

## Successful start to the season for Audi customer teams in New Zealand

- 1-2-3 victory and podium results for the Audi R8 LMS GT3 in five racing series
- Audi RS 3 LMS strong in Italy and the Baltic States

Neuburg a. d. Donau, May 7, 2024 – In New Zealand, Italy, Estonia and Thailand, numerous customer teams from Audi Sport made a good start to the 2024 season in GT and touring car racing.

### Audi R8 LMS GT3

One-two-three victory at the start of the season: The Audi customer teams celebrated a dream start to the new season in the **North Island Endurance Series** in New Zealand. On the Hampton Downs race track on the North Island, Luke Manson and James Penrose came out on top for the first time in the Audi R8 LMS. The driver duo defeated their teammates, last year's champions Sam Fillmore and Jonny Reid, who also shared an Audi from Team IMS. Fillmore had secured first place on the grid and initially led until Manson took the lead on lap 42. After the driver change, Reid came closer to Penrose, but the leader increased his advantage again to more than 15 seconds by the finish. Third place also went to an Audi: the amateur driver pairing of Steve Brooks/Bill Riding secured the podium result after three hours of racing, one lap down. At the start of the **Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe powered by AWS** sprint racing series, two victories in the gold category went to Audi customer teams. Max Hofer and Luca Engstler were the first gold winners of the season at Brands Hatch in the Audi R8 LMS of Liqui Moly Team Engstler. Paul Evrard/Gilles Magnus secured this classification with Saintéloc Racing in the second sprint. Team Tresor Audi Sport Italia achieved a podium result at the start of the **Campionato Italiano Gran Turismo Sprint** season. Rocco Mazzola started Sunday's race in Misano in fifth place. During an early pit stop, Pietro Delli Guanti took over the cockpit of the Audi R8 LMS, overtook several rivals and finished second, 6.4 seconds behind. The two Italians are now second in the standings. The **Thailand Super Series** also kicked off its new season. B-Quik Absolute Racing recorded three podium results and two class victories with the Audi R8 LMS in Buriram. Adisak Tangphuncharoen and Huang Ruohan won the Am classification in both races. As the best Audi team, they only missed out on overall victory by 74 thousandths of a second in second place in Sunday's race. As on the previous day, third place went to their teammates Vincent Lin/Markus Winkelhock. In the **GT America powered by AWS**, Johnny O'Connell continued his series of podium results at the third event. In the first race in Sebring, he snatched third place from a BMW driver shortly before the end during a daring overtaking maneuver across the grass. In the second race, the Audi privateer from SKI Autosports finished second, just 1.7 seconds short of victory. It was his sixth podium finish in the sixth race.

### **Audi RS 3 LMS (TCR)**

Impressive touring car results: At the season opener in Italy, nine Audi RS 3 LMS cars competed in the **TCR Italy** and six more first-generation Audi cars in the **TCR Italy DSG**. In the first race in Misano, the Italian Denis Babuin won the Master class, while the Canadian Nicolas Taylor won the Rookie classification. In the second race, Italian Nicola Baldan took second place overall in a field of 25 participants and thus victory in the Master class. In the two DSG races for models from the Volkswagen Group with dual-clutch transmissions, Luca Franca finished second out of 17 participants. He thus leads the DSG table. There was also reason to celebrate in the Baltic States in the **Nankang Endurance Academy** racing series. The two Lithuanians Deividas Sakalauskas and Marius Kemesys won the two-hour race in the Audi RS 3 LMS of the DMK Racing Team on the Pärnu circuit in Estonia.

### **Audi Sport**

Additional entry: In addition to the regular four Audi R8 LMS cars in the **Fanatec GT World Challenge Asia powered by AWS**, B-Quik Absolute Racing will take part in the second event next weekend with another Audi. Henk Kiks will use the round of the pan-Asian racing series in Buriram, Thailand, for a guest start. The team principal and driver of B-Quik Absolute Racing will share the cockpit with Australian Rodney Jane in the two one-hour races.

### **Coming up next week**

10-12/05 Lédenon (F), round 2, GT4 France  
10-12/05 Oschersleben (D), round 1, GTC Race  
10-12/05 Oschersleben (D), round 1, Spezial Tourenwagen Trophy  
10-12/05 Monterey (USA), round 3, IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge  
11-12/05 Portimão (P), round 3, 24H Series powered by Hankook  
11-12/05 Hockenheim (D), round 2, International GT Open  
11-12/05 Buriram (THA), round 2, GT World Challenge Asia  
11-12/05 Varano (I), round 2, Coppa Italia Turismo

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