

Quotes from the Audi Press Conference

Frank Biela (Infineon Audi R8 #1): "At Le Mans you always have to find a compromise between downforce and top speed. That's what we tried to achieve during the winter. Our people did a good job, otherwise the times we saw yesterday would not have been possible. We are well prepared. The one of us which comes through best has a good chance of winning."

Tom Kristensen (Infineon Audi R8 #1): "In qualifying, I got into traffic twice in the Porsche corners. You don't want to have traffic there. But that's Le Mans. For us, it's business as usual to start second and turn the bad luck from qualifying into good luck in the race."

Emanuele Pirro (Infineon Audi R8 #1): "In former times you had to preserve the car at Le Mans. You could not push like you wanted to as a race driver. With the cars we drive today you can do no mistakes with the gearshifts, you cannot over rev the engine, the tyres and the brakes are so good that you can drive the car on the limit all the time."

Rinaldo Capello (Infineon Audi R8 #2): "My team-mates had more traffic on their fastest laps than me. Unfortunately it is not very important to start this race from pole position. But it is good for personal satisfaction – and Johnny will start the race. He asked me to put the car on pole because he wanted to be in front on the photos in the first corner..."

Johnny Herbert (Infineon Audi R8 #2): "I am lucky to have won Le Mans before. But my two team-mates have not won it yet. So it would be nice to win together. We will work very hard to achieve this. I told Tom that Denmark can win the football game against England if we win the race..."

Christian Pescatori (Infineon Audi R8 #2): "I have much more experience with the team and the Audi R8 compared to last year. Together with Dindo and Johnny I won Sebring with this car. It is easier for me because I know the car and the team much better now."

Michael Krumm (Infineon Audi R8 #3): "Of course we are still lacking experience with the Audi. Also we are not quite sure how fast the boys in front will drive in the race. It is a 24 Hour race, but it could also be the case that the pace will be as fast as in a sprint race."

Philipp Peter (Infineon Audi R8 #3): "To drive at Le Mans for the first time is of course something special. During practice, especially the night was really impressive. But you find fun in driving very soon, I like the track very much. I have two strong team-mates, we've progressed well. We are a strong driver team, so we have good chances in the race."

Marco Werner (Infineon Audi R8 #3): "I enjoy participating in a race which has such a great history. Here it is very important to feel confident on the track. The Audi gives you the necessary safe feeling. Before coming to Le Mans I was a little bit afraid."

Seiji Ara (Audi R8 #5): "It is like a dream. I washed Audis in the PR department of Audi Japan in 1999. Audi was my dream car. And now I am driving an Audi R8. My target is finishing the race. Fortunately, we have a good teacher in Yannick. He knows how to race in Le Mans."

Yannick Dalmas (Audi R8 #5): "The reason for my accident on Wednesday is clear: Before the first chicane, something hit my car and ripped off the upper flap of the rear wing. Because of this, I lost control of the car and hit the guard rails. The technicians of Audi Sport and the team worked through the night to find the reason and bring the car at the start."

Hiroki Katoh (Audi R8 #5): "I think qualifying is not important for a 24 hour race. Priority is how you keep on going safely and steadily. If we are able to do this, the result is going to be good automatically."

Kazumichi Goh (Team Owner Audi Sport Japan Team Goh): "We had some problems yesterday and the previous day, so we did not have a good qualifying. But the car itself is fantastic and I think the race will be better for us. I am optimistic. We will do something like the Japanese 'Daruma' way of life: If you had seven times trouble, you overcome it the eighth time."

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest): "The FSI engine we used at Le Mans for the first time last year has many advantages. The fuel consumption is lower compared to a normal injection engine. This adds up during a 24 Hour race. On the other hand, the FSI engine has the characteristics of a normally aspirated engine which makes life much easier for the drivers. And there are more positive effects beside. For example, the FSI engine is much better to start compared to an engine without direct petrol injection."

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Sport): "We want to take the unique chance to add to our previous two victories by scoring a third famous win and take home the trophy. This happened only four times so far, the last time 20 years ago. It would be really great for us if we would achieve this. We are totally focussed on this and with the three first positions on the grid we at least laid the foundations."

Photos and further information can be found on the Internet:
www.audi-sportpress.com (accreditation required)