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## **Audi's Le Mans winning trio extends lead of the Championship standings in Brazil**

- **Marcel Fässler/André Lotterer/Benoît Tréluyer take second place**
- **Lucas di Grassi makes brilliant debut with Audi in home round**
- **Championship battle remains open three races before the end**

**Ingolstadt/São Paulo, September 15, 2012 – In the fifth round of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) at São Paulo, the Audi R18 had to admit defeat for the first time this season. The Le Mans winners Marcel Fässler/André Lotterer/Benoît Tréluyer in the Audi R18 e-tron quattro finished as the runners-up behind Toyota and in front of their team-mates Lucas di Grassi/Tom Kristensen/Allan McNish in the Audi R18 ultra. This ended an Audi string of sports car victories which had begun in March.**

With a 4.5-point advantage, the Le Mans winners traveled to the South American round and the trio are going home with 7.5 points more to their tally than their immediate rivals. At the fifth of the season's eight races, the two sportscar concepts and the driver teams of Audi fought a remarkable battle yet again. In the early phase, Allan McNish was initially running in second position ahead of Benoît Tréluyer. After nine laps, the Frenchman overtook the Scotsman. After Tom Kristensen had taken over the number "2" R18 ultra from McNish, he spun and clearly dropped behind his brand colleague Marcel Fässler but the eight-time Le Mans winner from Denmark started a remarkable recovery. Despite having to wait at the red light in the pit lane during a caution period and dropping behind the second safety car on the track Kristensen cut his deficit in half again before the end of his stint.

Lucas di Grassi took over the R18 ultra from the Dane and on his debut for Audi showed a commanding performance. He drove without making any mistakes whatsoever throughout the weekend and also did a very good job of handling the traffic that he was not used to. At the beginning of the final stint, he achieved the fastest race lap for Audi, thus clinching third place in his first endurance race together with his team-mates, with a gap of only 14 seconds to the sister car. The

podium result, in the end, meant 15 valuable points for Kristensen/McNish in the battle for the title. The gap between the two leading Audi driver teams at the top of the standings thus saw a minor increase, but with 78 points yet to be awarded in the three remaining races in Bahrain, Japan and China in the next six weeks, the title win in the drivers' championship remains completely open. Audi already secured an early win of the manufacturers' championship in the fourth round at Silverstone three weeks ago.\*

\* Subject to the official publication of the results by the FIA

### **Race results**

- 1 Wurz/Lapierre (Toyota) 247 laps
- 2 Fässler/Lotterer/Tréluyer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro) + 1m 00.778s
- 3 di Grassi/Kristensen/McNish (Audi R18 ultra) + 1m 14.679s
- 4 Prost/Jani (Lola-Toyota) – 5 laps
- 5 Belicchi/Primat (Lola-Toyota) – 7 laps
- 6 Leventis/Watts/Kane (HPD-Honda) – 7 laps
- 7 Potolicchio/Dalziel/Sarrazin (HPD-Honda) – 13 laps
- 8 Lahaye/Nicolet/Pla (Morgan-Nissan) –16 laps
- 9 Kaffer/Minassian/Perez Companc (Oreca-Nissan) – 17 laps
- 10 Brabham/Chandhok/Dumbreck (HPD-Honda) – 17 laps

– End –

The Audi Group delivered 1,302,659 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2011. In 2011, the Company posted revenue of €44.1 billion and an operating profit of €5.3 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 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 amongst others AUDI HUNGARIA MOTOR Kft. (Győr/Hungary), Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. (Sant'Agata Bolognese/Italy), AUDI BRUSSELS S.A./N.V. (Brussels/Belgium), quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm and the sports bike manufacturer Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. (Bologna/Italy). Audi currently employs around 65,000 people worldwide, including around 48,000 in Germany. Between 2012 and 2016 the brand with the four rings is planning to invest a total of €13 billion – mainly in new products and the extension of production capacities – in order to sustain the Company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" claim. Audi is currently expanding its site in Győr (Hungary) and will start production in Foshan (China) in late 2013 and in San José Chiapa (Mexico) in 2016.

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 Audi Environmental Foundation. Within the context of "Vorsprung durch Technik," which extends far beyond its products, the Company is directing its activities toward a major goal – comprehensive CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral mobility.