

Ingolstadt, 30 November 2007

## Motorsport

### **Audi with clear commitment to motorsport**

- **Most extensive factory involvement in company's history**
- **Race version of the new Audi A4 celebrates debut in DTM**
- **Entry in the Le Mans Series in Europe planned**

**AUDI AG makes a clear commitment to motorsport for the 2008 season with the most extensive factory involvement in the company's history. In addition to defending the DTM title with the new A4 and the entry of three diesel-powered sportscars in the 24 Hour of Le Mans, Audi Sport plans the continuation of its involvement in the American Le Mans Series and its entry in the Le Mans Series in Europe.**

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As a result, Audi competes on a factory level in a prospective 30 races and three championships with two different types of car in 2008. The near 460-hp race version of the new Audi A4 celebrates its debut in the DTM. The third generation of the revolutionary R10 TDI diesel sportscar is developed by Audi Sport in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm.

“Without its successes in motorsport, Audi would not be the most sporting and fastest growing brand in the premium segment,” stresses Rupert Stadler, Chairman of the Board of AUDI AG. “Everybody at Audi knows just how important motorsport is for the brand. We will continue to concentrate on racing series that bear a close relationship to production and which accelerate the development of our production car range. This is the case with the DTM and the Le Mans sportscars.”

### **Proven driving squad in the DTM**

Audi starts the 2008 DTM season as defending champions. The well-proven partner teams of Abt Sportsline, Phoenix and Rosberg enter a total of eight factory

cars for Audi. The customer team, Futurecom TME, brings two additional A4 cars to the grid. Audi remains loyal to the motto “Never change a winning team” where its driver squad is concerned: The four latest generation Audi A4 DTM cars are driven by DTM Champion Mattias Ekström, Tom Kristensen, Timo Scheider and Martin Tomczyk.

Also on board again are youngsters Alexandre Prémat and Mike Rockenfeller who impressed from the word go and were able to claim podium positions in their debut DTM season.

The identity of their team-mates and the line-up within the Phoenix and Rosberg teams will be revealed following driver evaluations in December. The same applies to Vanina Ickx’s successor at Futurecom TME. The occupant of the second seat in this team will again be allocated by the Bavarian-based Audi customer outfit itself.

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### **Three Audi R10 TDI prototypes at Le Mans**

Audi Sport also backs proven teams and drivers for its sportscar programme: The entry of the three cars at the 24 Hours of Le Mans will once again be undertaken by Audi Sport Team Joest, which has already taken five victories for Audi in the French long-distance classic. At the wheel of the three Audi R10 TDI prototypes are the same drivers as in June 2007: Frank Biela/Emanuele Pirro/Marco Werner, Dindo Capello/Tom Kristensen/Allan McNish and Lucas Luhr/Alexandre Prémat/Mike Rockenfeller.

Audi plans to enter two cars in the American Le Mans Series and the Le Mans Series in Europe through Audi Sport North America in the USA and Reinhold Joest’s team in Europe. “Stable regulations with the clear positioning of the LM P1 sportscar as top category and good TV marketing in Europe are conditions for Audi’s factory involvement in both of the Le Mans series,” explains Head of Audi Motorsport Dr Wolfgang Ullrich.

## **Lucas Luhr jumps from the DTM to the R10 TDI**

Regular drivers for the sportscar project in the 2008 season will be Dindo Capello, Allan McNish, Marco Werner and Lucas Luhr, the latter moving from the DTM to the Audi R10 TDI. Meanwhile Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro, the two longest serving and most experienced Audi factory drivers, compete again with the R10 TDI. Audi also wishes to commit the experienced duo to the brand for the long-term as a result of their unstinting service and loyalty to Audi after their active careers.

## **Detail-optimised Audi R10 TDI**

The Audi R10 TDI is further developed for its third season. The Audi Sport technicians, under the direction of Technical Director Dr Martin Mühlmeier, concentrate on detail improvements to the 650-hp TDI engine and the transmission and aerodynamic areas. The first race for the 2008 model R10 TDI is scheduled to be the 12-hour race at Sebring on 15 March which acts as a dress rehearsal for the 24 Hours of Le Mans for Audi Sport Team Joest.

## **DTM car based on the new Audi A4**

Significantly larger than the R10 TDI “facelift” is the step between the old and new Audi A4 in the DTM. Emerging from within the framework of the relatively restrictive DTM regulations is a new car which will have a new outer skin and new aerodynamics. The development started in June 2007 immediately after Audi’s latest victory in the 24-hour race at Le Mans. Components of the new A4 DTM, named “R14” internally, have already been tested successfully. The roll-out of the 2008 car will be held before the New Year. An extensive test programme then follows before the first race at the Hockenheimring on 13 April.

“Quite obviously the target in the DTM is to make a successful title defence,” says Head of Audi Motorsport Dr Wolfgang Ullrich. “The new A4 road car is a big step forwards and it had already won many benchmark tests and important awards

before its market launch. We will do everything possible to put a race car on the track that will do justice to the production car's reputation."

While Audi goes head-to-head again with Mercedes-Benz in the DTM, the Audi R10 TDI's main opponent will be Peugeot. "We are sure that Peugeot will make a big step forward in its second season and are expecting a hard fight at Le Mans," says Dr Ullrich. "Generally, with such an extensive programme, the 2008 season will be an enormous challenge for Audi Sport. However, Audi has never been shy of a challenge."

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