

The 2004 season in review

2004 – for Audi a year crammed with highlights

2004 was one of the most successful years for AUDI AG, and one of the most successful in the marque's long motorsport history. The successful DTM comeback with victory in the Drivers', Manufacturers' and Teams' Championships and the fourth Audi R8 win at the Le Mans 24 Hours were just two of many highlights. In the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) the title defence was a success, and in the new Le Mans Endurance Series (LMES) the Audi R8 is, till now, unbeaten. The Audi A4 STCC won the Finnish Touring Car Championship. Audi USA clinched the SPEED GT World Challenge Manufacturers' Championship with the RS 6 Competition for the second time in succession.

Audi wins all three DTM titles

DTM: The works DTM comeback could hardly have been more successful. In the first year of their comeback in Europe's most popular touring car series Audi won all three titles at the first attempt with the A4 DTM. With four pole positions and four wins, Mattias Ekström was the most outstanding driver and was already declared DTM Champion one race before the end of the season. Audi Sport Team Abt also won the Teams' Championship, at the Hockenheim finale Audi also secured the Manufacturers' Championship, so making the total triumph perfect. Tom Kristensen ended the season as best DTM newcomer, Martin Tomczyk as best placed German.

Final standings after 10 rounds:

1 Mattias Ekström (Audi A4 DTM)	74 points
2 Gary Paffett (Mercedes)	57 points
3 Christijan Albers (Mercedes)	50 points
4 Tom Kristensen (Audi A4 DTM)	43 points
5 Martin Tomczyk (Audi A4 DTM)	39 points

Fourth Le Mans victory for the Audi R8

24h Le Mans: Following 2000, 2001 and 2002, Audi celebrated their fourth triumph at the Le Mans 24 Hours. The race was completely dominated by the fight between the Audi importer teams from Great Britain, Japan and the USA, who chased each other all the way to the flag and set a new distance record as a result. The victorious Audi Sport Japan Team Goh Audi R8 completed 379 laps (5169.970 kilometres) and therefore exceeded the previous record by four laps in front of approximately 200,000 spectators.

24 Hours Le Mans, 12/13 June 2004

1 Ara/Capello/Kristensen (Audi R8)	379 laps
2 Davies/Herbert/Smith (Audi R8)	+ 41.354s
3 Lehto/Werner/Pirro (Audi R8)	- 11 laps
4 Ayari/Comas/Treluyer (Pescarolo-Judd)	- 17 laps
5 Biela/Kaffer/McNish (Audi R8)	- 29 laps

Fifth successive ALMS triumph

ALMS: Audi remains unbeaten in the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) and in the 12-hour race at Sebring. For the fifth time in succession Audi secured the Manufacturers', Teams' and Drivers' Championships in the leading prototype category and overall victory at Sebring. In eight of the nine races, an Audi R8 crossed the finish line as winner during 2004 season. Audi works driver Marco Werner was the first driver ever in the North American sportscar series' "Top Class" to successfully defend his title. After he had won the ALMS last year together with Frank Biela, he formed a strong duo with JJ Lehto in 2004 for Team ADT Champion Racing, who won the ALMS title for the first time.

Final standings after 9 rounds:

1 JJ Lehto/Marco Werner (Audi R8)	183 points
2 Butch Leitzinger/James Weaver (MG Lola)	111 points
3 Andy Wallace (MG Lola)	101 points
4 Chris Dyson (MG Lola)	90 points
5 Pierre Kaffer (Audi R8)	71 points

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Audi R8 unbeaten in the LMES

LMES: There was no beating the Audi R8 in the newly created Le Mans Endurance Series (LMES). Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx won all four races of the European sportscar series. Jamie Davies/Johnny Herbert and Pierre Kaffer/Allan McNish each won two races, the two teams fighting it out among themselves for the Drivers' title. Davies and Herbert clinched the title at the finale in Spa-Francorchamps, at which they also presented the Audi R8 with its 50th win in 60 races.

Final standings after 4 rounds:

1 Jamie Davies/Johnny Herbert (Audi R8)	34 points
3 Pierre Kaffer/Allan McNish (Audi R8)	28 points
5 Seiji Ara/Rinaldo Capello (Audi R8)	27 points

Audi A4 STCC takes title in Finland

Finland: The Audi A4 STCC, with which Team KMS Motorsport had won the Swedish Touring Car Championship (STCC) in 2003, also prevailed in Finland in 2004. Olli Haapalainen convincingly won the title in the inaugural Finish Touring Car Championship for Super 2000 cars by winning ten of the twelve races with the LMS Racing A4.

Final standings after 12 rounds:

1 Olli Haapalainen (Audi A4 STCC)	229 points
2 Pasi Lahteenmaki (Honda)	170 points
3 Jani Vuorinen (VW)	147 points
4 Indrek Sepp (VW)	145 points
5 Kari Gronthal (BMW)	120 points

Third position for Fredrik Ekblom in Sweden

STCC: After winning the Swedish Touring Car Championship (STCC) in the 2003 season with the KMS Motorsport Audi A4 STCC, Fredrik Ekblom was again one of the most successful drivers of the year. The Swede won two race and finished third overall in the championship.

Final standings after 18 rounds:

1 Richard Göransson (BMW)	227 points
2 Robert Dahlgren (Volvo)	176 points
3 Fredrik Ekblom (Audi A4 STCC)	165 points
4 Jan Nilsson (Volvo)	137 points
5 Tommy Rustad (Opel)	137 points

Successful title defence in the USA

SPEED GT: Audi succeeded in retaining the title in the SPEED GT World Challenge. Audi won the manufacturers title in the North American GT series for the third time. With a mere six point deficit, Michael Galati clinched, as best Audi driver, the runner's-up spot in the Drivers' classification. The Audi RS 6 Competition won four of the ten races, despite being artificially slowed down by the championship organisers with new handicaps.

Final standings after 10 rounds:

1 Tommy Archer (Dodge)	240 points
2 Michael Galati (Audi RS 6 Competition)	234 points
3 Max Angelelli (Cadillac)	206 points
4 Randy Pobst (Audi RS 6 Competition)	204 points
5 Andy Pilgrim (Cadillac)	198 points

Both Abt-Audi TT-R cars in the top ten

24h Nürburgring: At the 24-hour race around the Nürburgring, the two Abt-Audi TT-R cars finished in fourth and eighth positions despite the extremely difficult conditions that caused numerous incidents. In changeable weather conditions the two TT-R cars matched the fast pace of the leaders and impressed with their mechanical reliability. Throughout the entire 24-hours no unscheduled repairs were made.

Nürburgring 24 Hours, 12/13 June

1 Müller/Müller/Stuck/Lamy (BMW)	143 laps
2 Lamy/Said/Huisman/Stuck (BMW)	- 1 lap
3 Luhr/Klasen/Bernhard/Manthey (Porsche)	- 2 laps
4 Abt/Huisman/Stippler/Wendlinger (Abt-Audi TT-R)	- 3 laps
5 Asch/Schoysman/Kinoshita/Tanaka (Nissan)	- 8 laps