 12 Hours and one victory each at the 24-hour races on the Belgian circuits at Spa and Zolder, plus GT3 class victory at the Nürburgring 24 Hours. This year, the 24-hour classics in the Eifel and the Ardennes are again on the R8 LMS' agenda. The coming weekend will also see the start of the first of numerous GT3 championships in the 2012 season in which Audi customer sport teams are represented. At Adelaide, Australia, Mark Eddy will be competing as the title defender on the first weekend in March. Together with his team-mate Warren Luff he is aiming to make up in the R8 LMS for what he unfortunately was unable to achieve at Bathurst – the leap onto the podium.

Quotes after the race

Romolo Liebchen (Head of Customer Sport quattro GmbH): "After this weekend we can be more than happy because we experienced a pretty rough day. We were fighting for twelve hours straight, from the beginning through to the end, and we did so in difficult overall conditions. We won but on the other hand two of the Audi cars did not finish due to accidents – including our strong Australian car. In the end, one R8 LMS made it, and our youngsters prevailed with a really cool showing. A tremendous performance! The cars were running without any problem from the first meter on. They'd been perfectly prepared at home and were perfectly fielded by Phoenix Racing. And it's nice for us to be able to beat our core competitors and to finish ahead of Mercedes and Ferrari. That does fill us with a bit of pride. The two 24-hour races at the Nürburgring and at Spa are the next big aims for the R8 LMS. In parallel, we'll soon be starting into about 20 championships worldwide where the R8 LMS will be fielded."

Ernst Moser (Team Director Phoenix Racing): "The balanced performance of the victorious driver trio was the secret of success. They were all very good because conditions at Bathurst were really difficult. The competition was lying in wait up to

the final lap. A big 'well done' to the drivers and to my squad. In terms of strategy we didn't have an advantage throughout, as some rivals repeatedly managed to make up ground in yellow periods. But we were always able to recover. We all love endurance races. After the victories at the Nürburgring and at Spa, our team's track record now shows a success at Bathurst as well. Our second car was in contention for victory too. Craig and Warren consistently remained without mistakes. Unfortunately, Mark reached the limit in rain. Heavily touching the wall after a small mistake is a really tough experience. Otherwise, the car would also have been at the very front in the end. They were leading the race some of the time. They are three tremendous guys. I'd really love to see them travel to Germany and drive an endurance race at the Nürburgring with us some day."

Christer Jöns (Audi Top Service R8 LMS #1)

"I can hardly believe it! I truly enjoyed watching the scenes at the end of the race on TV once more. This is my first victory in the Audi R8 LMS, and on my Bathurst debut of all times. Darryl (O'Young) safely drove the car to the finish line in the end. That was really a rough, challenging race with a lot of unknown quantities. The weather was unpredictable and the track conditions kept changing. And it was a true battle all the way up to the end."

Christopher Mies (Audi Top Service R8 LMS #1)

"This victory is fantastic because my race wasn't exactly easy. A Ferrari overtook us early on. Christer (Jöns) took over the car later and then I was driving in rain again. We were running far in front when my rear wheels locked when I was braking into the last turn. So I slipped into the gravel trap. We truly experienced some highs and lows. In the end, we won with a lead of a little over a minute. In rain we were five seconds faster some of the time than our sister car and the Mercedes that ultimately finished as the runner-up. We also made the quickest pit stops. At the end, I had tears in my eyes because this victory was the result of an ultra-tough battle in incredibly bad weather against strong rivals."

Darryl O'Young (Audi Top Service R8 LMS #1)

"The team was tremendous. The cooperation between quattro GmbH and Phoenix Racing was fantastic. As well as for Phoenix, Australia was new territory for Christer Jöns, who did a first-class job of driving. For me, it's been one of my toughest races due to the constantly changing conditions. There was a lot of hydroplaning and at times we had to drive on slicks in the rain. A fantastic showing by all. Many thanks from me to the whole squad."

Mark Eddy (Audi Finance R8 LMS #2)

“Working with Phoenix Racing was great fun. We were competitive throughout the weekend and the team did a really good job. In the race both Audi cars were running at the front some of the time but as the race progressed conditions became more difficult due to rain and fog. Unfortunately, I then had the accident on the mountain and we retired. I let a warning message on the cockpit display briefly distract me. Now I’m hoping for better luck next weekend when the Australian GT Championship opens at which I’m competing with my own R8 LMS.”

Craig Lowndes (Audi Finance R8 LMS #2)

“It was great having contested a race again in the Audi R8 LMS. Phoenix Racing is top-notch and gave us a very warm welcome. And the R8 LMS is simply a sensational car that is very pleasant to drive and that you don’t mind trusting. Up to the accident we had an outstanding weekend. The conditions were pretty difficult and it’s not easy anyway to be quick at Mount Panorama. Mark Eddy was simply struck by misfortune in the fog. I enjoyed driving again for Audi Sport customer racing. I hope this wasn’t the last run.”

Warren Luff (Audi Finance R8 LMS #2)

“Even though the weekend didn’t end the way we’d been hoping it would it was great driving with Phoenix Racing. Our speed during the first half of the race was good and we were already faster than at our lap record last year. The car was very quick and consistent. When the weather changed Mark (Eddy) unfortunately had an accident on the mountain. But that’s part of racing too. Mark and I are now looking forward to the next weekend. That’s when his title defense in the Australian GT Championship starts and I’ll be running together with him. Hopefully, we’ll be at the very front then in the Audi R8 LMS.”

Race results

- 1 Jöns/Mies/O’Young (Audi R8 LMS), 270 laps in 12h 03m 31.375s
- 2 Slade/Bleekemolen/Hackett/Curtis (Mercedes) + 1m 13.284s
- 3 Sun/Baird/Griffin (Ferrari) - 2 laps
- 4 Tinkler/Johnson/Richards (Porsche) - 16 laps
- 5 O’Donnell/Niall/McLennan (Porsche) - 26 laps
- 6 Alford/Leemhuis/Beechey (Porsche) - 33 laps
- 7 Pye/Barbour/Pither (Holden) - 39 laps
- 8 Thomlinson/Dippie/Maddren (Porsche) - 42 laps
- 9 Thomson/Klien/Harley (Lotus) - 43 laps
- 10 Newman/Lillie/Atkinson (Holden) - 48 laps



– End –

The Audi Group delivered around 1,302,650 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2011. From January through the end of September 2011 the Company posted revenue of €32.4 billion and an operating profit of €3.96 billion. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). The Audi Q7 is built in Bratislava (Slovakia). In July 2010, CKD production of the Audi Q5 was added to the existing Audi A4 and A6 manufacturing operations in Aurangabad (India). At the Brussels plant, production of the Audi A1 has been running since May 2010, while production of the new A1 Sportback began in 2012. The Audi Q3 has been built in Martorell (Spain) since June 2011. 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 63,000 people worldwide, including around 47,900 in Germany. Between 2012 and 2016 the brand with the four rings is planning to invest more than €13 billion – mainly in new products, human resources and the extension of production capacities – in order to sustain the Company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. Audi is currently expanding its site in Győr (Hungary) and will start production in Foshan (China) in late 2013. 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. Under the heading of "Audi balanced mobility," the Company is directing its activities toward a major goal – comprehensive CO₂-neutral mobility.