



Press Information

11 June 1999

Audi R8R continues to improve

The two Audi R8Rs entered by Audi Sport Team Joest continued to improve in readiness for the German manufacturer's debut in the Le Mans 24 Hour race (12-13 June).

Despite both cars being in race trim and with their race engines installed, both R8Rs improved their times by over two seconds in the final four hour qualifying session on Thursday evening compared to the previous night.

Team Director Reinhold Joest confirmed: „I had always believed that a 3min 34secs was possible.“

Fastest Audi driver during Thursday night's time trials was Rinaldo Capello, the Italian setting a time of 3mins 34.891secs and now starts ninth. Meanwhile the second Audi R8R remained 11th fastest despite Frank Biela improving the car's overnight time.

„Now I'm really optimistic for the race,“ said the former British Touring Car Champion. „We made changes to the set-up which were successful and significantly our qualifying tyres performed well this evening.“

Audi's Head of Sport Dr Wolfgang Ullrich was also content. „With the two Audi R8Rs, we almost reached the times we'd calculated. We make big steps forward everyday and people should not forget that we're still Le Mans newcomers. Including last month's pre-qualifying sessions, this is only Audi's third day here.“

Dr Ullrich was less happy with the performance of Audi Sport UK's „closed“ R8Cs. Both cars lost valuable time for the second consecutive night when they encountered gearbox problems although creditably both R8Cs improved their times.

„We'll quietly analyse on Friday the problems they have encountered so that hopefully the Audi Sport UK team can show their true potential in the race.“

**Photographs can be downloaded copyrightfree from the internet:
www.audi.com/motorsport/media**

