

**Communications Motorsport**

Jürgen Pippig  
Telephone: +49 (0)841 89 34200  
E-mail: motorsport-media@audi.de

Eva-Maria Veith  
Telephone: +49 (0)841 89 33922  
E-mail: eva-maria.veith@audi.de

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## **Portrait of Audi factory driver Emanuele Pirro**

- **Shooting for tenth consecutive Le Mans podium**
- **15<sup>th</sup> season for Audi Sport**
- **Professional racer with varied interests**

**Ingolstadt – Audi “factory” driver Emanuele Pirro already holds a unique record: nine times in a row, the Italian, who was born in Rome, has been on the podium at the legendary 24 Hours of Le Mans. For the weekend of 14/15 June, the former Formula 1 driver at the wheel of the Audi R10 TDI, has set his sights on clinching his tenth podium result.**

“Of course this would be the crowning of a fantastic time I’ve had as an Audi driver since 1994,” says the 46-year-old. “2008 is my 15th season for Audi – and I’m completely happy with every single one of them. This includes the touring car titles in Italy and Germany, the nine podium finishes at Le Mans and, of course, the great time with the Audi R8 and the Audi R10 TDI in America. I think that by now I’ve got a bit of Audi blood running through my veins ...”

To drive racing cars was Emanuele Pirro’s big dream even at a very early age. “When I was five years old, I saw a shooting star in the sky and uttered my wish to become a racer,” the Audi driver recalls. His wish came true: after starting out in karting, the Roman made his way all the way into Formula 1.

In 1994 Pirro joined Audi – and has been riding the crest of the wave of success ever since: twice he was touring car champion in Italy, once in Germany. Five overall victories Pirro has clinched so far at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. Twice he has won the American Le Mans Series. Alongside his team-mate Frank Biela,



Emanuele Pirro is the most successful Audi driver of all time – and a driver who always perfectly sells the brand with the four rings as an ambassador. “My heart beats for Audi,” he says. “Audi makes fantastic cars. And Audi Sport has great people.”

At public appearances or press conferences Pirro, with his eloquent ways, enjoys doing most of the talking. Women find the Roman, whose skin is always bronzed, extremely attractive. But Pirro has been married for many years to his Belgian wife Marie-Hélène, with whom he has two sons: Cristoforo and Goffredo. Both of them have been infected with the motorsport virus as well, drive Motocross with their father and may follow in his footsteps some day.

But motorsport is by no means the only thing in Emanuele Pirro's life. The variety of the Audi driver's interests is hardly matched by any other professional racer. He is the co-owner of a software firm, manages hotels and runs a marketing and event management agency. His numerous hobbies include all kinds of water sports, from canoeing to diving. His greatest passion, however, is flying. As often as possible, he pilots the airplane he jointly owns with a friend. And building model airplanes is another one of Pirro's favourite pastimes.

“I always wanted to keep a big distance between my private life and motorsport,” explains the resident of Monaco. “None of my friends have anything to do with motorsport. This keeps me from constantly thinking about racing and makes it easier for me to get rid of stress after a race.”

Pirro compensates for the fact that, at age 46, he is no longer a youngster by intensive fitness training in his own gym and by engaging in outdoor activities. “I'm doing a lot more now to stay fit than I used to. I've never been as fit in my life as I've been in recent years,” he emphasizes.

But fitness and talent are not the only factors that explain Emanuele Pirro's success as a racer and businessman. “I'm simply an optimist and always see the positive side of things,” he describes one of his greatest strengths.

Consequently, there is no reason to worry about Emanuele Pirro as his career as an active professional racer is gradually approaching its end. Life will definitely not be boring for him – he simply has too many interests and hobbies.

But at the moment, he is far from thinking about quitting yet. For one, the 2008



24 Hours of Le Mans are on the agenda – a race where not only speed counts but experience, reliability and keeping a cool head. Emanuele Pirro, no doubt, possesses these traits. Otherwise he would not have clinched nine podium positions in a row at Le Mans.

Note to TV editors:

Via [www.audi-motorsport.info](http://www.audi-motorsport.info) rights-free footage can be ordered, showing Emanuele Pirro spending private time with his family and during recreational activities.

**Photographs and information available at [www.audi-motorsport.info](http://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.