



Communications Motorsport

Jürgen Pippig
Tel: +49 (0)841 89 34200
E-mail: juergen.pippig@audi.de
www.audi-motorsport.info

Eva-Maria Veith
Tel: +49 (0)841 89 33922
E-mail: eva-maria.veith@audi.de

With e-tron quattro to first hybrid pole position at Le Mans

- **Audi's diesel hybrid sports car takes grid position one at Le Mans**
- **André Lotterer beats last year's best time by nearly two seconds**
- **Two Audi R18 cars on the front row**

Ingolstadt/Le Mans, June 15, 2012 – Premiere at the Le Mans 24 Hours: The 80th running of the endurance classic that has been held since 1923 will see a sports car with hybrid drive starting from grid position one for the first time – the new Audi R18 e-tron quattro.

The intelligent combination of TDI power at the rear axle and an electrically driven front axle made it possible for André Lotterer in the Audi R18 e-tron quattro designated as car number “1” to achieve a fastest lap of 3m 23.787s in the final qualifying session on Thursday night shortly after 22:00 – and thus an improvement of last year's best time by nearly two seconds.

“The car was running like it was on rails, simply incredible,” raved the 31-year-old German as he praised the advantages of the new type of electric quattro drive that is already being tested at Audi for use in production vehicles. “The guys at Audi Sport did a top job yet again and made my first pole position at Le Mans possible for me. Many thanks to them for this!”

But not only the R18 e-tron quattro showed a convincing performance on both qualifying days at Le Mans. World championship front runner Loïc Duval in the fastest conventionally powered number “3” R18 ultra was merely 0.291 seconds slower. “My lap wasn't completely free, more would have been possible,” reported the Frenchman. “That's why I'd actually expected my time to be beaten. But the main goal was to be in front of Toyota – and we achieved this.”

Le Mans record winner Tom Kristensen in the number “2” Audi R18 e-tron quattro set the fourth-fastest lap (3m 25.433s) behind the quickest hybrid vehicle from Toyota. Le Mans rookie Marco Bonanomi in the number “4” Audi R18 ultra took grid



position six (3m 26.420 s. This meant that all four vehicles fielded by Audi Sport Team Joest qualified for the three front rows.

After 2000, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2011, this marked the seventh pole position for Audi at Le Mans. Each time, the brand with the four rings secured the complete front row at those events as well – albeit never before with two different technologies.

“Of course, we’re proud to be the first automobile manufacturer to clinch the pole position with a hybrid vehicle at Le Mans and to outperform the two Toyota hybrid cars,” said Head of Audi Motorsport Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich. “But this is just a very small step. The much bigger task is still ahead – the race. Therefore, as always, we used the two practice days almost exclusively to work on the race set-up. The result is that we’ve now got cars that are very good to drive and which until now ran with absolute reliability too. But you could also very impressively see today that you can’t only be fast at Le Mans with a diesel – that’s exactly what we’ve always said. This double pole is the nicest thank you for the entire squad that has been working hard on preparing the cars so superbly.”

The 80th edition of the Le Mans 24 Hours will be started on Saturday at 15:00 and broadcast live by numerous TV channels worldwide. At www.audi-liveracing.com Audi is offering live streaming in which spectators can continually watch the race from the onboard perspective of the Audi R18 cars.

The smallest Audi made a big appearance at Le Mans as well. The A1 quattro that is produced in a limited number of 333 cars will be driven in front of the field on the formation lap.

Quotes after Qualifying

Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “I think it’s fantastic that we’ve captured the front row of the grid for Audi. As expected, our e-tron quattro is a bit faster than the Audi R18 ultra. And we could see that our competition from Toyota is close. Still, we’re running in front – that may not necessarily be important for the race but it’s a good base and, most importantly, great motivation for the squad that has been working so hard for this.”

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest): “We finished qualifying without any kind of incidents. We’ve worked out a successful set-up for all four cars. All the drivers are convinced that they’ve got a good race car. They were consistently



fast. But with all cars we also went on the chase for times with less fuel and fresh tires once. That worked out better with some than with other – because traffic on track is a problem, among other things. In the end, Toyota unpacked fresh tires once more. They were running very fast. Congratulations on third place. That's a respectable result on running for the first time. They showed that we mustn't forget them in the race. 'Thank you' to the squad that perfectly prepared the cars, working nightshifts some of the time. This gives the drivers the resulting confidence."

Marcel Fässler (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #1): "First of all, I've got to congratulate André (Lotterer) on this superb lap! He countered once more after Loïc Duval had bumped us from the top stop in between – that was really cool. I'm really proud of him. The car is good. Both at night and during the day I found a good rhythm and I'm really confident because our R18 e-tron quattro is easy to drive – and that's very important for a 24-hour race."

André Lotterer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #1): "Clinching pole at Le Mans is a cool feeling. Of course a lot can happen in the race but our performance does show that we've got a strong car in our R18 e-tron quattro. So my thanks go to the squad that has been working hard for this for a year. I received only one set of new tires and had only one free lap which I made good use of. It's good to know that the speed is there because the competition does not sleep. Toyota showed what they're capable of toward the end of qualifying. We've now got a good starting base and have given the mechanics a nice reward for their fantastic commitment in the past few days."

Benoît Tréluyer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #1): "We're very pleased with qualifying. Everything went according to plan: André (Lotterer) managed to drive a fast lap in order to secure a place at the front. Afterwards we continued to focus on the race set-up of our car. We found a good set-up, so we're confident for the race. It's always good to start into a 24-hour race with a car that you can handle really well."

Romain Dumas (Audi R18 ultra #3): "The good work we've been doing for the past two days continued through to the end of qualifying. We did a lot of additional work on the set-up. Our Audi R18 ultra is really good now. We hadn't expected to be so close to the best time, so in that respect the front row is a really nice result for us. Now we're starting into the race from the far front. That's a good sign."

Loïc Duval (Audi R18 ultra #3): "This was a good qualifying session. We're pleased and feel well prepared for the race. Obviously, we'd have liked to have clinched the fastest time but the Audi R18 e-tron quattro is simply a bit better here at Le Mans. Considering this, the best time for car number '1' is also well deserved because



they've been fast since the test day. For us, it's good to start in second place. We've achieved good results over the distance as well."

Marc Gené (Audi R18 ultra #3): "I'm very pleased. We did a good job and invested a lot of energy in preparing for the race. Loïc (Duval) concentrated on qualifying and drove a good lap. That makes me feel optimistic about the race. Second place is better than I'd expected. The race will be long and hard. Our work was good and the car is handling superbly."

Dindo Capello (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #2): "Congratulations to André (Lotterer), who gave the Audi R18 e-tron quattro the second best time after Allan (McNish) had managed to do so at Spa. That was a positive conclusion. We tested tires on the first trial in order to be prepared for the race and to get a clear picture of the tire choice. At the beginning of the last session Tom (Kristensen) was stuck in traffic on his best lap. Afterwards we just worked on setting up the car for the race and gained a good impression."

Tom Kristensen (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #2): "It was a good day for us. We focussed on a good set-up for the race. Our Audi worked well and in my stint after 10pm, the lap times were good and competitive on new tires. We face good, stiff competition but are looking forward to a great race. Of course well done to Andre on a perfect 'pole'."

Allan McNish (Audi R18 e-tron quattro #2): "First of all, 'well done' to André (Lotterer) and his guys, that was a brilliant performance. For us, the day was much better than yesterday – on the one hand no doubt because of the better track conditions but especially because we had worked out a good set-up for the race. The competition is very close and we're right in the middle. It looks like we'll be seeing a thrilling race."

Marco Bonanomi (Audi R18 ultra #4): "That was a nice qualifying session although it actually wasn't qualifying for us in the real sense. On both days we were trying to work for the race and drove several stints straight to see how the tires were working. So, considering this, our time is okay even though it's a bit slower than that of the other cars. But the grid position isn't so important at Le Mans. We found a good rhythm and are ready for the race."

Oliver Jarvis (Audi R18 ultra #4): "Of course I know that the grid position isn't important for a 24-hour race but I'm still disappointed about our sixth place. We had the potential for a position on the two front rows but never had a completely



free lap – but that’s the way things are at Le Mans. We know that we’ve got a good car for Saturday and Sunday. And that makes us optimistic.”

Mike Rockenfeller (Audi R18 ultra #4): “Congratulations to the squad with car number one that’s back on pole again – that was a strong performance. I’m pleased with our qualifying session. We drove a lot, had no difficulties and are all happy with the set-up of the car. I’m optimistic for the race because Oliver (Jarvis), Marco (Bonanomi) and I harmonize very well and have got the same feel for the car. That’s why the starting base is secondary for us for now.”

Qualifying results

- 1 Fässler/Lotterer/Tréluyer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro) 3m 23.787 s
- 2 Dumas/Duval/Gené (Audi R18 ultra) 3m 24.078s
- 3 Davidson/Buemi/Sarrazin (Toyota) 3m 24.842s
- 4 Capello/Kristensen/McNish (Audi R18 e-tron quattro) 3m 25.433s
- 5 Wurz/Lapierre/Nakajima (Toyota) 3m 25.488s
- 6 Bonanomi/Jarvis/Rockenfeller (Audi R18 ultra) 3m 26.420s
- 7 Leventis/Watts/Kane (HPD Honda) 3m 29.622s
- 8 Prost/Jani/Heidfeld (Lola-Toyota) 3m 29.837s
- 9 Belicchi/Primat/Bleekemolen (Lola-Toyota) 3m 31.866s
- 10 Bourdais/Minassian/Ara (Dome-Judd) 3m 33.066s

– End –

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 May 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., Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. in Sant’Agata Bolognese (Italy), AUDI BRUSSELS S.A./N.V. in Brussels (Belgium) and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Subject to a positive decision by the responsible competition authorities, the Italian sports motorcycle manufacturer Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. will also belong to the Audi Group. Audi currently employs around 64,000 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.