

## Communications Motorsport

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## Audi R8 LMS impresses at 24-hour debut

- **Basseng/Rockenfeller/Stippler lead race after 16 hours**
- **Two Audi R8 LMS cars still have chances for victory**
- **Ekström/Scheider/Werner struck by misfortune**

**Ingolstadt/Nürburg – From the outset, AUDI AG's new GT3 sports car is the car to be beaten at its maiden run in the 24-hour race on the Nürburgring. On Sunday morning, sixteen hours into the race, the three Germans Marc Basseng, Mike Rockenfeller and Frank Stippler in the Audi R8 LMS #99 of the Phoenix Racing team were running about two minutes in front of the Porsche that was victorious last year.**

At the beginning of the third hour, the Audi R8 LMS – car number 99 – had taken the lead and defended it throughout the night. Only during the scheduled refueling stops the Phoenix squad had to relinquish its top position temporarily. In the first 16 hours the new GT3 sports car, which is subjected to an ultimate endurance test at the 24-hour race, ran without any major technical problems.

After sixteen hours, Christian Abt, Jean-François Hemroulle, Pierre Kaffer and Lucas Luhr, as well, were still on the same lap as the front runners. At eight in the morning, the black Audi R8 LMS #97 of the ABT Sportsline team was in fourth position and thus had chances for overall victory too.

Frank Biela, Marcel Fässler, Emanuele Pirro and Hans-Joachim Stuck made up ground again, back into the top ten, in their Audi R8 LMS on Sunday morning after losing about 30 minutes around 4 am due to a leaking radiator which had to be exchanged. In the starting phase, a three-minute stop-and-go penalty had



been imposed on the Audi R8 LMS #98 of Team Phoenix Racing for passing under yellow flags.

Mattias Ekström, Timo Scheider and Marco Werner were struck by misfortune in a major way. Their Audi R8 LMS #100 (Team ABT Sportsline) stopped in the Flugplatz circuit sector as early as on the starting lap. A defective plug had caused a failure of the electronics system. From 166<sup>th</sup> place, Ekström/Scheider/Werner recovered into the top 50 before their Audi R8 LMS lost additional time on Sunday morning due to a problem with the fuel supply system. At 8 am they were already running in position 46 again.

The 24-hour race on the Nürburgring ends at 4 pm Sunday afternoon.

- Ends -

**Photographs and information available at [www.audi-motorsport.info](http://www.audi-motorsport.info)**

AUDI AG sold a total of 1,003,469 cars in 2008 and thus achieved its 13th consecutive record year. The Company posted new record figures with revenue of €34.2 billion and profit before tax of €3.2 billion. 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 and of the Audi A4 in early October 2008. The Company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include Automobili Lamborghini Holding S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese (Italy) and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Audi currently employs around 58,000 people worldwide, including 46,500 in Germany. The brand with the four rings invests around €2 billion each year in order to sustain the company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. Audi plans to significantly increase the number of models in its portfolio by 2015 to 42. The AUDI brand celebrates its 100th birthday in 2009. The company was founded by August Horch in Zwickau on July 16, 1909; he named it AUDI after the Latin translation of his surname ("hark!").