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Audi is well prepared for Le Mans 24 Hours

- **Le Mans premiere for Audi R18 ultra and R18 e-tron quattro**
- **Eleven drivers take turns at the wheel**
- **Positions one to three for Audi in first comparison**

Ingolstadt/Le Mans, June 3, 2012 – At the Le Mans test day held two weeks before the 24-hour race, Audi completed its preparation phase with a wealth of valuable findings. The brand's first diesel hybrid sports car set the fastest time of the day. Allan McNish in the number "2" Audi R18 e-tron quattro was the quickest driver on the tradition-steeped track at La Sarthe.

Audi Sport Team Joest made efficient use of the only testing opportunity of the year at Le Mans. The two Audi R18 e-tron quattro and the R18 ultra vehicles covered a total distance of 4,497 kilometers on the circuit that is primarily made up of public roads. From the suspension set-up and aerodynamics through to tire tests, handling of the LMP sports prototypes with varying amounts of fuel and the comparison of the concepts, the engineers gathered valuable data for the year's most important endurance race. Occasional precipitation in some areas made for changeable conditions on the 13.629-kilometer track though.

Marco Bonanomi, the only Audi factory driver who has previously never participated in the Le Mans 24 Hours, qualified for the grid by completing ten mandatory laps and numerous additional kilometers in the number "4" Audi R18 ultra.

The day's fastest time of 3m 25.927s was achieved by Allan McNish. An excursion by the Scotsman at Tertre Rouge, though, put a premature end to the track presence of car number "2" one hour before the test was over. With positions one, two, three and six plus a wealth of valuable data Audi concluded the test day on an extremely positive note and thoroughly completed its preparations.



Quotes after the test day

Dieter Gass (Head of Racing Commitments): “Throughout the day, we gathered a lot of information which forms an important element in our preparation for the race two weeks from now. We can basically draw the conclusion that after today, the race at Spa and the winter test program we feel well prepared. The conditions today weren’t completely perfect at all times and we had some downtimes in the morning the causes of which we’re going to rectify by the time of the race. Today, we also finally had the opportunity to meet with our major rival, Toyota, on the race track. As expected, the team presented itself in a very professional manner and with a fast car, so we’re looking forward to an interesting race.”

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest): “We did a good job of completing our program. Fortunately, it was dry most of the time because you can hardly test tires in rain showers. The tire program was one of the major items on our task list. Car number “2” had a problem in the fuel system at first but it could be repaired quickly. Allan’s accident was a shame. But these things can happen when you’re quick – and he was quick. Both vehicle types, the R18 e-tron quattro and the ultra, were running well. Toyota’s first public appearance deserves respect. Our competitor was immediately fast and completed a lot of laps. We’re pleased and can prepare for the race weekend.”

Dindo Capello (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #2): “This was a positive test day. All drivers were quick right away. Our car is clearly better compared to last year. It’s easier to drive and provides better feedback in all areas. It was really good fun to drive the R18 e-tron quattro. I feel familiar with the car and look forward to the race.”

Tom Kristensen (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #2): “On this good and important day we experienced a lot of sun and a little rain. All four of Audi’s race cars had a productive test day. We gathered a lot of data with the two different concepts, which gives us a meaningful base for the race week. It was exciting to experience the new Audi on this track for the first time. In the morning, I drove the second-fastest time and felt very comfortable. Like last year when I did, Allan set the best time. We want to continue this in the race week. Two other nice results: I take my hat off to the performance of our new rival Toyota. And I was very pleased to see that the ACO has further improved several sections of the track.”

Allan McNish (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #2): “Our day was very productive but ended in disappointment. Dindo (Capello) already felt very comfortable in the car



and Tom (Kristensen) further improved balance. That meant I took over a car that was set up well for the areas of the track that have new tarmac. As always, grip was low on the dirty track at the beginning of the test day. I drove fast and consistent lap times. Unfortunately, toward the end while entering Tertre Rouge I briefly touched the grass, spun 360 degrees and touched the guard rails. That unfortunately ended the day but we've got a good starting point for the race week. Balance of the R18 e-tron quattro is very good."

Marcel Fässler (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #1): "The test day went very well. We tried different things such as tire pressures, set-up and aerodynamics. This means that we've gathered information for the race two weeks from now and can travel to Le Mans well prepared."

André Lotterer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #1): "So far, so good. We had a lot of priorities for testing, from the suspension through to the performance of the tires across the distance. We thoroughly analyzed consumption as well. These are our most important questions on such test days. Obviously, you want to get a better idea of what's possible in the end too. But as it was raining the ultimate lap time wasn't the only focal topic."

Benoît Tréluyer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #1): "We tried out various set-ups. In the process, we also tested a few things that had previously been confirmed by simulation but which still needed to be verified again on the track. The car feels very comfortable and compared with last year we improved handling yet again. The hybrid system works very well and balance is right. I'm pleased."

Romain Dumas (Audi R18 ultra #3): "Compared to last year we've got a car that's both quicker and better balanced. You can primarily feel this in the fast sections like the Porsche corners. I've not personally tested the car's limits. In the morning, we tried out set-ups, and in the afternoon tires."

Loïc Duval (Audi R18 ultra #3): "Basically, things went well even though the weather cost us a bit of time today like it did everyone else. That meant we couldn't exactly stick to our plan but still managed to check off almost everything on our list. Everyone is happy with the car. With respect to the set-up we're already doing very detailed work."

Marc Gené (Audi R18 ultra #3): "For me it was good to get used to the new car on this track. The morning went well and I reeled off two longer distances. The car felt



good and I was pleased with my rhythm too. My team-mates then further improved the set-up in the afternoon. Our car is fast and that's nice."

Marco Bonanomi (Audi R18 ultra #4): "This was a tremendous experience. It was nice for me to be able to do so many laps at Le Mans for the first time in my life. We learned a lot and varied the set-up. The direction of our development is right. In the morning I felt particularly comfortable and the lap times were easy to achieve. Of course I've got to get to know the track first. We're ready for the race. Audi is very good, and Toyota not far away. That's nice for the fans and not easy for us."

Oliver Jarvis (Audi R18 ultra #4): "It's great to be back at Le Mans. It's been such a long time that I was here. The atmosphere is fantastic even two weeks before the race. This is an exciting phase. I'm already looking forward very much to the race week that starts next Sunday. Marco and I had no problem getting used to the car and the track today."

Test day results

- 1 Capello/Kristensen/McNish (Audi R18 e-tron quattro), 3m 25.927s
- 2 Fässler/Lotterer/Tréluyer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro), 3m 26.468s
- 3 Dumas/Duval/Gené (Audi R18 ultra), 3m 26.561s
- 4 Wurz/Lapierre/Nakajima/Buemi (Toyota), 3m 27.204s
- 5 Davidson/Buemi/Sarrazin/Nakajima (Toyota), 3m 28.298s
- 6 Bonanomi/Jarvis (Audi R18 ultra), 3m 28.765s
- 7 Leventis/Watts/Kane (HPD-Honda), 3m 34.243s
- 8 Belicchi/Primat/Bleekemolen (Lola-Toyota), 3m 35.357s
- 9 Prost/Jani/Heidfeld (Lola-Toyota), 3m 36.876s
- 10 Ara/Minassian (Dome-Judd), 3m 37.149s

- End -



The Audi Group delivered 1,302,659 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2011. In 2011 the Company posted revenue of €44.1 billion and an operating profit of €5.3 billion. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). The Audi Q7 is built in Bratislava (Slovakia). In July 2010, CKD production of the Audi Q5 was added to the existing Audi A4 and A6 manufacturing operations in Aurangabad (India). At the Brussels plant, production of the Audi A1 has been running since May 2010, while production of the new A1 Sportback began in 2012. The Audi Q3 has been built in Martorell (Spain) since June 2011. The Company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include AUDI HUNGARIA MOTOR Kft., Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese (Italy), AUDI BRUSSELS S.A./N.V. in Brussels (Belgium) and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Subject to a positive decision by the responsible competition authorities, the Italian sports motorcycle manufacturer Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. will also belong to the Audi Group. Audi currently employs around 64,000 people worldwide, including around 48,000 in Germany. Between 2012 and 2016 the brand with the four rings is planning to invest a total of €13 billion – mainly in new products and the extension of production capacities – in order to sustain the Company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. Audi is currently expanding its site in Győr (Hungary) and will start production in Foshan (China) in late 2013 and in Mexico in 2016.

Audi has long been fulfilling its social responsibility on many levels – with the aim of making the future worth living for generations to come. The basis for Audi's lasting success is therefore formed by environmental protection, the conservation of resources, international competitiveness and a forward-looking human resources policy. One example of AUDI AG's commitment to environmental issues is the Audi Environmental Foundation. Within the context of "Vorsprung durch Technik," which extends far



beyond its products, the Company is directing its activities toward a major goal – comprehensive CO₂-neutral mobility.