



Communications Motorsport

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Will Audi achieve a third 24-hour victory in 2012?

- **Audi aims to score next endurance success at Spa-Francorchamps**
- **Star-studded line-up with Le Mans winners Fässler/Kristensen/Lotterer**
- **Title defense in the Ardennes on July 28 and 29**

Ingolstadt, July 20, 2012 – Within the space of ten weeks, Audi will be competing in Belgium for the third victory at a 24-hour race following its successes at the Nürburgring on May 20 and at Le Mans on June 17.

Audi is currently contesting an extremely successful endurance racing season. Whereas the Audi R18 sports prototype won the first three races of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) including the Le Mans 24 Hours, the Audi R8 LMS ultra is a winner in its debut season as well. In May, Audi won the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring with it for the first time.

Spa-Francorchamps, not far from the Belgian-German border, will now be about achieving the next success – plus quite a bit more, as the classic event has the potential of producing additional accolades. For instance, Audi is returning with four R8 LMS ultra cars to the 7.004-kilometer roller-coaster in the Ardennes as last year's winner. A year ago, Audi Sport Team WRT celebrated victory at its home round. The team thus laid an important foundation for subsequently winning the Blancpain Endurance Series (BES). This year, the team of Vincent Vosse is battling to defend the title – at the Spa 24 Hours as well as in the BES. Stéphane Ortelli (MC), Christopher Haase (D) and Christopher Mies (D) are currently the runners-up ahead of their WRT team-mates Laurens Vanthoor (B) and Edward Sandström (S), who will be competing at Spa together with Marco Bonanomi (I). As almost twice as many points as at the other rounds are achievable at the 24-hour race a success at Spa has particularly high value.

Audi's factory line-up is completed by two Audi R8 LMS ultra cars of Audi Sport Team Phoenix. Ernst Moser's squad won the classic in the Ardennes with a GT1 car in 2007. Two months ago, the Eifel-based team celebrated overall victory with the R8



LMS ultra at the Nürburgring 24 Hours. Frank Stippler (D), one of the victorious Nürburg racers is sharing a cockpit with Andrea Piccini (I) and René Rast (D).

The international spotlight is focused on their team-mates. They combine twelve Le Mans victories among themselves and despite their long-standing experiences are in for a few premieres again. For the first time, Marcel Fässler (CH) and André Lotterer (D), who celebrated their second consecutive Le Mans victory this year, are forming a team with Tom Kristensen (DK). In addition, the Dane and the German are driving an R8 LMS ultra in a race for the first time. For Le Mans legend Kristensen, after eight victories at La Sarthe, this marks the first 24-hour car race outside of France.

Aside from overall victory, Audi Sport Team Phoenix is aiming for a trophy that can additionally be won for the first time. The team that achieves the best aggregated results at the Nürburgring and Spa 24-hour races will receive this new trophy.

No matter who is expecting to have the best chances the conditions this year will be tougher than ever. With more than 50 cars in the field, the Spa 24 Hours was the most important GT3 race worldwide last year. This year, 80 entrants with twelve different marques have been nominated for the popular and production-derived category. Arguably, no other class in any motorsport discipline has such a well-filled field. The entrants banking on the Audi R8, in addition to Phoenix and WRT, include five customer teams.

Quotes by the officials

Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “Last year, we won our first 24-hour race with the Audi R8 LMS at Spa. That is a very prestigious race. This year, the event will be even more thrilling and interesting as the number of entrants has reached an all-time high. We’re in for a very large field full of GT3 vehicles. And they’re Europe’s best GT3 vehicles. Our aim is to repeat last year’s success.”

Werner Frowein (quattro GmbH): “A year ago, Spa marked the beginning of a grand march down victory lane for the Audi R8 LMS at major endurance races. Since then, our GT3 customer race sports car has celebrated three 24-hour races plus numerous single victories in various racing series worldwide. Audi has kept its word and in the R8 LMS ultra is offering its customers a fascinating, reliable and promising race car that meanwhile occupies a place in racing history.”

Romolo Liebchen (Head of Audi Sport customer racing): “More than 80 entrants have been nominated for the Spa 24 Hours. At the moment, there’s arguably no



single class anywhere in the world that is more popular. Under its factory commitment, Audi is entering four R8 LMS ultra cars, plus there are six customer vehicles. Audi Sport customer racing of course supports the customer teams, Alfab Racing, JB Motorsport, GT3 Racing, Saintéloc Racing and United Autosports, in both word and deed. For these teams, not only the overall result but the PRO-AM classification, the Gentlemen Trophy, the team classification and valuable points for the Blancpain Endurance Series are at stake.”

Ernst Moser (Team Director Audi Sport Team Phoenix): “We love endurance races and we love Spa. This year, we’ve already won the Bathurst 12 Hours and the Nürburgring 24 Hours. Now we’re competing with the Le Mans aces Marcel Fässler, André Lotterer and Tom Kristensen. A tremendous challenge! In Frank Stippler we’ve got the Nürburgring 24 Hours winner on board who will be supported by Andrea Piccini and René Rast. That’s a strong team as well. And the Audi R8 LMS ultra runs perfectly at Spa. The aim is to clinch another victory for Audi. And this time hopefully for Audi Sport Team Phoenix ...”

Vincent Vosse (Team Director Audi Sport Team WRT): “The Spa 24 Hours are very emotional for me. In 1995, I participated as a driver for the first time – in an Audi 80 competition. In 2010, I ended my own career there in an Audi R8 LMS. A year ago, our young team was successful and exactly ten years ago I won this race myself. Plus, I’m living very close to the track. Audi is perfectly prepared and WRT is totally committed as well. In addition, we’ve got a top-class driver line-up. In the previous Blancpain race at Le Castellet, our three victorious drivers in terms of their average lap times across the whole distance were separated by only a tenth of a second.”

Facts and quotes by the Audi drivers

Christopher Haase, Audi R8 LMS ultra #1 (Audi Sport Team WRT):

- Won the Nürburgring 24 Hours in the Audi R8 LMS ultra
- At Le Castellet celebrated his first victory of the season in the BES

“Obviously, our victory in the past Blancpain race at Le Castellet is giving us a boost. We’re the runners-up in the standings now and at Spa up to 49 points are awarded. Naturally, our aim is to clinch a victory for Audi – no matter which driver team wins the race. Last year, I competed for Phoenix there, and this year for WRT. Both are top-caliber professional teams with a very individual approach. And we’re a good driver squad because Christopher Mies, Stéphane Ortelli and I are a perfect fit. Christopher and I benefit from Stéphane’s immense endurance racing experience.”



Christopher Mies, Audi R8 LMS ultra #1 (Audi Sport Team WRT):

- Won the Bathurst 12 Hours in the Audi R8 LMS
- Has never been on the grid at Spa

“At Spa, I’m experiencing a premiere. I’ve never driven a race there and only tested once. The loads which the car withstands in Eau Rouge are incredible. I won at Bathurst in February, drove the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring and am now traveling to Spa – these are three of the nicest circuits in the world. A year ago, we saw that the car and Audi Sport Team WRT are able to win at Spa. I think that the drivers and the weather are the factors that will decide the outcome this year.”

Stéphane Ortelli, Audi R8 LMS ultra #1 (Audi Sport Team WRT):

- Won the Spa 24 Hours in 2003
- Was the Le Mans winner in 1998

“The Spa 24 Hours is a great single event but I’ve been driving there for championship points as well for many years. This year, the title in the Blancpain Endurance Series is at stake. Twelve months ago, the Audi R8 LMS of Team WRT that won at Spa also clinched this title in the end. For me personally, the Le Mans 24 Hours is the most prestigious race but the Spa 24 Hours is the nicest run. I’ve won both races before and am eager to see what’s possible this year.”

Marco Bonanomi, Audi R8 LMS ultra #2 (Audi Sport Team WRT):

- Finished on the podium at Le Mans in his first 24-hour race
- Was the runner-up in the Blancpain season opener at Monza

“I’m in a very special position at Spa. My two team-mates are battling for a good championship spot in the Blancpain Endurance Series. But because I skipped the second race of the season due to my Le Mans program with Audi I’m lacking points. So I’m putting myself completely at the service of the team. At Spa, I was previously on podium this year, at the second WEC round. But the differences between our Audi R18 ultra and the R8 LMS ultra are huge. The braking points for a GT3 sports car are totally different. It even almost feels as though you’re driving more turns per lap in the R8 because you can drive the R18 flat-out in more places.”

Edward Sandström, Audi R8 LMS ultra #2 (Audi Sport Team WRT):

- Was the runner-up in the Spa 24 Hours last year
- Took second place in the BES races at Monza and Silverstone

“It’ll be a tremendous battle at Spa in the world’s toughest GT3 race. If you prepare well and approach the race with a calm hand, you’ve got good chances. But, at the Nürburgring we also saw how quickly you lose ground after a single mistake. Last year, I chased Audi on my 24-hour Spa debut and finished in second place. This year,



I'm driving for WRT. The team is giving us drivers the wonderful feeling of being truly welcome."

Laurens Vanthoor, Audi R8 LMS ultra #2 (Audi Sport Team WRT):

- Is racing a double program in the Audi R8 LMS ultra
- Was on podium twice in the Blancpain Endurance Series

"This is the first 24-hour race in my career. Also, I'm not as familiar yet with the track at Spa as one might expect a Belgian to be. I've been there only once in Formula 3 and drove a touring car race as well. But as pros we quickly adjust to new conditions. I'm receiving a lot of valuable information about the track and the race from my team-mates. I'm already looking forward to the event and am expecting many friends, my family, fans and familiar faces at Spa."

Marcel Fässler, Audi R8 LMS ultra #6 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix):

- Won the race in 2007 together with Team Phoenix
- Celebrated his second consecutive Le Mans victory in June

"Spa is a special event. And this year it's very special because I've got André Lotterer and Tom Kristensen as team-mates. I'm extremely fond of Spa and it's my favorite track. We know how good our R8 LMS ultra is. It's a nice further development of last year's car. We want to win this race. That would be really great after the victory at Le Mans."

Tom Kristensen, Audi R8 LMS ultra #6 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix):

- With eight victories under his belt, is the living legend of the Le Mans 24 Hours
- Is contesting his first 24-hour race at Spa

"It was easy to say yes when Audi asked me if I wanted to drive an R8 LMS ultra at the 24-hour race on the legendary track at Spa. The abbreviation R8 has a special meaning for me. I was on board at all the victories of the R8 LMP at Le Mans and achieved five of my eight successes in it. I was also one of the first customers of the road-going version of the R8, which I didn't acquire as a 'company car' but privately, and which I still own. And now I'm going to race the GT3 version – a cool thing, especially with André and Marcel in Team Phoenix."

André Lotterer, Audi R8 LMS ultra #6 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix):

- Grew up in Belgium and calls Spa his home track
- Finished the Spa 24 Hours in third place in the N-GT class ten years ago

"I'm looking forward to this challenge with huge anticipation. At Spa, I virtually grew up in racing. When my father owned a race team I visited many of the 24-hour race events and took part in one myself in 2002. In Marcel and Tom I've got two top-caliber colleagues this time. And the Audi R8 LMS ultra is a strong car. I'm



hoping for us to manage a good showing. I want to surpass my result from ten years ago this time.”

Andrea Piccini, Audi R8 LMS ultra #16 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix):

- Took third place in the FIA GT1 World Championship last year
 - Was the runner-up in the Audi R8 LMS ultra in the Blancpain race at Silverstone
- “In the past years I tried to win the Spa 24 Hours for Phoenix several times. In 2006, we were leading for a long time before dropping to second place. In the past two years, I was on the grid in the Audi R8 LMS for Phoenix at Spa. We were quick but something kept getting in our way. It would be great if we finally had the necessary racing luck this year. Ernst Moser has a strong team. He’s a superb motivator and always has several driver squads on the grid that are in contention for victory. And the Audi R8 LMS ultra is a car for position one. I’d really like to give this great team a victory.”

René Rast, Audi R8 LMS ultra #16 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix):

- Won the Daytona 24 Hours in the GT class in January
- After three victories this season, is the leader of the standings in the Porsche Supercup

“My mood is outstanding. At Daytona, our team celebrated a class victory in the 24-hour race. At the Nürburgring, we were leading with the Audi R8 LMS ultra when we were struck by a mishap. At Spa, my team-mates Frank Stippler and Andrea Piccini are bringing a lot of experience to the team. And Ernst Moser has forged a squad in Audi Sport Team Phoenix that projects a strong ‘we’ feeling. There are arguably no mechanics in the whole pit lane that perform better and quicker stops. That can become an important key to success at Spa.”

Frank Stippler, Audi R8 LMS ultra #16 (Audi Sport Team Phoenix):

- Won the Nürburgring 24 Hours in the Audi R8 LMS ultra
- Celebrated a VLN endurance race win on the Nordschleife in June

“After our victory at the Nürburgring 24 Hours we received massive responses and cordial congratulations from all over the world. That’s great motivation for the next 24-hour race with its huge field. We’ve got extremely strong team colleagues but the competitive situation is tough in general too. The GT3 class continues to be in great demand. I like Spa because it’s an old-school type of circuit. Natural spectator stands similar to those along the Nürburgring-Nordschleife, a long track, many vertical differences and thrilling turns – that’s what I love.”



The schedule at Spa-Francorchamps

Thursday, July 26

09:45–11:15	Free practice
18:20–19:20	Pre-qualifying
20:20–21:35	Qualifying 1
22:05–23:20	Qualifying 2

Friday, July 27

15:35–15:55	Super Pole
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Saturday, July 28

09:05–09:25	Warm-up
16:00	Start

Sunday, July 29

16:00	Finish
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The Audi Group delivered 1,302,659 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2011. In 2011 the Company posted revenue of €44.1 billion and an operating profit of €5.3 billion. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). The Audi Q7 is built in Bratislava (Slovakia). In July 2010, CKD production of the Audi Q5 was added to the existing Audi A4 and A6 manufacturing operations in Aurangabad (India). At the Brussels plant, production of the Audi A1 has been running since 2010, while production of the new A1 Sportback began in 2012. The Audi Q3 has been built in Martorell (Spain) since June 2011. The Company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include AUDI HUNGARIA MOTOR Kft. (Győr/Hungary), Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. (Sant'Agata Bolognese/Italy), AUDI BRUSSELS S.A./N.V. (Brussels/Belgium), quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm and the motorcycle manufacturer Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. (Bologna/Italy). Audi currently employs around 65,000 people worldwide, including around 48,000 in Germany. Between 2012 and 2016 the brand with the four rings is planning to invest a total of €13 billion – mainly in new products and the extension of production capacities – in order to sustain the Company's technological lead embodied in its "Vorsprung durch Technik" slogan. Audi is currently expanding its site in Győr (Hungary) and will start production in Foshan (China) in late 2013 and in Mexico in 2016.

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 Audi Environmental Foundation. Within the context of "Vorsprung durch Technik," which extends far beyond its products, the Company is directing its activities toward a major goal – comprehensive CO₂-neutral mobility.