



Press Information

11 March 2000

Audi R8: The fastest convertible on Miami Beach

Audi staged a spectacular event in America last night – not on a racetrack but on the famous Ocean Drive in Miami when the new Audi R8 was unveiled to the public. Audi works driver Allan McNish drove the sportscar along the glamour mile of Florida which was closed for the occasion by American Cops.

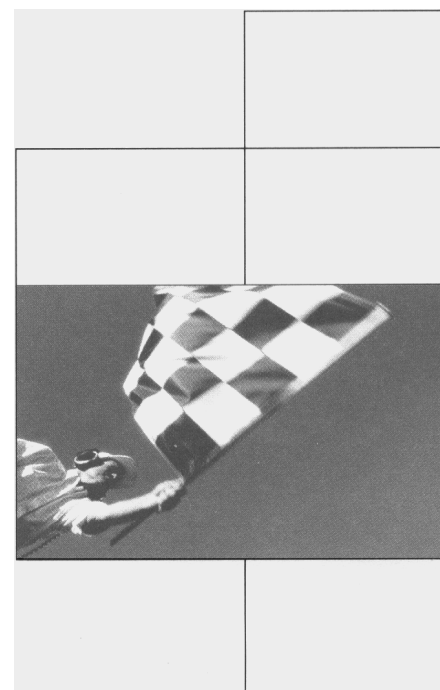
„Ladies and Gentlemen, I present to you the fastest convertible on Miami Beach“, said the Scotsman to some hundred onlookers. The improved Audi R8, which finished third on its Le Mans 24 Hour debut last year, will compete in the American Le Mans Series this year.

„For the first time we are doing an entire championship with the car but we do not know the circuits in America very well. Nevertheless we want to achieve a place in the top three“, said Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich, Head of Audi Sport, who went on to confirm the Audi R8's main improvements over last year's car.

„We concentrated on aerodynamics and especially reducing the frontal area,“ continued Dr. Ullrich. Furthermore the kerb weight has been reduced so that engineers can then make detail revisions to suit the different racetracks. The monocoque of the 610 bhp sportscar also changed offering the drivers greater protection due to a higher cockpit surround.

In readiness for the start of the season, the driver combinations have now been fixed. In the American Le Mans Series, Frank Biela lines up with Tom Kristensen and Emanuele Pirro while Michele Alboreto partners Rinaldo Capello and Allan McNish. At Le Mans, where three Audi R8s will race, the line-ups are Frank Biela / Tom Kristensen / Emanuele Pirro and Christian Abt / Michele Alboreto / Rinaldo Capello plus Laurent Aiello / Allan McNish / Stéphane Ortelli. This last combination won Le Mans in 1998. „That's why we wanted to keep this team“, added Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich.

Audi plans to enter the entire season of the American Le Mans Series. That includes nine races in North America plus races at Silverstone (Great Britain) and on the Nürburgring (Germany). There is also a visit „Down under“ when the season finishes on 31 December in Adelaide, Australia.





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Season starts off at Sebring (USA)

Following the extraordinary event on Ocean Drive, the Audi R8 and its team move directly to Sebring for the opening round of the American Le Mans (ALMS) Series on Saturday. The aims for the 12 Hour race are clear.

„Despite a lower speed, Sebring is a good final rehearsal for Le Mans. Car and drivers are pushed to the limit“, states Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich. All six drivers will be aiming for Championship points in the ALMS opener with a place on the rostrum the ultimate aim. „The important element at Sebring is to achieve a good race set up.“

Last year, the Audi R8R finished third and fifth at Sebring on its debut.

The Schedule at Sebring

Monday, 13 March

09.00 – 17.00

Testing

Tuesday, 14 March

09.00 – 17.00

Testing

Wednesday, 15 March

09.15 – 10.15

Free practice

12.45 – 13.45

Free practice

16.35 – 16.55

1st Qualifying

Thursday, 16 March

10.00 – 11.00

Free practice

14.40 – 15.00

2nd Qualifying

19.30 – 20.30

Night practice

Friday, 17 March

09.15 – 10.15

Free practice

Saturday, 18 March

08.00 – 08.20

Warm-Up

10.00 – 22.00

12 Hours of Sebring 2000

You will find updated pictures of the presentation, portraits of the drivers and many other photographs of the Audi R8 on the Internet:

www.audi-press.com

(Username: Audi, Password: MotoR8)

The password lasts 14 days. You have always the possibility to accredit yourself under that address.

