

Le Mans, 17 June 2005

Motorsport

Quotes from the Audi Le Mans Press Conference

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “By competing at Le Mans, in the American Le Mans Series plus the Le Mans Endurance Series allows Audi to demonstrate its technology, like FSI, on a worldwide basis while DTM is important to our ‘local’ network in Germany. We are working towards keeping Audi involved in sports-prototype in the future. Long distance sportscar racing and DTM pose different problems for our engineers. News of Audi’s plans next year will be finalised in October or November as normal.”

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Rod Bymaster (Audi Sport North America): “The Le Mans 24 Hours is known worldwide so it’s a powerful marketing tool for Audi North America. ALMS is still growing – partly due to the flexibility in engine sizes and regulations.”

Dave Maraj (Team Director Team ADT Champion Racing): “To score an American team’s first victory here since 1967 would be an amazing achievement and for me personally, for one of my cars to win, would be a lifetime achievement. Earlier this year Champion Motors opened the biggest Audi Centre in the world in Florida. Audi’s image in North America has definitely been increased by the Audi R8.”

Frank Biela (Team ADT Champion Racing #2): “With more weight and less power, overtaking is a big problem this year – under braking is the only opportunity and that can be quite dangerous. Reliability and race strategy will be the key to our success.”

Allan McNish (Team ADT Champion Racing #2): “I didn’t expect to qualify third or to be only three seconds off the ‘pole’. With the change in regulations for our car, the start and opening laps are even more important than ever before. For me, getting back in to the Audi R8 is liking getting in to an armchair in my lounge – I feel at home.”

Emanuele Pirro (Team ADT Champion Racing #2): “The Audi R8 has done so much for sportscar racing – it deserves to sign-off from Le Mans with a fifth victory. My target, as always is to finish Le Mans, but since 1999 I have been lucky and finished on the podium in all of these races. For me this year, there is a bigger wave of interest in Le Mans.”

Tom Kristensen (Team ADT Champion Racing #3): “There has been lots of talk about me claiming a record seventh Le Mans victory but I have already been fortunate to win this race six times. A driver is just a small spoke in a big wheel. We focussed on the race – not for qualifying. A bird flew over me when I was making my hand print in the town centre and s**t on me – is that good luck?”

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JJ Lehto (Team ADT Champion Racing #3): “All three drivers focussed hard to get the car working to our liking in race trim. A single qualifying at Le Mans means nothing – it’s a 24 hour race. Compared to our ‘restricted’ Audi at Le Mans, our R8 in the ALMS is still a race car. Compared to most LM P1, some of the LM P2 and GT1 – and even the GT2 cars – overtaking is tough.”

Marco Werner (Team ADT Champion Racing #3): “Le Mans is a very special race – maybe the biggest in the world. To have already won the Daytona 24 Hours and the Sebring 12 Hours twice is good but victory here would be a dream. This is only my fourth Le Mans – I am still learning.”

Hugues de Chaunac (Team Director Audi PlayStation Team ORECA): “I have nothing but admiration for Audi and what they have done and achieved in sports car racing. Previously my drivers would only tell me what the Audi R8 looked like from the back – now we can do that to others. It was very satisfying to achieve fifth on the grid.”

Jean-Marc Gounon (Audi PlayStation Team ORECA #4): “Having driven other various sports-prototypes and now having been fortunate to drive an Audi R8, I can really feel and see the difference for myself. The car is so sophisticated and is so easy in terms of maintenance – and to drive. The hot weather could also help us compared to our rivals in terms of reliability.”

Franck Montagny (Audi PlayStation Team ORECA #4): “To go from driving the best Formula One car to driving the best sports-prototype is not difficult – in

fact I immediately felt at home. I had various problems in qualifying but starting fifth is not a problem. The Le Mans 24 Hours is one of the three biggest races in the world alongside the Indy 500 and Monaco Grand Prix.”

Stéphane Ortelli (Audi PlayStation Team ORECA #4): “I am very happy to come back to Le Mans driving a sports-prototype and of course to be with Audi again. I was with them when they made their Le Mans debut in 1999 and again in 2000 – it’s like going home to a big family. The Audi R8 is without question the best car I have ever driven at Le Mans.”

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