

05 / Le Mans, 11 June 2004

Quotes from the Audi press conference

Jamie Davies (Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx / Audi R8 #88): "Our team had two trouble-free practice days. We are in front of the grid and hope that in the race we encounter no unexpected problems. All of us are working highly concentrated and are focussed on victory."

Johnny Herbert (Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx / Audi R8 #88): "This year it seems I was simply more lucky than Tom. I really wanted the pole position and got a clear lap just at the right moment. The car is very consistent and we found the right setup for the race. All four Audi R8 sports cars have a good chance to win the race. I hope for the fans that all four R8 cars stay in the race until the very end and fight for victory. If this happens you will not have seen an exciting fight like this for a long time."

Guy Smith (Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx / Audi R8 #88): "In practice, Johnny concentrated on taking the pole position while Jamie and I concentrated on finding the right setup. This worked perfectly. Also this year the Audi R8 is the car to beat. The cars mixed among the R8 cars will probably only be able to match our pace at the beginning of the race."

Frank Biela (Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx / Audi R8 #8): "Despite Audi mainly concentrating on DTM this year, I am happy to be sitting in an Audi R8 again. The R8 is a wonderful car and Le Mans 2004 will be a outstanding, tough race. Therefore it's good to share a cockpit with Allan McNish – we've been team-mates in the past but drove different cars. It's much better to be in the same car as him."

Pierre Kaffer (Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx / Audi R8 #8): "The legendary Le Mans track, especially for me being a rookie, is simply exciting. The high speeds on the straights are very impressive. I like also driving in the night. Despite getting not get so many laps during practice, I feel well prepared for my first participation in this endurance classic."

Allan McNish (Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx / Audi R8 #8): "I'm really happy to be back in the Audi family after three years in Formula 1. Today's Audi R8 is a great development. The FSI engine has especially impressed me with its drivability and its economic fuel consumption. I'm convinced that we will see an entertaining race. Who wants to win has to attack right from the start, but at the same time not taking big risks."

Seiji Ara (Audi Sport Japan Team Goh / Audi R8 #5): "The Le Mans race is very popular in my home country and is very important. I am happy to have experienced team-mates like Dindo and Tom. I've already learnt a lot from them about the car. Now we have a good car and a good setup, so I'd really like to win."

Rinaldo Capello (Audi Sport Japan Team Goh / Audi R8 #5): "After I won Le Mans last year with Bentley, I'd also like to be finally successful here with Audi. I am

proud that I was able to drive for both manufacturers. The Bentley and the Audi R8 are the best race cars that have ever been built for Le Mans.”

Tom Kristensen (Audi Sport Japan Team Goh / Audi R8 #5): “Last year, Johnny was slowed down by traffic while we were fighting for the pole. This time it was the other way around. Now I concentrate of the race which of course I want to win. I am not really thinking about being able to equal the record of six-time Le Mans winner Jacky Ickx. But many people talked to me about this record and asked me if this race has a special meaning to me. It’s simply always a great feeling being successful at Le Mans.”

JJ Lehto (Team ADT Champion Racing / Audi R8 #2): “I will sit down and watch the action at the beginning of the race. In the first hours there will be a lot of traffic on the track and I’m sure we will have a very exciting race.”

Emanuele Pirro (Team ADT Champion Racing / Audi R8 #2): “After the first DTM races it took me some time to get used to the Audi R8. I came to Le Mans with fever, but fortunately I am fit again. After working hard on my fitness over the whole winter, it would have been really disappointing if a virus slowed me down. All four Audi R8 cars have good possibilities to win the race. Usually the car which spends the least time in the pits, will win the race.”

Marco Werner (Team ADT Champion Racing / Audi R8 #2): “I feel really good working together with my team mates JJ and Emanuele. We have a lot of fun. At the end of practice, I was able to record fast lap times with the race setup. This makes me optimistic for the race. After winning Daytona and Sebring, a victory at Le Mans would be the greatest for me.”

Kazumichi Goh (Team Director Audi Sport Japan Team Goh): “Since I was a child, Le Mans is the race I love. That’s why I really enjoy being here. How important the race is in Japan is proven by my 77-year old mother. She gets many phone calls from people who want to get information about the race. Le Mans seems to be more popular in Japan than Formula 1.”

Sam Li (Team Director Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx): “The cooperation with Audi is very professional. My team would like to take the chance to win this race as a customer team. I talked to Dr Ullrich how he would handle a race like this. Audi Sport means not only Audi, but also Sport – so we will allow our drivers to compete flat-out throughout the entire race.”

Dave Maraj (Team Director Team ADT Champion Racing): “Starting sixth does not mean much at Le Mans. The fastest lap was not so important to us. We had to sort out some problems with the car and concentrated totally on the race setup. All Audi cars will be prepared perfectly and we will see a tough race right from the start.”

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “I am happy how professional our customer teams are working. We are like a big family and guarantee to each other every possible support. Most of the drivers I know very well after working together for a long time. It’s a great mix of very different characters. Despite the fierce competition among our customer teams, they all know that the Audi brand

is the most important thing. They all will try to bring their Audi R8 cars to the finish. If they achieve this, there will be automatically be a good result.”

Editorial notes

We can be contacted on location at Le Mans and at the Nürburgring by E-mail at lemans@audi-motorsport.info and nuerburgring@audi-motorsport.info.

Photographs and further information are available in the Internet:
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