



Communications Motorsport

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Flashback: Le Mans 2007 and the victory of the only remaining Audi

- **Audi's Le Mans wins in the rearview mirror: victory no. 7**

Ingolstadt, April 30, 2015 – After Audi had gone down in history in clinching the first diesel-powered victory at Le Mans in 2006, the race the following year held the next major challenge in store for the brand. The 75th running of the epic event showed one of its particularly grueling facets.

As the winner of the previous year, Audi was a clear favorite in 2007 although, in Peugeot, a strong rival that was also relying on diesel power challenged the brand. This was exactly the type of competition Audi had been looking for. However, changeable weather made for very slippery track conditions during parts of the race. Audi's up-and-coming driver Mike Rockenfeller (D), who slid backwards into the guard rails on his third lap, was one of the first 'victims.' The car was so heavily damaged in the incident that he was forced to retire. The next setback followed early Sunday morning when a rear wheel came off the Audi R10 TDI of Dindo Capello (I) and his team-mates Tom Kristensen (DK) and Allan McNish (GB), who had been leading the race for 16 hours. This meant that all hopes were now pinned on car number '1.'

Like the year before, Frank Biela (D), Emanuele Pirro (I) and Marco Werner (D) were sharing driving duties of this R10 TDI. Heavy rain in the final stage of the race demanded maximum concentration of the drivers. In the crucial hours, Marco Werner was sitting in the cockpit of the LMP race car that was still open at the time. "Towards the end, this was no longer a car race but a boat race," the driver from Dortmund, Germany, recalls with a smile. "And all the pressure was now on us because we were the last of the 'Audi warrior' in the field." Peugeot were in second place, chasing the #1 Audi, and their position would have proved dangerous if Audi had made a mistake.

Emanuele Pirro wanted to drive the final stint to the finish, as he had 'traditionally' done, but race engineer Ed Turner stuck to his decision of keeping Marco Werner at



the wheel. “I knew where the dangerously wet track sections were, “says the race driver. “I was really relieved to see the checkered flag. The final laps were chaotic,” Werner recalled, after having driven the only remaining Audi across the finish line in first place. For him, as well as for his two team-mates, this marked the final victory at Le Mans before their careers ended. Werner had won the iconic race for the third time in succession that year. Biela and Pirro were successful for the fifth time, clinching a deserved, honest and unforgettable triumph that Audi Sport Team Joest had worked incredibly hard for.

– End –

In 2014, the Audi Group delivered approximately 1,741,100 cars of the Audi brand to its customers. The company achieved revenue of €53.8 billion and an operating profit of €5.15 billion in 2014. Audi operates globally in more than 100 markets and has production facilities in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Brussels (Belgium), Bratislava (Slovakia), Martorell (Spain), Kaluga (Russia), Aurangabad (India), Changchun and Foshan (China) as well as Jakarta (Indonesia). The brand with the Four Rings will start producing cars in Curitiba (Brazil) this year and in San José Chiapa (Mexico) in 2016. Wholly owned subsidiaries of AUDI AG include quattro GmbH (Neckarsulm), Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. (Sant’Agata Bolognese, Italy) and sports motorcycle manufacturer Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. (Bologna, Italy). The company currently employs approximately 80,000 people worldwide, thereof around 58,000 in Germany. Total investment of about €24 billion is planned from 2015 to 2019 – primarily in new products and sustainable technologies. Audi is committed to its corporate responsibility and has anchored the principle of sustainability for its products and processes in its strategy. The long-term goal is CO₂-neutral mobility.