



## Press Information

Le Mans / Ingolstadt, 8 November 2003

### Audi R8 on pole position at Le Mans

At the 1000 kilometre race in Le Mans (France), the Audi R8 is again the car to beat. Tom Kristensen secured pole position for himself and team colleague Seiji Ara in the Audi R8, entered by Audi Sport Japan Team Goh. The race doubles as qualification for the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 2004 and pilot event for the new Le Mans Endurance Series (LMES).

Kristensen was quickest in the first of two 45-minute qualifying sessions held on Saturday. With his time of 1m 27.775s, he beat Jan Lammers in the Dome-Judd by three tenths into second place. The fastest lap set by the five time Le Mans winner was unbeatable in the afternoon's final qualifying session, the "Japanese" Audi R8 remaining at the head of the 35 car field as a result.

The 1000 kilometre race at Le Mans starts on Sunday at midday and finishes at nightfall after 240 laps or a maximum of six hours at around 6:00 p.m. Unlike the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the race will be held on the 4.180 kilometre long "Circuit Bugatti" and not on the 13.650 kilometre "Circuit des 24 Heures".

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### Quotes after qualifying

**Tom Kristensen (Audi Sport Japan Team Goh Audi R8 #5):** "We proved once more that the Audi R8 is the best open-top sportscar. As usual, qualifying on pole for an endurance race means only prestige. But I am very pleased how efficiently the team has worked. Seiji (Ara) and I are very happy with the car for the race. It is very cold. In qualifying we used the soft 'night' tyres from the 24-hour race, which will also be our race tyres. Of course we are the favourites. But there are so many cars on this narrow track that it will be a hard race."

**Seiji Ara (Audi Sport Japan Team Goh Audi R8 #5):** "It's great being able to work together with Tom Kristensen. He has got so much experience in sports cars. I hope we can win this race. The track is very narrow and twisty. It is difficult to pass. I will be very careful in the race and do my best."

**Kazumichi Goh (Team owner Audi Sport Japan Team Goh):** "I am very happy that we took the pole. Tom and Seiji did a great job. In qualifying we used our race set-up, so things look very good for the race. The other cars were also quick, but most of them used qualifying tyres. We'll see what happens tomorrow, but I am happy today."



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### The starting grid at Le Mans

- 1 Ara/Kristensen (Audi R8) 1m 27.775s
- 2 Lammers/Wallace (Dome-Judd) 1m 28.127s
- 3 Campbell-Walter/Kinch/Coronel (Lister) 1m 29.056s
- 4 Andrews/Keen/Lavaggi (Lola-Judd) 1m 29.102s
- 5 Newton/Erdos/Goodwin (MG Lola) 1m 29.533s
- 6 Sarrazin/Lagorce/Bourdais (Courage-Peugeot) 1m 29.925s
- 7 Field/Dayton/Connor (Lola-Judd) 1m 29.969s
- 8 Beretta/Saelens (Panoz) 1m 31.480s
- 9 Rusinov/Eyckmans/Muscioni (Courage-JPX) 1m 31.879s
- 10 Goddard/Short/Carway (Reynard) 1m 32.236s

Photographs and further information can be found in the Internet:

**[www.audi-sportpress.com](http://www.audi-sportpress.com)** (accreditation necessary)

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