

**Communications Motorsport**

Daniel Schuster

Tel: +49 841 8938009

E-mail: [daniel2.schuster@audi.de](mailto:daniel2.schuster@audi.de)

[www.audi-motorsport.info](http://www.audi-motorsport.info)

## **Blancpain Endurance Series season finale full of highlights for Audi sport customer racing**

- **Audi R8 LMS ultra to battle for the title at the Nürburgring**
- **Four teams with seven GT3 race cars from Audi on the grid**
- **Skiing world champion Didier Cuche to celebrate Audi racing debut**

**Ingolstadt, September 16, 2014 – In GT racing, Audi will be celebrating the finale of the Blancpain Endurance Series on September 21 with several attractions. The 1,000-kilometer race on the Nürburgring will not only be about the decision between the four Audi drivers at the top of the standings and their immediate rivals. In the closing event of the season, the Swiss Ski World Cup winner Didier Cuche will also be celebrating his debut in the Audi R8 LMS ultra. At the same time, Audi will be looking at a four-digit number of racing commitments of the successful customer sport program in the Eifel.**

This will be a Swiss stunner: Super-G world champion Didier Cuche will be tackling his first car race in an Audi. The 40-year-old race rookie will be relying on the support of two compatriots, as Rahel Frey, who has been clinching success in motorsport with Audi since 2011, and Nico Müller, who is in his first year of racing in the DTM with Audi, are sharing the cockpit with the former professional ski racer from Le Pâquier. The prominent entrant is the most recent example of a number of newcomers receiving professional training by the Audi race experience. They complete a systematic educational program for race drivers, from license training through to actually competing in a race.

Whereas the racing action will be a thrilling Audi premiere for Cuche, Laurens Vanthoor is looking forward with eager anticipation to round five of the season as the leader of the standings. In July, the 23-year-old Belgian at the wheel of the Audi R8 LMS ultra won the Spa 24 Hours, the Blancpain Endurance Series season's pinnacle event, for the first time. Now he is fired up for clinching his first title in the series. On achieving his triumph in his home round, the driver of the Belgian Audi Club Team WRT gained a seven-point advantage. 33 points are awaiting the race winner at the Nürburgring. Breathing down Vanthoor's neck are three brand



colleagues from another Audi customer team: Grégory Guilvert/Stéphane Ortelli/Edward Sandström (F/MC/S) are competing for Saintéloc Racing from France, were the best Audi driver team in two rounds this season and are in the runner-up spot of the standings with an equal points score. Mathematically, no less than 16 drivers still have chances of taking the title. In the Pro Cup teams' classification, the Belgian Audi Club Team WRT is leading with an eleven-point advantage, while Saintéloc Racing is sharing second place with a competitor that has an equal number of points. For Audi, a success at the Nürburgring would mark the third title in this prestigious endurance series within the space of four years.

In total, the current entry list reflects seven Audi R8 LMS ultra cars. In addition to the three cars of the Belgian Audi Club Team WRT, the two race cars of Saintéloc Racing and the car of the Audi race experience, Team Parker Racing will be putting another R8 LMS ultra on the grid. The British team is currently in third place of the Gentlemen Trophy teams' classification.

But not only the number of entrants proves the popularity of the GT3 model with the four rings that delivers up to 560 hp. Since 2009, 120 units of the race car with the 5.2-liter V10 engine have been delivered and won 23 motorsport championships around the world to date. The race at the Nürburgring marks the 1,000th run in a major racing event in five years – in addition, there are numerous other competitions on regional and local levels in Australia, Asia, Europe and North America, as the R8 LMS is a popular model in club sport as well. The 1,000th run explains why the race car of the Audi race experience is designated as car number 1000.

“Following our victory in the Spa 24 Hours in July, the season finale featuring this large number of attractions will definitely be another season highlight in the Blancpain Endurance Series,” Romolo Liebchen, Head of Audi Sport customer racing, is certain. “We wish our customers and their drivers a lot of success. It would be fantastic to win the next title in this fiercely competitive and high-caliber Blancpain Endurance Series. The success of our customers underscores the status of the R8 LMS ultra, which has long become a living GT legend.”

### **The Audi teams at the Nürburgring**

#### **Belgian Audi Club Team WRT**

- #1 Marc Basseng/Cesar Ramos/Laurens Vanthoor (D/BR/B)
- #3 Christopher Mies/James Nash/Frank Stippler (D/GB/D)
- #4 Jean-Luc Blanchemain/Christian Kelders/Stéphane Richelmi (F/B/MC)

#### **Team Parker Racing**

- #22 Ian Loggie/Julian Westwood (GB/GB)



### **Saintéloc Racing**

#25 Claude-Yves Gosselin/Jean-Claude Lagniez/Marc Rostan (F/F/F)

#26 Grégory Guilvert/Stéphane Ortelli/Edward Sandström (F/MC/S)

### **Audi race experience**

#1000 Didier Cuche/Rahel Frey/Nico Müller (CH/CH/CH)

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The Audi Group delivered approximately 1,575,500 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2013. As one of the most successful models, the Audi A3 has been awarded the title of “World Car of the Year 2014“ by an international jury of journalists (combined fuel consumption in l/100 km: 7.1 – 3.2; combined CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in g/km: 165 – 85). In 2013, the company reported revenue of €49.9 billion and an operating profit of €5.03 billion. The company operates globally in more than 100 markets and has production facilities in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Brussels (Belgium), Bratislava (Slovakia), Martorell (Spain), Kaluga (Russia), Aurangabad (India), Changchun (China) and Jakarta (Indonesia). Since the end of 2013, the brand with the Four Rings has also been producing cars in Foshan (China). In 2015, Audi will start production in São José dos Pinhais (Brazil), followed by San José Chiapa (Mexico) in 2016. Wholly owned subsidiaries of AUDI AG include quattro GmbH (Neckarsulm), Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. (Sant’Agata Bolognese, Italy) and Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. (Bologna, Italy), the sports motorcycle manufacturer. The company currently employs approximately 76,000 people worldwide, thereof more than 53,400 in Germany. Total investment of around €22 billion is planned from 2014 to 2018 – primarily in new products and sustainable technologies. Audi is committed to its corporate responsibility and has anchored the principle of sustainability for its products and processes in its strategy. The long-term goal is CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral mobility.