

Communications Motorsport

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Audi starts from the second row at Le Mans

- **Audi R10 TDI 4th, 5th and 7th on the grid**
- **Audi Sport Team Joest well prepared for the race**
- **Allan McNish sets fastest time with full tank**

Ingolstadt/Le Mans – After two days of trouble-free qualifying Audi Sport Team Joest will start well sorted into the 76th running of the Le Mans 24 Hours on Saturday at 3 p.m. The Audi squad was able to work out a good and – above all – safe to drive set-up for the race with all three Audi R10 TDI prototypes.

After the first qualifying session on Wednesday evening, the R10 TDI cars were completely dismantled and rebuilt with fresh parts. In Thursday evening's second qualifying session they were running in the same specification they will go into the race.

The lap times at the top of the 55-car strong field were significantly closer on Thursday than on the previous day and gave a foretaste of what we can expect from the eagerly awaited battle between the world's fastest sports cars.

Best Audi pilot was yet again Allan McNish who further improved his time from the previous day with a full tank by three tenths of a second. He thus beat last year's fastest time of an Audi R10 TDI by over three seconds. Dindo Capello, Tom Kristensen and Allan McNish will start the race on Saturday as best placed Audi team from the second row of the grid in fourth place.



Lucas Luhr, Alexandre Prémat and Mike Rockenfeller will start from position five. Frank Biela, Emanuele Pirro and Marco Werner improved their lap time from the previous night but dropped to seventh position on the grid.

There weren't any unexpected incidents in the Audi camp during the two qualifying days. This will allow the Audi team to be prepared calm and focused for the race and get some rest before the big challenge.

Audi competes for the tenth time this year in the Le Mans 24 Hours and has won the French endurance classic already seven times – 2005, incidentally, starting from a similar position: In that year the best Audi also started from the second row. At the end of the race Audi won by two laps.

More than 250,000 spectators are expected at the weekend at Le Mans. Millions of fans will follow the "race of the year" on television. In Europe, Eurosport broadcasts live from Le Mans.

Quotes after Qualifying

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "This will for sure be a very exciting race. The lap times were very close together on Thursday and on a very high level. We consistently ran through our programme and worked out a good dry set-up for all three cars with which all drivers coped with well. It can also be changed quickly into a good rain set-up in case this will be necessary. We adjusted the lights and tried the spare parts. I think, we are well prepared for the race."

Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #2): "I think we worked in a proper way in the second practice again. We improved the car compared with the previous day. Now the car is easier to drive. It is faster even with a lot of fuel and used tyres. That's what we need – a race car that handles easily and allows you to push where you need it without taking big risks. At the end, the car was as we have wished for. The drivers, engineers and mechanics did a good job."



Tom Kristensen (Audi R10 TDI #2): “Congratulations to Peugeot for pole. We have concentrated on our car for the race. I feel that we have got the best race car we can have with the three-year-old Audi R10 TDI. I am very happy and looking forward to getting behind the wheel in the race and to see what happens in this year’s event. Fingers crossed for us.”

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #2): “Tonight’s session was very positive. Like the previous evening, we didn’t look at it as pure qualifying so spent time further improving the balance and consistency which allowed us to set similar fast times like the Peugeots. Tom (Kristensen), Dindo (Capello) and I are all very comfortable in the car – whether it be on full or near empty tanks, used or fresh tyres – we’re happy. This allows us to be confident to attack immediately from the green light.”

Lucas Luhr (Audi R10 TDI #3): “Maybe the starting position in a 24 Hour race is important for the ego of the driver but it is certainly not for the result of the race. Our competitors are fast, there is no doubt. But I’m sure that with a good strategy, our great mechanics and a good teamwork we will show up stronger on Saturday and Sunday. During the last days we worked hard and learned a lot – now I’m looking forward to show that in the race.”

Alexandre Prémat (Audi R10 TDI #3): “I’m happy with our fifth position on the grid. It doesn’t mean much because here at Le Mans we have seen cars losing the race from pole position and winning it from the back of the field. I’m looking forward to the 24 hours with Mike (Rockenfeller) and Lucas (Luhr) because together with our Audi R10 TDI we are a strong team. I wish all the competitors at Le Mans good luck – and for us a big piece of it.”

Mike Rockenfeller (Audi R10 TDI #3): “Now there is nothing we can do anymore. We will have a close look at all the data we collected and then find a perfect set-up for the race. We’ll also use Friday to relax a little bit and get perfectly prepared. And of course there is the drivers’ parade downtown at Le Mans which is a highlight for every driver. I’m looking forward to the start of the race on Saturday – because then we finally can do what we are here for: Give our best to bring home a good result for Audi.”



Frank Biela (Audi R10 TDI #1): "We did the programme that we've planned to do. The car has a good balance for the race and it suits each of us well. So we're reasonably well-prepared for the race. We need to wait now and see which pace we will be able to achieve in the race. It's difficult to say yet how fast we will be in the race. Lap times so far depended on who was using which tyres and which fuel load at a given time."

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #1): "It's been another good day. We did some set-up work and we improved the car. I think we found a little bit of what has been missing yesterday. We still didn't try to do any qualifying attempt. In race trim, the car feels good and I'm quite optimistic."

Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #1): "We managed to make a few little steps forward. I've been really pleased with the laps in the dark towards the end. The times were good and consistent, too. I think that we enjoyed a steady improvement. Qualifying and race are two different things. Being consistent over the distance has traditionally been the key to success for us."

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest): "We had two good, productive qualifying days with all three cars. The drivers of the number 2 car are completely happy. Marco (Werner) at the end was also very satisfied with car number 1. The R10 TDI with start number 3 did a small step in the wrong direction on Thursday. But we were able to correct this. This means that all three cars are on a good level. We can start well prepared into the race."

The starting grid at Le Mans

- 1 Lamy/Sarrazin/Wurz (Peugeot 908) 3m 18.513s
- 2 Montagny/Zonta/Klien (Peugeot 908) 3m 18.682s
- 3 Gené/Minassian/Villeneuve (Peugeot 908) 3m 20.451s
- 4 Capello/Kristensen/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) 3m 23.847s
- 5 Lühr/Prémat/Rockenfeller (Audi R10 TDI) 3m 24.287s
- 6 Charouz/Mücke/Enge (Lola-Aston Martin) 3m 25.158s
- 7 Biela/Pirro/Werner (Audi R10 TDI) 3m 25.289s
- 8 Ito/Tachikawa/Kataoka (Dome-Judd) 3m 26.928s
- 9 Collard/Boullion/Dumas (Pescarolo-Judd) 3m 28.533s



10 Ayari/Duval/Groppi (Courage-Oreca-Judd) 3m 30.490s

TV broadcast times

Saturday, 14 June

14:30 – 15:45	Eurosport
15:45 – 18:15	Eurosport 2
18:15 – 20:00	Eurosport
20:00 – 22:00	Eurosport 2
22:00 – 22:30	Eurosport
22:30 – 01:45	Eurosport 2

Sunday, 15 June

01:45 – 08:45	Eurosport
08:45 – 11:00	Eurosport 2
11:00 – 12:00	Eurosport
12:00 – 14:00	Eurosport 2
14:00 – 15:15	Eurosport

Note for editors:

The Audi press conference takes place on Friday at 2 p.m. in the Audi Racing Arena at the “Parc du Raccordement” and will be broadcast live on the Internet at www.audi.de/tv (German) and www.audi.com/tv (English).

Photographs and information can be obtained at www.audi-motorsport.info

AUDI AG sold a total of 964,151 cars in 2007 and thus achieved its twelfth consecutive record year. With revenue of €33,617 million and profit before tax of €2,915 million, the company attained its best figures ever. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). At the end of 2007, production of the Audi A6 started in Aurangabad, India. The company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include Automobili Lamborghini Holding S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese, Italy, and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Audi employs about 54,000 people worldwide, including 45,000 in Germany. The brand with the four rings invests more than €2 billion each year in order to sustain the company's technological lead embodied in its “Vorsprung durch Technik” slogan. Audi plans to significantly increase the number of models in its portfolio by 2015, from the 26 currently on offer to 40.