



Communications Motorsport

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Audi ready for Texan racing festival

- **Start of the Audi R18 in the United States, an important Audi market**
- **Audi aims for third victory at Austin since 2013**
- **Superb sports car festival featuring IMSA and FIA WEC**

Ingolstadt, September 9, 2016 – Suspense galore in the second half of the season: In the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) on Saturday, September 17, Audi is aiming to win at Austin for the third time. The battles for victory in the WEC by the brand with the four rings have seldom been as close as in 2016 – twice, in the two most recent races, Audi has had chances of claiming the winners’ trophy up until the end, just barely missing it in second place on both occasions. In Texas, the tide is set to turn.

“We’ve seen great advertising for endurance racing in the FIA WEC in the most recent rounds,” says Head of Audi Motorsport Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich. “For six hours, the outcome of the race would remain entirely open. Setbacks as well as recoveries were possible at any time and delivered suspense galore to the audience.” Most recently in Mexico, three manufacturers occupied the first three positions. Audi has clinched five trophies in the 2016 season to date.

The situation before the sixth of nine FIA WEC rounds: Lucas di Grassi/Loïc Duval/Oliver Jarvis (BR/F/GB) had most recently clinched the third pole position for Audi in the fifth race and initially led the round in Mexico. However, two defects with subsequent repairs caused the trio in car number 8 to be relegated to an unrepresentative 27th place. As a result, the three Audi drivers dropped from second to third place in the championship. At Austin, they could recapture their previous position. The deficit to the top of the standings is currently 43.5 points and 104 points are yet to be awarded before the end of the season. In the manufacturers’ standings, Audi is in second place with a 43-point gap and a maximum of 176 points can still be scored by the end of the season. The championship remains open.

The second Audi R18 from Audi Sport Team Joest is always capable of delivering top performances as well and ranks in fourth place of the standings. In 2016, car number 7 has taken pole position twice. Following fifth place at Spa, position four at Le Mans and third place at the Nürburgring, number 7, on clinching second place in Mexico, continued its upward trend. At Austin, Marcel Fässler/André Lotterer/Benoît Tréluyer (CH/D/F) are aiming to repeat their 2014 win.

The “Circuit of the Americas” near Austin in the south of Texas is 5.513 kilometers long and a



particularly intriguing track. 20 corners with highly diverse radii challenge the engineers with respect to setting up the race cars and 41 meters of vertical difference between the lowest and the highest track sections are clearly noticeable. Plus, this is the only track on the FIA WEC calendar on which the teams drive counter-clockwise. This puts a strain on different muscle groups of the drivers and the mechanics have to adjust their ways of working during pit stops.

The race in the United States is held in an important market for Audi. In the first seven months of the year, the company was the only brand to increase its sales in the core competition, by 3.6 percent to 115,298 automobiles.

The audience at Austin can look forward to another sports car spectacle this year. The Texan race weekend billed as “Lone Star Le Mans” combines the FIA WEC and the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship to a joint event. Three Audi customer racing cars, fielded by Teams Magnus Racing and Stevenson Motorsports, are competing in the IMSA series. The Audi R8 LMS has celebrated an amazing seven podium places in the IMSA GTD class this year, including the two victories by Magnus Racing at Daytona and Lime Rock Park.

Consequently, the fans at Austin will be treated to nearly nine hours of straight racing on Saturday. Following the IMSA round, the 6-hour FIA WEC race will start at 17:00 local time (00:00 CEST). The series will be thrilling the fans with the unique nighttime atmosphere of endurance racing until 23:00 local time, culminating in a major display of fireworks as a visual and acoustical highlight of the event.

The TV channel Eurosport will be airing live and full-length coverage of the race in Germany during the night from Saturday to Sunday, 00:00 to 06:15 (CEST). Audi is going to keep its fans continually up to speed on Facebook (AudiSport) and Twitter (@audisport).

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The Audi Group, with its brands Audi, Ducati and Lamborghini, is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the premium segment. It is present in more than 100 markets worldwide and produces at 16 locations in twelve countries. In the second half of 2016, the production of the Audi Q5 will start in San José Chiapa (Mexico). 100-percent subsidiaries of AUDIAG include quattro GmbH (Neckarsulm), Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. (Sant’Agata Bolognese, Italy) and Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. (Bologna, Italy).

In 2015, the Audi Group delivered to customers approximately 1.8 million automobiles of the Audi brand, 3,245 sports cars of the Lamborghini brand and about 54,800 motorcycles of the Ducati brand. In the 2015 financial year, the Audi Group achieved total revenue of €58.4 billion and an operating profit of €4.8 billion. At present, approximately 85,000 people work for the company all over the world, about 60,000 of them in Germany. Audi focuses on new products and sustainable technologies for the future of mobility.