

Communications Motorsport

Jürgen Pippig

Telephone: +49 (0)841 89 34200

E-mail: motorsport-media@audi.de

www.audi-motorsport.info

Eva-Maria Veith

Telephone: +49 (0)841 89 33922

E-mail: eva-maria.veith@audi.de

Rows one and two for Audi at Imola

- **Audi R18 TDI on grid positions two and four**
- **Le Mans winner Marcel Fässler sets fastest time for Audi**
- **LMP1 sports car has been aerodynamically updated**

Ingolstadt/Imola, July 2011 – A good starting base for the Le Mans revenge: Audi is starting into the 6-hour race at Imola, the fourth round of the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup (ILMC), from positions two and four. Only three weeks after the triumph with the R18 TDI at the legendary 24-hour race at La Sarthe Le Mans winner Marcel Fässler (CH), who will be running together with Timo Bernhard (D) for the first time, set the second-fastest time of 1m 32.354s and secured a position on the front row of the grid.

As early as in the final third free practice session at the tradition-steeped circuit near Bologna Fässler had achieved the best time. In the sister car designated as #2, which is fielded by Audi Sport Team Joest as well, Allan McNish (GB) set the fourth-fastest time of 0.620 seconds behind Fässler. The Scotsman will thus start from the second row of the grid together with his team-mate Tom Kristensen (DK).

The innovative LMP1 sports car featuring Audi ultra-lightweight technology has been aerodynamically updated for the first meeting of the top sports car class after the Le Mans 24 Hours. The newest specification of the more than 540-hp prototype has higher downforce. The technical update seemed to have paid off for Audi. Right at the beginning of the 20-minute qualifying session the two R18 TDI cars went on a chase for times. In direct battle with rival Peugeot Marcel Fässler and Allan McNish first took the two front places twice but in the end had to let their competitors go ahead.

The fourth round of the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup (ILMC) will start on Sunday at 12:00 and will last for six hours. Eurosport 2 will broadcast live from 12:00 to 13:00 and from 16:00 to 18:00 (CEST) live from Imola, Eurosport will air a summary from 00:00 to 01:00 on the night from Sunday to Monday.

At www.audi-microsites.com/lemans the race can also be watched live on the internet at the “Audi Live Racing” microsite. Audi provides a live stream with onboard footage from the two Audi R18 TDI cars plus telemetry data of the vehicles such as speed, gear engaged and on track position.

Quotes after qualifying

Marcel Fässler (Audi R18 TDI #1): “I’m pleased with my lap. The R18 TDI was very good to drive. However, it was really difficult to find the right braking points as we didn’t have a lot of time in free practice. In qualifying there was a lot of traffic, I had only one really free lap. On the whole I’m happy with my second place. I’m optimistic for the race because our R18 TDI is very good across the whole distance. But the traffic in the race will probably be the biggest problem.”

Timo Bernhard (Audi R18 TDI #1): “It was a good lap by Marcel. The front row is important for us. That gives us a good starting base for the race. I feel ready! The teamwork with Marcel is outstanding because we’re both racers and are working in the same direction. We’re driving with a new high-downforce setting here and on this slow to semi-fast track the R18 TDI is making a good impression with it.”

Tom Kristensen (Audi R18 TDI #2): “This is my first run at Imola. The first free practice was already a bit broken up as many red flags frequently interrupted the session. The second session practically fell through due to rain and the third one was also done in drying conditions. Qualifying with a lot of traffic gave us a foretaste of the race tomorrow. I suppose we can expect a hectic race in that regard. The aim is to get through quickly and without any problems and to hopefully have a lot of success that way.”

Allan McNish (Audi R18 TDI #2): “As we couldn’t gather a lot of experience with our car in free practice we squeezed the best out of qualifying. The balance of the car was right. After a free first lap I was struggling to get through traffic. To be honest, the race will be hard work. My team-mate Tom Kristensen is driving his first race at Imola. I’ve been here before but we’ve only completed a handful of laps with the R18 TDI each time. But we’re here to fight. And that’s exactly what we’re going to do.”

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest): “We’re running at Imola for the first time and had little practice time since the second free practice session on Friday took place in heavy rain and car number 2 had a small problem on Saturday. Marcel Fässler was very strong in qualifying. The whole time he was four



tenths of a second faster than the competition. But in the end Anthony Davidson surprisingly set this fabulous time. We've prepared two new cars for this race, and both are running well. But the six-hour race will be long and very hard because the track has blind hilltops and dropping corners where getting through without any problems in a field of about 50 cars is crucial. If you manage that, then anything's possible."

Qualifying results

- 1 Davidson/Bourdais (Peugeot) 1m 31.736s
- 2 Fässler/Berhard (Audi R18 TDI) 1m 32.354s
- 3 Montagny/Sarrazin (Peugeot) 1m 32.732s
- 4 McNish/Kristensen (Audi R18 TDI) 1m 32.974s
- 5 Ragues/Moreau (Oak Pescarolo-Judd) 1m 34.746s
- 6 Jani/Prost (Lola-Toyota) 1m 35.047s
- 7 Belicchi/Boullion (Lola-Toyota) 1m 35.700s
- 8 Collard/Tinseau/Jousse (Pescarolo-Judd) 1m 35.996s
- 9 Cortes/Geri/Piccini (Zytek) 1m 36.084s
- 10 Beche/Thiriet/Firth (Oreca-Nissan) 1m 37.208s

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.