



Communications Motorsport

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May 22, 2009

Quotes after qualifying for the 24-hour race on the Nürburgring

Ingolstadt/Nürburg – The four Audi R8 LMS cars of Teams ABT Sportsline and Phoenix Racing will start as a solid formation from the second and third rows of the grid to the 24-hour race on the Nürburgring (start at 4 pm on Saturday). Quotes after qualifying.

Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "I think that, considering that this is our new Audi R8 LMS's maiden run at the 24-hour race, we can be happy with its performance. Obviously, we're able to run at the front of the field. However, we've done – and will continue to do – a lot of work on our new car. We're preparing ourselves for the race now which will be an extreme endurance test in the form of this highly special 24-hour race for the Audi R8 LMS."

Marc Basseng (Audi R8 LMS #99/Phoenix Racing): "From my perspective, qualifying went very well. I caught the cars that were still leaving the pit lane. That cost me some time but then I had the Nordschleife all to myself. Obviously, that's a huge advantage. The Audi was running like a charm. I was able to drive at the limit for a long time. I'm definitely happy with the result."

Mike Rockenfeller (Audi R8 LMS #99/Phoenix Racing): "At the end of the second qualifying, I tried another fast lap. However, after the Bergwerk uphill to the Kesselchen someone crashed and there was a lot of debris on the track. Otherwise, I might have achieved a similarly good time as Marc (Basseng). He drove a fantastic lap. All of us are happy. The result means that, at race start, we won't be part of the big commotion quite as much."



Frank Stippler (Audi R8 LMS #99/Phoenix Racing): “From my point of view, things went well. We’re at the far front of the starting grid. On the whole, it was an interesting qualifying event with three different brands on the top three grid positions. The times are close together. That promises to make for a thrilling race.”

Christian Abt (Audi R8 LMS #97/Team ABT Sportsline): “At first, I was a little disappointed by our time because I was sure that we’d be able to make a much better showing. It was impressive that Lucas (Luhr) all the way at the end and in the middle of traffic managed posting such a good time. Well done to him – in my book, that was today’s top performance.”

Jean-François Hemroulle (Audi R8 LMS #97/Team ABT Sportsline): “We’ve got a very good car for the race and a viable setup for 24 hours. I’m driving on a great team with good teammates. I hope we’ll be driving a good race. With four Audi cars at the front of the field, we’ve got a good starting base. The race is long. I’m hoping things will go well for us all the way through to the end.”

Pierre Kaffer (Audi R8 LMS #97/Team ABT Sportsline): “We were a bit out of luck in the early stages of qualifying because I caught permanent traffic despite my good starting base. That’s why I’m particularly happy that Lucas (Luhr) managed such a strong lap in the end. Audi and Team Abt Sportsline did a great job and prepared the R8 extremely well. I think we’re a very homogenous squad in our car that has set some ambitious goals. I’m happy when the race finally starts.”

Lucas Luhr (Audi R8 LMS #97/Team ABT Sportsline): “A fast lap is often possible only at the beginning of a session but I was really lucky with traffic on the track at the end today. Fourth place clearly sounds better than eleventh – and a 1.6-second gap to pole is something I can live with very well.”

Mattias Ekström (Audi R8 LMS #100/Team ABT Sportsline): “Qualifying was okay. Timo delivered a pretty good lap in the beginning. That was enough for a place among the top five. I drove two laps myself. The feeling was good, but I was driving in heavy traffic. The car’s running well and we’re looking forward to the race.”



Timo Scheider (Audi R8 LMS #100/Team ABT Sportsline): “That was really a special kind of chaos in the pit lane at the start to qualifying. I’ve never seen anything like this! The first lap was something special too: braking on entering, driving door to door and catching a free lap – I had to go for all-out attack on the Grand Prix circuit. I got through pretty well and was the second to enter the Nordschleife.”

Marco Werner (Audi R8 LMS #100/Team ABT Sportsline): “Today showed that we’ve already got the speed we need with our Audi R8 LMS. Now we’re excited about the upcoming start on Sunday and will do what we can to make it through the 24 hours on the Nordschleife unscathed – because there’s always a small question mark behind that on this unique track. And our car is still a baby.”

Frank Biela (Audi R8 LMS #98/Phoenix Racing): “Having a good car for the race is what counts. The qualifying result is secondary. I believe we’re well sorted. We’re quite happy after there was a bit of chaos during practice on Thursday. At the end of the subsequent qualifying I tried another run on new tires. But the yellow flag was waved twice and I had to drive at very low speed.”

Marcel Fässler (Audi R8 LMS #98/Phoenix Racing): “I think it’s been a successful qualifying for the two Audi R8 LMS cars I’m driving. Position three on the grid for our second car is a pretty good result even though the qualifying is not that crucial for the race from my perspective. We’re competitive and that’s what counts.”

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R8 LMS #98/Phoenix Racing): “It’s been a very good qualifying for us and for myself. For me, it was important to complete a large number of laps. I drove in all kinds of conditions, including in rain at night on Thursday. I improved and got to know the track better which is very important for me. We really clinched a good team result. Four cars are close together among the top six.”

Hans-Joachim Stuck (Audi R8 LMS #98/Phoenix Racing): “This was a thrilling qualifying! Looking at what’s going on in the run-up to the race, you’d think that the race had long started. All Audi cars show strong potential. All are running well and are very fast. I’m happy that, finally, the race will start tomorrow. ‘To finish first, you first have to finish’ – that’s the way I look at it.”



Ernst Moser (Teamchef Phoenix Racing): “At the two-hour qualifying on Friday, you had to get everything down pat. Due to the rain the day before it was clear that the first trial on Friday on a dry, clear track would be crucial. It was important for us to get out early. That allowed us to post the time. In the end, we wanted to improve once more but some areas were yellow flagged. We can be happy with our positions on the front rows of the grid.”

Hans-Jürgen Abt (Teamchef Team ABT Sportsline): “We’re totally happy with second row. This performance already shows that all our hard work has paid off. A 1.6-second gap to pole over a distance of 25 kilometers – I think that’s nothing to sneeze at. If things continue like this on Saturday afternoon, the race will be a real humdinger. We’re well prepared and looking forward to it.”

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Photographs and information available at www.audi-motorsport.info

AUDI AG sold a total of 1,003,469 cars in 2008 and thus achieved its 13th consecutive record year. The Company posted new record figures with revenue of €34.2 billion and profit before tax of €3.2 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 and of the Audi A4 in early October 2008. 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 currently employs around 58,000 people worldwide, including 46,500 in Germany. The brand with the four rings invests around €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 to 42. The AUDI brand celebrates its 100th birthday in 2009. The company was founded by August Horch in Zwickau on July 16, 1909; he named it AUDI after the Latin translation of his surname (“hark!”).