

## **Red rhombus meets “Green Hell”: 40 years of Audi Sport GmbH with a special kick-off at the Nürburgring**

- **Audi subsidiary celebrates its 40th birthday this year**
- **Oliver Hoffmann: “We have a clear goal: to successfully carry the sporting DNA of the four rings into the electric future”**
- **Rolf Michl: “The Nürburgring is a magical place for us”**
- **Sebastian Grams: “We want to shape the future of mobility in the high-performance segment in a sustainable and progressive way”**

**Ingolstadt/Neckarsulm, May 15, 2023 – Almost 40 years ago – on October 10, 1983 – Audi Sport GmbH, as it is known now, was founded as quattro GmbH. Today, it shapes the sporty and exclusive image of the brand with the four rings. At Audi, the vehicles with the red rhombus stand for performance and sportiness. The birthday celebrations begin at the Nürburgring 24 Hours next weekend (May 18–21).**

40 years, more than 250,000 vehicles produced in the past ten years alone and more than 400 clinched motorsport titles meet 20.832 kilometers, 73 turns and elevation changes of more than 300 meters – key figures that stand for Audi Sport GmbH and also the legendary Nordschleife – also known as the “Green Hell” – of the Nürburgring. This has shaped Audi Sport GmbH like no other race track. The circuit in the Eifel region and the wholly owned subsidiary of AUDI AG share a close relationship – both in racing and in the high-performance vehicles of the series. Audi Sport has been an official partner of the 24-hour race since 2002 and provides the “official cars” to the race organizers. Since 2009, the Audi R8 LMS has been competing in the Eifel marathon, which is one of the annual highlights of Audi Sport customer racing. The customer racing division has been part of the former quattro GmbH since 2011. With six overall victories and three additional GT3 class wins to date, Audi is the most successful manufacturer in the GT3 era of the endurance classic at the “Green Hell.” So, it’s no surprise that Audi Sport GmbH is launching its activities to mark its milestone birthday at the Nürburgring: At this year’s edition of the 24-hour race, the four Audi R8 LMS cars of the Audi Sport Teams will be competing in retro designs to mark the 40th anniversary of Audi Sport GmbH, featuring famous liveries from Audi’s motorsport history. In keeping with the birthday spirit, former DTM champions Mike Rockenfeller, Timo Scheider and Martin Tomczyk will take part with the number 40 as their start number. Their Audi R8 LMS from Audi Sport Team Scherer PHX is visually based on the 1992 Audi V8 quattro DTM.

*\*The collective fuel/electric power consumption and emissions values of all models named and available on the German market can be found in the list provided at the end of this text.*

Due to its demanding characteristics of the track, the Nordschleife is not only a motorsport challenge, but also a yardstick for the production vehicles of Audi Sport GmbH. Every new R and RS model completes several thousand kilometers on the varied Eifel circuit during its development phase. “The Nürburgring is the world’s toughest race track. It is a magical place for us and that’s why it is perfectly suited to start our 40th company birthday at the 24-hour race,” says Rolf Michl, Managing Director of Audi Sport GmbH and Head of Motorsport at Audi. “The Nürburgring-Nordschleife is considered as a Mecca for all motorsport fans. For me, the 24-hour race is one of the most beautiful things you can experience in motorsport, but the Nürburgring is also essential for the development of our production cars. All our models are tested there under extreme conditions and brought to production readiness.”

### **Exciting activities for the anniversary**

Audi is planning several activities for the 24-hour race weekend at the Eifel circuit. On Friday, May 19, Mike Rockenfeller, Timo Scheider and Martin Tomczyk, as well as Audi Sport Managing Directors Sebastian Grams and Rolf Michl, will be on hand to answer questions at the “Champions’ talk” in the media center. Various models from the company’s history will be on display in the ring°boulevard. These include the first-generation Audi R8 and RS 4 Avant, the current R8 GT\* and the RS 4 Avant with the competition package\*. Another highlight is the all-electric Audi S1 Hoonitron, with which the unforgettable Ken Block caused a stir on the streets of Las Vegas in the “Electrikhana” video. And shortly before the 24-hour race, spectators can admire high-performance models from the sporty Audi subsidiary in a motorcade along the famous track.

Fans can also look forward to celebrations at the headquarters of Audi Sport GmbH in Neckarsulm. The anniversary exhibition of “40 years of Audi Sport GmbH – Fascination Meets Performance” will provide an almost complete overview of the history of Audi Sport GmbH from June 14: In addition to automotive highlights – from the first vehicle of the former quattro GmbH to various models from the customer racing program and the current product portfolio – there are also worthwhile exhibits from the Audi collection and vehicle customization to enjoy seeing at the Audi Forum Neckarsulm. The exhibition runs concurrently with the special exhibition of “150 Years of NSU: Innovation, Daring, Transformation” about the history of the traditional NSU brand.

Finally, another highlight is coming up in the fall: To mark the birthday of Audi Sport GmbH, a rally for fans of the red rhombus is planned for October 14, heading to the Audi Forum Neckarsulm. Audi Sport GmbH is inviting visitors to a special day there. Informative guided tours through the special exhibition, which will be supplemented exclusively for this day by further exhibits on four wheels that are not otherwise open to the public, will enable visitors to take an exciting journey through the 40-year history of the company. An entertaining stage program completes the offer for visitors.

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## Well positioned for the future

“Audi Sport GmbH has written a real success story over the past four decades. With passion and team spirit, many exciting high-performance projects have been developed to production readiness, emotional customer experiences have been created and great successes in motorsport have been achieved,” says Oliver Hoffmann, Member of the Board of Management for Technical Development at AUDI AG and Chairman of the Advisory Board of Audi Sport GmbH. “We have a clear goal: to successfully carry the sporting DNA of the four rings into the electric future.” Managing Director Sebastian Grams adds: “The company has remained true to itself over all these years, has always been courageous and dared to do new things. This spirit of innovation still characterizes us today. We want to shape the future of mobility in the high-performance segment in a sustainable and progressive way.”

Audi Sport GmbH is currently involved in four business areas: In addition to the development and production of high-performance models, it is responsible for both factory and customer racing for the brand with the four rings. In addition, vehicle customization via the Audi exclusive program and the sale of high-quality lifestyle collections from the Audi collection are among its core areas. Audi Sport GmbH currently employs around 1,500 people. In 2022, the wholly owned subsidiary of AUDI AG once again set a sales record with exactly 45,515 cars. With 16 models, the vehicle portfolio is larger than ever, ranging from the compact Audi RS 3 Sportback\* and the high-performance RS Q8\* SUV to the R8 Coupé\* super sports car and the top electric model, the RS e-tron GT\*. With the all-electric four-door coupé, the sporty Audi subsidiary is demonstrating a pioneering spirit in the field of electric mobility. Last year, 10,042, or around a quarter of the vehicles delivered by Audi Sport GmbH, were already models from the e-tron GT family, with around one in three of these being an RS model. “We want to make the right segment-specific offer to our customers. This ranges from broad electrification via mild hybrids to the flexibility of the future performance plug-in hybrids to the special driving experience of electric cars,” Sebastian Grams explaining the corporate strategy. “With the RS e-tron GT, we started the era of highly emotional and electric vehicles – with the new all-electric Audi Sport models on the PPE platform, such as the first electric performance SUV, we will continue this chapter. By the end of the decade, the portfolio is to be converted one hundred percent to battery electric (BEV) and partially electric (PHEV) models. At the same time, we want to make even greater use of our small-series expertise for highly emotional vehicles in the future.”

Audi Sport GmbH is also a key driver of electrification for Audi in motorsport. Under its leadership, the innovative Audi RS Q e-tron prototype was created in 2021 for its first participation in the legendary Dakar Rally. The vehicle’s drivetrain concept combines an electric powertrain with a high-voltage battery and a highly efficient energy converter that charges the high-voltage battery while driving. The energy converter consists of an TFSI engine from the DTM coupled to a drivetrain unit from Formula E as a generator. From 2026, the four rings will compete in the FIA Formula One World Championship.

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The new rules rely on greater electrification, and the electric drivetrain unit (MGU-K) will then have nearly as much power as the combustion engine. The highly efficient 1.6-liter turbocharged engines will be powered by sustainable synthetic fuel. An independent company, Audi Formula Racing GmbH, has been established to enter the premier class of motorsport.

### **Constant change**

When Audi Sport GmbH was founded as quattro GmbH in 1983 with just a few employees, hardly anyone expected that it would become a manufacturer of high-quality and high-performance vehicles with an extremely successful motorsport program over the following four decades. In the early days, the company's primary concern was to ensure protection of the "quattro" name and marketing rights. But since then, the company has continued to develop and opened new business avenues. In 1984, for example, it began selling accessories. Since then, the articles from the Audi collection have made the hearts of fans beat faster. Whether clothing, luggage or model cars, the lifestyle collection enables a comprehensive brand experience. Eleven years later, another important pillar was added: Since 1995, Audi Sport customers, who love the unusual, have been able to have their vehicles customized. The options and equipment programs offered by Audi exclusive are considerable and have always been a guarantee for technical and visual highlights. One of the most unusual vehicles was probably the Audi "Picasso" cabriolet with its leather interior designed by the world-famous artist.

Another milestone in the company's history followed just one year later: quattro GmbH became a registered vehicle manufacturer and presented the S6 plus, the first model of its own, at the Geneva Motor Show. 2007 saw the debut of the first super sports car from the four rings: the Audi R8, now in its second generation. The GT3 version of the mid-engine sports car was also the starting point for the customer racing program, which has since been further expanded with the RS 3 LMS, R8 LMS GT4 and R8 LMS GT2 models. To date, vehicles built by Audi Sport customer racing have clinched more than 400 titles and countless race victories worldwide. In 2014, the R8 was given a very special production line in the form of the Böllinger Höfe facility, which is characterized by being a combination of a manufacturing and a smart factory. In addition to the mid-engine sports car, the electrified top models, the e-tron GT quattro\* and RS e-tron GT, are also currently built here on a shared production line that is unique throughout the Group. In 2016, quattro GmbH was renamed as Audi Sport GmbH. The name Audi Sport is based on the long and successful tradition of the four rings in motorsport.

"Audi Sport GmbH can look back on 40 exciting and very successful years. This was and is only possible thanks to a strong team effort," says Rolf Michl. "For us, one thing is certain: taking new, unusual paths and continuously developing further – this will continue to characterize Audi Sport GmbH."

> **Further information and content on 40 years of Audi Sport GmbH can be found [here](#).**

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The Audi Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the premium and luxury segment. The brands Audi, Bentley, Lamborghini, and Ducati produce at 22 locations in 13 countries. Audi and its partners are present in more than 100 markets worldwide.

In 2022, the Audi Group delivered 1.61 million Audi vehicles, 15,174 Bentley vehicles, 9,233 Lamborghini vehicles, and 61,562 Ducati motorcycles to customers. In the 2022 fiscal year, AUDI Group achieved a total revenue of €61.8 billion and an operating profit of €7.6 billion. Worldwide, more than 87,000 people worked for the Audi Group in 2022, over 54,000 of them at AUDI AG in Germany. With its attractive brands, new models, innovative mobility offerings and groundbreaking services, the group is systematically pursuing its path toward becoming a provider of sustainable, individual, premium mobility.

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**Fuel/electric power consumption and emissions values\*\* of the models named above:**

**Audi RS 3 Sportback 2.5 TFSI quattro**

Combined fuel consumption in l/100 km: 9.5–9.0;  
combined CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in g/km: 216–205

**Audi RS 4 Avant 2.9 TFSI quattro**

Combined fuel consumption in l/100 km: 10.1–9.6;  
combined CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in g/km: 229–217

**Audi RS Q8 4.0 TFSI quattro**

Combined fuel consumption in l/100 km: 13.6–13.2;  
combined CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in g/km: 308–300

**Audi R8 Coupé V10 performance quattro**

Combined fuel consumption in l/100 km: 13.1–12.9;  
combined CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in g/km: 297–293

**Audi R8 Spyder V10 performance quattro**

Combined fuel consumption in l/100 km: 13.9–13.8;  
combined CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in g/km: 316–313

**Audi R8 Coupé V10 performance RWD**

Combined fuel consumption in l/100 km: 12.9–12.5;  
combined CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in g/km: 293–284

**Audi R8 Spyder V10 performance RWD**

Combined fuel consumption in l/100 km: 13.8–13.4;  
combined CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in g/km: 313–305

**Audi R8 Coupé V10 GT RWD**

Combined fuel consumption in l/100 km: 15.0–14.9;  
combined CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in g/km: 341–339

**Audi e-tron GT quattro**

Combined electric power consumption in kWh/100 km: 21.6–19.6;  
combined CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in g/km: 0

**Audi RS e-tron GT**

Combined electric power consumption in kWh/100 km: 22.1–19.8;  
combined CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in g/km: 0

*\*\*The indicated consumption and emissions values were determined according to the legally specified measuring methods. Since September 1, 2017, type approval for certain new vehicles has been performed in accordance with the Worldwide Harmonized Light Vehicles Test Procedure (WLTP), a more realistic test procedure for measuring fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Since September 1, 2018, the WLTP has gradually replaced the New European Driving Cycle (NEDC). Due to the more realistic test conditions, the consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emission values measured are in many cases higher than the values measured according to the NEDC. Additional information about the differences between WLTP and NEDC is available at [www.audi.de/wltp](http://www.audi.de/wltp).*

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*At the moment, it is still mandatory to communicate the NEDC values. In the case of new vehicles for which type approval was performed using WLTP, the NEDC values are derived from the WLTP values. WLTP values can be provided voluntarily until their use becomes mandatory. If NEDC values are indicated as a range, they do not refer to one, specific vehicle and are not an integral element of the offer. They are provided only for the purpose of comparison between the various vehicle types. Additional equipment and accessories (attachment parts, tire size, etc.) can change relevant vehicle parameters, such as weight, rolling resistance and aerodynamics and, like weather and traffic conditions as well as individual driving style, influence a vehicle's electric power consumption, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and performance figures.*

*Further information on official fuel consumption figures and the official specific CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of new passenger cars can be found in the "Guide on the fuel economy, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and power consumption of all new passenger car models," which is available free of charge at all sales dealerships and from DAT Deutsche Automobil Treuhand GmbH, Hellmuth-Hirth-Str. 1, 73760 Ostfildern-Scharnhausen, Germany ([www.dat.de](http://www.dat.de)).*