



**Communications Motorsport**

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## **Audi before next WEC thriller**

- **Round two of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) at Spa**
- **Leaders of the standings Audi on grid with three R18 e-tron quattro**
- **René Rast celebrates LMP1 debut with Audi**

**Ingolstadt, April 24, 2015 – Overtaking maneuvers on each lap, wheel-to-wheel duels, lead changes and a 4.6-second advantage for Audi after six hours of racing: The WEC opening round at Silverstone could not have been more thrilling. As the leaders of the standings, Audi is now traveling to the second in a total of eight World Championship rounds with high expectations. On May 2, the Spa 6 Hours is on the calendar of Audi Sport Team Joest – a classic race that promises to become equally exciting as the most recent one at Silverstone.**

The Spa 6 Hours have traditionally been the ‘dress rehearsal’ for the Le Mans 24 Hours that captivates a worldwide audience only six weeks later as the pinnacle event of the season. Therefore, Audi has been using the race at Spa, Belgium, for many years to put an additional race car on the grid besides the two R18 e-tron quattro entered in the Championship – just like at Le Mans. Testing different aero configurations of the hybrid sports car in the race at Spa has paid off for Audi in recent years. In 2015, Audi will be testing its technologies for Le Mans there again. Marcel Fässler/André Lotterer/Benoît Tréluyer (CH/D/F) in car number ‘7’ and Lucas di Grassi/Loïc Duval/Oliver Jarvis (BR/F/GB) in number ‘8’ are supported by Filipe Albuquerque/Marco Bonanomi/René Rast (P/I/D) in an Audi R18 e-tron quattro designated as car number ‘9.’

For René Rast, May 2 will be a special day. The 29-year-old German will be contesting his first race in an Audi LMP1 sports car. Rast has been successful in the GT3 program of Audi Sport customer racing for several years, having scored two victories in the Spa 24 Hours, and was promoted to the LMP program last winter. “The track in the Ardennes suits me really well and I can hardly wait for my first race in the R18 after the many kilometers I drove it in testing,” René Rast says before his premiere. “I’ve known Filipe and Marco from previous races. Audi has prepared me well for my new task.”



The circuit located 60 kilometers southeast of Liège thrills fans and drivers with its challenging configuration. The 7.004-kilometer tarmac band follows the contours of terrain with considerable vertical differences. Raidillon Corner, also known as Eau Rouge, numbers among a race driver's greatest challenges. Audi's hybrid sports cars reach speeds of more than 270 km/h in the steep left-right combination of the uphill section. At the end of the following straight, the R18 e-tron quattro runs at 298 km/h, approaching the start and finish chicane at the same speed before the drivers shift from seventh all the way down to first gear, having to decelerate to 71 km/h. During each braking event, the hybrid system of the race car recuperates energy that is used again on acceleration.

Audi has close ties with the kingdom of Belgium and the Spa 6 Hours. Brussels is home to one of the company's European production locations. Audi delivered 31,400 automobiles on the Belgian market last year, recording five percent growth. In 2012 and 2013, Audi took the top three spots in the Spa 6 Hours. Last year, Audi Sport Team Joest took home the trophy for second place. This year, Marcel Fässler/André Lotterer/Benoît Tréluyer are traveling to Belgium as the leaders of the standings with a seven-point advantage.

TV viewers in Germany can watch the final stage of the race on Eurosport from 18.30 to 20.45 (CEST). On the internet, Audi will be reporting about the events of the weekend on Facebook (AudiSport), Twitter (@Audi\_Sport) and on the Audi Sport App. A complete WEC press kit is available at [digital.audi-presskit.de/en/wec\\_2015](http://digital.audi-presskit.de/en/wec_2015).

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In 2014, the Audi Group delivered approximately 1,741,100 cars of the Audi brand to its customers. The company achieved revenue of €53.8 billion and an operating profit of €5.15 billion in 2014. Audi operates globally in more than 100 markets and has production facilities in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Brussels (Belgium), Bratislava (Slovakia), Martorell (Spain), Kaluga (Russia), Aurangabad (India), Changchun and Foshan (China) as well as Jakarta (Indonesia). The brand with the Four Rings will start producing cars in Curitiba (Brazil) this year and in San José Chiapa (Mexico) in 2016. Wholly owned subsidiaries of AUDI AG include quattro GmbH (Neckarsulm), Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. (Sant'Agata Bolognese, Italy) and sports motorcycle manufacturer Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. (Bologna, Italy). The company currently employs approximately 80,000 people worldwide, thereof around 58,000 in Germany. Total investment of about €24 billion is planned from 2015 to 2019 – primarily in new products and sustainable technologies. Audi is committed to its corporate responsibility and has anchored the principle of sustainability for its products and processes in its strategy. The long-term goal is CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral mobility.