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## **Le Mans from the French Audi drivers point of view**

- **Romain Dumas and Benoît Tréluyer about the “Circuit des 24 Heures”**
- **Part of 13.629 kilometer track on closed public roads**
- **Tempo 330 on the Hunaudières straights**

**Ingolstadt/Le Mans, June 9, 2011 – Romain Dumas and Benoît Tréluyer are the two French factory drivers in the Audi sportscar squad. Last year they finished first and second respectively at Le Mans and are ideally suited to introduce the track in their homeland in conversation.**

### **Courbe and Chicane Dunlop**

**Romain Dumas:** “Le Mans starts immediately with a great spectacle. The first corner after the start and finish is taken at full throttle. This is fifth gear and still 275 km/h in the Audi R18 TDI. However, full throttle doesn’t mean that this part is easy. You have to start to brake at the apex of the right hand corner to get the Dunlop Chicane right. You are often too fast here but the corner can only be taken at 100 km/h in second gear.”

**Benoît Tréluyer:** “It’s an advantage that this section is extremely well illuminated during the night. This makes braking much easier. You have to be careful because you approach at very high speed and the GT cars are much slower here. Under the bridge at full throttle and off we go again through the downhill right hander.”

### **Virage de la Chapelle**

**Benoît Tréluyer:** “At the bottom in the right kink ‘Virage de la Chapelle’ the Circuit Bugatti turns off to the right. During the 24-hour race we continue straight on.”

### **S du Tertre Rouge**

**Benoît Tréluyer:** “Then comes the ‘S’ du Tertre Rouge, an extremely fast corner. It’s bumpy under braking; the car gets a little nervous. Unfortunately, I learnt this rather painfully when I had a big accident here before I came to Audi.”

### **Virage du Tertre rouge**



**Romain Dumas:** “You drive through Virage du Tertre Rouge at 190 km/h which exits onto the long straight. This is why it’s very important to carry a lot of speed here, because it’s not so easy to make up what you lose at the start.”

**Benoît Tréluyer:** “In this fast right hand corner you have to place the car precisely and be aware of where the car is relative to the high outside curb. The under floor is very easily damaged on it.”

#### **Ligne droite des Hunaudières**

**Benoît Tréluyer:** “The straight is a public highway which is only closed for the 24-hour race. Our Audi R18 TDI reaches about 320 km/h before the first chicane. Then we have to find the right braking point.”

#### **Ralentisseur PlayStation**

**Romain Dumas:** “Absolutely. There are signs here which serve as reference points. During the day, however, I prefer to concentrate on the tarmac. It changes color at one point. This is the critical point.”

**Benoît Tréluyer:** “Even though you approach at a relatively high speed this right-left chicane is quite easy. You brake to 100 km/h and must shift down into second gear.”

#### **Ralentisseur Michelin**

**Benoît Tréluyer:** “On the next straight we exceed 300 km/h again before the second chicane. It’s more difficult than the first as the rear tends to step out of line here.”

**Romain Dumas:** “There are two reasons for this: The track surface changes and there are some big bumps. So, you really have to pay attention.”

#### **Courbe des Hunaudières**

**Benoît Tréluyer:** “In the final part of the Hunaudières Straight there is a very gentle right kink. We barely notice it as such because we are still accelerating hard from the previous chicane.”

#### **Virage de Mulsanne**

**Romain Dumas:** “Then we bear down on Mulsanne. While the highway continues straight on into a roundabout, we turn gently to the right beforehand on the way to the sharp Mulsanne corner. The braking zone starts exactly in this gentle right corner.”

**Benoît Tréluyer:** “The rear is really very light here under braking. Mulsanne corner is a part of the track that you recognize at night from a surprisingly long distance away; because of the smell: the typical aroma of spectators’ barbecues even wafts into the cockpit.”

### **Virage d'Indianapolis**

**Romain Dumas:** "We shift from second to sixth along the next straight. At this point the track is lined by trees on the left and right – this commands respect. We are travelling at over 300 km/h as we head towards the gentle right corner of Indianapolis. In this banked corner we brake hard for the 90 degree left. In my opinion it's one of the most impressive corner combinations on the entire circuit. You shouldn't take too many risks as the walls are very close to the track."

**Benoît Tréluyer:** "It's a really good place for the spectators because we approach at lightning speed. The cherry red glowing carbon brakes are also spectacular, especially at night."

### **Virage d'Arnage**

**Benoît Tréluyer:** "The crossroads at Arnage is the slowest point. The aerodynamics are also of little importance in this 90 degree right."

**Romain Dumas:** "Be careful at this crossing! It looks harmless and is taken at only 75 km/h, but a lot can happen. The tarmac is incredibly bad. When it rains there is no grip whatsoever. There is a tire wall immediately on the exit of the corner. It's better not to out brake yourself here."

### **Virage Porsche**

**Benoît Tréluyer:** "A very fast sequence starts with the right entering the Porsche corners. You turn off the public road onto the race track again. This sequence of corners is blind, however, because of the topography here. But you can smell the fans' barbecues again."

### **Virage du Pont**

**Romain Dumas:** "The Porsche Curve opens a sequence of corners in which a possible mistake simply leads to the next. The first left corner, Virage du Pont, follows, then immediately after the next one which runs into the S du Karting. The first is flat, for the second you have to lift lightly. Your line has to be absolutely perfect; you also need a particularly good car here."

**Benoît Tréluyer:** "Correct as this sector is unforgiving. Since the test day we know that the

Audi R18 TDI is very good through here

### **S du Karting**

**Benoît Tréluyer:** “The track continues with the S du Karting. It is extremely difficult. You have to be careful of the high curbs on the inside! The rear of every car is very light here. The hoards of spectators here are always very impressive.”

**Romain Dumas:** “You can only get through this long, sweeping right hand corner quickly with a clean, fluid driving style. A good car and strong driver make the difference here. You should stay well away from the curbs because the yellow concrete bananas could damage the car.”

### **S Ford**

**Benoît Tréluyer:** “At the end of a short straight there is a final chicane before we rejoin the Circuit Bugatti. You have to take care on the approach: You have to be careful on the approach: cars turning right into the pit lane obviously brake a little earlier. We can certainly bank on the applause of the Audi guests here. They watch us from the VIP Lounge directly alongside the track to the right.”

**Romain Dumas:** “You have to brake very hard from around 280 km/h for this left-right combination. You can run over the curbs a little, but not too much.”

### **Virage du Raccordement**

**Benoît Tréluyer:** “Afterwards there is a slow left-right combination leading back towards the start and finish. We need about three and a half minutes to complete the 13.629 kilometers. Pretty quick, don’t you think?”

The Audi Group sold around 1,092,400 cars of the Audi brand in 2010. The Company posted revenue of €35.4 billion and an operating profit of €3.3 billion in 2010. 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, of the Audi A4 in early October 2008 and of the Audi Q5 in July 2010. Production of the new Audi A1 has been running at the Brussels plant since May 2010. The Company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG’s wholly owned subsidiaries include AUDI HUNGARIA MOTOR Kft., Automobili Lamborghini Holding S.p.A. in Sant’Agata Bolognese (Italy) and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Audi currently employs around 60,000 people worldwide, including around 46,600 in Germany. Between 2011 and 2015 the brand with the four rings is planning to invest around €11 billion, mainly in new products, in order to sustain the Company’s technological lead embodied in its “Vorsprung durch Technik” slogan. By 2015, Audi plans to increase the number of models in its portfolio to 42.

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 newly established Audi Environmental Foundation.