

## Quotes from Team Audi Sport after the Baja España Aragón

- **Carlos Sainz/Lucas Cruz finish home race**
- **Rolf Michl: “Learned a lot – an appealing performance by Carlos”**

Neuburg a. d. Donau, July 22, 2023 – Team Audi Sport contested the Baja España Aragón around Teruel in eastern Spain for the first time. The competition, in which Audi competed outside the classification, together with a previous test marked the start of the squad’s six-month preparation for the 2024 Dakar Rally. While Carlos Sainz/Lucas Cruz finished in the Audi RS Q e-tron, Mattias Ekström/Emil Bergkvist retired after a water crossing caused damage to the power steering pump. In the case of Stéphane Peterhansel/Edouard Boulanger, a faulty sensor with consequences for the electric drive ended the race prematurely.

### **Rolf Michl (Head of Audi Motorsport)**

“The Baja España Aragón was the first test under race conditions since the Dakar Rally in January. We knew why we chose these conditions here in Spain. We learned a lot about our new set-up. Unfortunately, both Stéphane’s and Mattias’ cars retired in the competition for technical reasons. We’re now investigating the causes in detail. But Carlos and Lucas finished the race with an appealing performance. For us this was a first important step towards the Dakar 2024.”

### **Sven Quandt (Team principal Q Motorsport)**

“Our learning curve was valuable. And it was the first joint start of a team, as we have now partly reorganized it. The Baja was interesting, even if we had hoped for a different result. We learned a lot in just two days. Finally we were back in competition mode and experienced the competition. We managed to take a step forward with the suspension, which was important. There’s still work ahead of us, but the direction is right. The defects on the other two cars are not so nice, but they are also part of our learning curve. Next up is the Morocco Rally, where we already want to compete with the configuration for the Dakar Rally.”

### **Carlos Sainz**

“The first stage today took place on yesterday’s track, but it now contained a clean line with fewer boulders. That’s why the times turned out much better after it was difficult to open the track on the first day. On the final stage, we were again the first car to open the track, which was again very challenging. For the whole team, the rally was productive. Now we have to check various small things. Our team has now contested its first Baja. The main goal was to learn a lot.”

### Lucas Cruz

“That was not an easy rally for us. As the first on the track, we actually had to sweep away the stones. We suffered two punctures in the process. However, the regulations do not allow competitors to use additional tires for the rest of the rally. Overall, we learned a lot in the two weeks in Spain, especially during the test. For the Baja we had to change the set-up of the car a bit compared to a desert rally. These tracks are not so typical of what we can expect at the Dakar Rally. But we’re learning with every kilometer.”

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