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## **Audi on front row at Silverstone**

- **Allan McNish clinches P2 on the grid at his “home round”**
- **Rain shower prevents faster lap times**
- **Audi drivers optimistic for race on Sunday**

**Ingolstadt/Silverstone, September 10, 2011 – The two Audi R18 TDI cars from Audi Sport Team Joest will start into the 6-hour race at Silverstone (Great Britain) on Sunday at 11:35 a.m., local time ( 12:35 CEST) from the two front rows of the grid.**

Rain showers made conditions in qualifying on Saturday afternoon difficult. Drizzling rain had already set in before the beginning of the 20-minute session. But when the two Audi drivers, Allan McNish and Timo Bernhard, were on what were their fastest laps up to that time, they encountered heavier rain in the last track sector so that they were unable to improve their times any more.

Due to the location of the team at the beginning of the pit lane the two Audi R18 TDI cars were not able to start their chase for times right at the beginning of the qualifying session. That proved to be crucial. After a strong first flying lap McNish was on course for setting the best time on his second lap before encountering rain in the last chicane before the start and finish. Consequently, neither the Scotsman nor his team-mate Timo Bernhard, who had to overtake several slower cars on the first two laps, was able to improve.

The squad around Head of Audi Motorsport Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich looks toward to the fifth round of the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup (ILMC) with confidence nonetheless as all four Audi drivers commented positively about the handling of their Audi R18 TDI right from the beginning at Silverstone and are sure that the true potential of the Le Mans winning car will be shown in the race.

Audi.tv will air full-length live coverage of the 6-hour race on Sunday on the internet at <http://microsites.audi.com/lemans/>. Allan McNish is contesting the Silverstone race together with Tom Kristensen, Timo Bernhard and Marcel Fässler.



### Quotes after qualifying

**Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** “Today we didn’t have much time in free practice because two red flag periods considerably shortened the practice session. But we’d already done a good job on Friday and worked out a good set-up for both cars. We were actually quite optimistic for qualifying. Due to the weather and pit lane situation we weren’t able to be among the first to go out on the track and that was crucial today. We waited until the first cars were gone. Unfortunately, the rain was getting heavier on our fast laps. That didn’t allow us fully use the potential.”

**Tom Kristensen (Audi R18 TDI #2):** “It’s great to be back in the UK, particularly at Silverstone and its fantastic race track. Yesterday and today the weather has been very changeable and that will continue to be the case tomorrow. We need to closely watch the weather forecasts with respect to the set-up of our cars. We tried out various options in the past two days. It looks like there may be more rain tomorrow – and I’m hoping for us to be perfectly prepared for it. Allan (McNish) did a good job in qualifying. Now we’re exactly between the two Peugeot on the grid. That could mean that we’re in for a thrilling 6-hour race tomorrow.”

**Allan McNish (Audi R18 TDI #2):** “Qualifying went well with respect to the car’s performance capability and the feeling for it. Naturally it was a bit frustrating that the weather didn’t cooperate. But that was the same for everyone in the field. The first fast lap was relatively free, on the second one there was heavy rain in Stowes Corner and in the last turn. Without that, more would have been possible. I’m going into the race tomorrow with a positive feeling.”

**Marcel Fässler (Audi R18 TDI #1):** “We’ve been able to reel off our program in the practice sessions so far, tried out set-ups for the race and are basically very happy with the car. I’m actually convinced that we’ll be running well in the race tomorrow. I had a good feeling right from the start, the car has superb balance. That’s why I’m looking forward to tomorrow even though we were a bit unfortunate with the weather in qualifying today. But the grid positions aren’t so crucial at a 6-hour race.”

**Timo Bernhard (Audi R18 TDI #1):** “That was a difficult qualifying session. Just before the start, rain set in. On both of the two timed laps when the track offered the highest grip level I had to overtake two or three cars. At the end of my third flying lap the rain was really pouring down. It wasn’t possible to improve any more.”



So we were a bit unfortunate. But I think we can make up for that in the race – because our performance is right.”

**Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest):** “A lottery! The rain started right in time for qualifying. We had the option to use several sets of tires but just getting one set up to heat was difficult enough. Maybe we went out a tiny bit too late so that the track was already too moist. We went out one minute after the session had started – that was the minute that was lacking in the end. Allan McNish caught a good lap while Timo Bernhard was a bit unfortunate with traffic. He didn’t hit the narrow window in which fast laps were possible. But all in all we don’t have a bad starting base on the two front rows, particularly as the drivers are very pleased with the set-up of their cars.”

#### **Qualifying results**

- 1 Bourdais/Pagenaud (Peugeot) 1m 43.924s
- 2 Kristensen/McNish (Audi R18 TDI) 1m 44.856s
- 3 Montagny/Sarrazin (Peugeot) 1m 45.102s
- 4 Bernhard/Fässler (Audi R18 TDI) 1m 46.621s
- 5 Jani/Prost (Lola-Toyota) 1m 47.684s
- 6 Lahaye/Moreau/Ragues (Oak-Pescarolo-Judd) 1m 47.785s
- 7 Nicolet/Prémat/Pla (Oak-Pescarolo-Judd) 1m 47.890s
- 8 Belicchi/Boullion (Lola-Toyota) 1m 48.287s
- 9 Collard/Tinseau/Jousse (Pescarolo-Judd) 1m 48.624s
- 10 Laventis/Watts/Kane (HPD) 1m 49.619s

– End –



The Audi Group delivered around 1,092,400 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2010. The Company posted revenue of €35.4 billion and an operating profit of €3.3 billion in 2010. In the first half of 2011, the Audi Group sold 652,970 vehicles bearing the four rings worldwide and achieved record figures in terms of revenue (€21.5 billion) and operating profit (€2.5 billion). Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). Aurangabad in India saw the start of CKD production of the Audi A6 at the end of 2007, of the Audi A4 in early October 2008 and of the Audi Q5 in July 2010. Production of the new Audi A1 has been running at the Brussels plant since May 2010. 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 Holding S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese (Italy) and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Audi currently employs around 60,000 people worldwide, including around 46,600 in Germany. Between 2011 and 2015 the brand with the four rings is planning to invest more than €11 billion, mainly in new products, in order to sustain the Company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. By 2015, Audi plans to increase the number of models in its portfolio to 42.

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 newly established Audi Environmental Foundation. Under the heading of "Audi balanced mobility," the Company is directing its activities toward a major goal - comprehensive CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral mobility.