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## **R15 plus wins its race début**

- **Audi Sport Team Joest wins Le Mans Series opener**
- **Clear victory for Dindo Capello and Allan McNish**
- **Important findings for the 24 Hours of Le Mans**

**Ingolstadt/Le Castellet, 11 April 2010 – The Audi R15 TDI, model year 2010 (internally labeled “R15 plus”) has won its race début at Le Castellet (France) and in doing so left a strong impression.**

The technically further developed diesel racing sports car ran the entire distance without the smallest problem during the test race. On the opening lap of the 8-hour race Allan McNish overtook the Peugeot which had started from pole position in the hands of Frenchman Stéphane Sarrazin and on the third lap the Lola-Aston Martin of Stefan Mücke. From then on Allan McNish and teammate Dindo Capello did not relinquish the lead. At the checkered flag after 266 laps the two Audi drivers held a five-lap lead from the Lola-Aston Martin of defending champion Stefan Mücke, Harold Primat and Adrian Fernandez. The Oreca team Peugeot finished fourth after succumbing to a technical problem during the opening stages of the race.

The only unscheduled pit stop was made just seven minutes before the end of the race, when Audi Sport Team Joest switched to rain tires for safety reasons as rain began to fall.

Audi Sport Team Joest used the Le Mans Series 2010 season opener as preparation for the 24-hour race at Le Mans on 12/13 June. In the practice sessions on Friday and Saturday as well as Sunday morning’s warm-up the team compared different set-up configurations before selecting a version which allowed Dindo Capello and Allan McNish to record constantly fast laps in the relatively low temperatures. The Audi R15 TDI was almost always the fastest car in the field throughout the eight hours and also set the fastest race lap.

Audi Sport Team Joest gained important knowledge for Le Mans during the victorious race at Le Castellet, which will now be evaluated by Audi Sport in Ingolstadt and which go into further fine tuning of the R15 plus.



Next on the agenda is a 30-hour test and the Le Mans dress rehearsal at the 1000-kilometre race at Spa-Francorchamps on 9 May, which Audi Sport Team Joest will contest, exactly like Le Mans, with three Audi R15 TDI.

### **Quotes after the race**

**Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** “It is impressive that Audi Sport has developed a prototype for a fourth consecutive time which was able to win its debut race: after the R8, the R10 and the R15 now the R15 plus. Of course we are very happy that the R15 plus has won the Le Castellet 8 Hours in its test entry. But even more important is the fact that the car is already very fast and reliable. We did not have the slightest technical problem here and without the rain shower in the end we would have completed the whole distance without any unscheduled pit-stop. This success is a small milestone on the way to Le Mans and a first reward for the hard work of the previous weeks and months. But we know very well that there is still plenty of work to do until Le Mans.”

**Dindo Capello (Audi R15 TDI #7):** “For sure it is nice to be back on the highest step of the podium – especially at the debut of a new car. What makes me happy is that the changes we have done with the car – even the ones after the warm-up – worked quite well. Our next task is to make the R15 plus more consistent.”

**Allan McNish (Audi R15 TDI #7):** “We have achieved three things: First of all we gave the R15 plus its debut victory. This continues a tradition for Audi’s debut wins of new LMP1 cars. We won the race, which for the team and the drivers was very important especially after our difficulties last year. And for the engineers and the drivers it was very good experience for Le Mans. I think we ticked all the boxes and achieved our goals for this one.”

**Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest):** “This was a good race for us. After the Oreca-Peugeot had problems so early in the race, the pressure was missing a little bit. But we just tried to continue to go flat out. We did this for eight hours without any problems. But we’ve seen this weekend as well that we still have to learn a lot with the car – and this was the purpose of this test race. We’ve already completed a lot of kilometers with the R15 plus, but these have all been endurance tests. We just started to play with the car here at Le Castellet and this weekend has given us a lot of knowledge and a big step forward. Thanks to the team which has done a great job. This is a superb result we can build on.”



### **Race results**

- 1 Capello/McNish (Audi R15 TDI) 266 laps in 8h 00m 36.415s
- 2 Primat/Mücke/Fernandez (Lola-Aston Martin) - 5 laps
- 3 Belicchi/Boullion/Smith (Lola-Rebellion) - 5 laps
- 4 Panis/Lapierre/Sarrazin (Peugeot) - 8 laps
- 5 Ayari/Andre/Duval (Oreca-AIM) - 8 laps
- 6 Ragues/Mailleux/Ickx (Lola-Aston Martin) - 10 laps
- 7 Leventis/Watts/Kane (Acura/Honda) - 16 laps
- 8 Moreau/Gulliaume/Hein (Pescarolo-Judd) - 16 laps
- 9 Erdos/Newton/Wallace (Lola-Honda) - 17 laps
- 10 Lahaye/Nicolet (Pescarolo-Judd) - 17 laps

AUDI Group sold around 950,000 cars in 2009. The Company posted revenue of €29.8 billion and an operating profit of €1.6 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 AUDI HUNGARIA MOTOR Kft., 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 45,500 in Germany. Between 2010 and 2012 the Audi Group is planning to invest around €5.5 billion in order to sustain the Company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. By 2015, Audi plans to significantly increase the number of models in its portfolio to 42.

Audi has long been fulfilling its social responsibility on many levels – with the aim of making the future worth living for generations to come. The basis for Audi's lasting success is therefore formed by environmental protection, the conservation of resources, international competitiveness and a forward-looking human resources policy. One example of AUDI AG's commitment to environmental issues is the newly established Audi Environmental Foundation.