



**Communications Motorsport**

Stefan Moser

Tel: +49 841 89-32260

E-mail: [stefan1.moser@audi.de](mailto:stefan1.moser@audi.de)

[www.audi-mediacyenter.com/en](http://www.audi-mediacyenter.com/en)

## **Audi Motorsport Newsletter 37/2016**

- **Strong start to season by Lucas di Grassi in Formula E in Hong Kong**
- **Audi customer teams successful in Europe, Asia and North America**
- **WEC driver Benoît Tréluyer visits Paris Motor Show**

**Ingolstadt, October 9, 2016 – Lucas di Grassi finished second in the opening race of the FIA Formula E season in Hong Kong. Audi customer teams celebrate first titles in North America and claim podium finishes in the China GT Championship, as well as in the VLN Endurance Championship Nürburgring. Benoît Tréluyer visited Audi Sport partner Michelin at the Paris Motor Show.**

### **Lucas di Grassi is second in the Formula E opener in Hong Kong**

Spectacular Formula E season opener in Hong Kong: Lucas di Grassi and ABT Schaeffler Audi Sport secured second place thanks to a tactical masterstroke. After a slip up in qualifying, the Audi factory driver only started the race from 19th on the grid. An accident in the second corner, when di Grassi was unable to avoid another competitor's accident happening in front of him, forced him to make a first unscheduled pit stop to change a damaged front wing. This dropped him to the back of the field again. di Grassi used another safety car phase to make the mandatory car change. A comeback drive onto the podium was secured by following a strict energy saving driving style around the city track beneath the skyscraper filled skyline. It is the 14th podium finish in Formula E for the 32-year-old. Teammate Daniel Abt was also involved in a collision at the start, but had to retire his damaged car in the pits. To start the third season of the electric racing series, Audi increased its involvement with the only German team and plans to expand its factory motorsport program to include Formula E for the 2017/2018 season. Audi factory driver Loïc Duval (Faraday Future Dragon Racing) was 14th. In one week, Duval and di Grassi will share an Audi R18 cockpit at the seventh WEC race at Fuji/Japan.

### **Audi successful in the VLN**

At the ninth round of the VLN Endurance Championship Nürburgring, Audi Sport customer racing teams secured positions two and three in the SP9 category, as well as third place overall. By the end of the four-hour race that had difficult weather conditions, the duo of Christopher Mies and Connor De Phillippi in an Audi R8 LMS from Montaplast by Land-Motorsport missed the class victory by a small margin and finished third overall. Phoenix Racing achieved third place in class with drivers Frank Stippler and Anders Fjordbach.



### **Podium success for Phoenix Racing in China**

Phoenix Racing Asia celebrated two podium finishes in the finale of the 2016 China GT Championship at the Shanghai International Circuit. Marchy Lee and Alex Au piloted their Audi R8 LMS to third and second place overall in the two races held separately on Thursday and Friday during the end of the seven-day “Golden Week” national holiday period in China.

### **First titles for Audi R8 LMS in North America**

Together with its customers, Audi Sport customer racing has celebrated the first titles of the Audi R8 LMS in North America. The GT3 race car prevailed in three categories of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. Audi won the manufacturers’ title in the GTD class thanks to the points scored by its teams Magnus Racing and Stevenson Motorsports. The race cars with the four rings also claimed victories in the special classification made up of the four major endurance races at Daytona, Sebring, Watkins Glen and Road Atlanta: Magnus Racing beat ten other outfits in the GTD teams’ classification of the North American Endurance Cup, and Audi won the manufacturers’ trophy ahead of five other brands. For Audi, this has been the first championship win in North America since its string of nine successive titles in the American Le Mans Series between 2000 and 2008.

### **Benoît Tréluyer visits the Paris Motor Show**

On Tuesday, Audi driver Benoît Tréluyer visited the Paris Motor Show. At the exhibition in his French home, the audience and media guests were pleased to see the three-time Le Mans winner at the Audi Sport partner Michelin stand. The professional racer signed autographs for the visitors, and explained to media representatives why tire selection in endurance racing often decides races.

### **A word from ... Lucas di Grassi**

The Audi factory driver produced a fantastic comeback drive that saw him move from 19th on the grid to finish on the podium in the opening round of the Formula E season in Hong Kong.

### **A furious opening to the season: “From zero to hero.” After messing up qualifying and an accident at the start, have you ever been happier at the end of a race?**

Obviously I’m delighted. But what happened in the race has nothing whatsoever to do with luck. We saw our opportunity when the safety car was deployed. It was actually too early to change car, because this meant a load of laps with the second car – more than we had planned. I saved energy wherever I could and with a very conservative driving style that exploited every Joule. I never thought that it would be possible, but we quite literally squeezed everything out of the car – and the result was second place at the flag. Great! This shows once again that as a team we just don’t give up. Races like these – or also that in Le Mans this year – show that it’s never over until the checkered flag waves. A big thank you today also to my team and my mechanics who made this possible.



### **How do you rate the opening race of the Formula E season in Hong Kong?**

Hong Kong is a breathtaking city for Formula E – I can't imagine a better start to the new season. We received a huge amount of attention from the media and the fans in this megacity. Everybody in the city knew about the event and applauded us. The Emotion Club in the paddock was sold out, as well as the grandstands, and there was a party atmosphere at the podium – it wasn't just a fantastic opener for me, but also for Formula E.

### **Manufacturer interest is increasing. After Audi, also Jaguar, BMW and – as option – Mercedes have stated their interest. From where does the interest shown by the 'big' manufacturers come from?**

Motorsport has always had a relationship with development and the goals of the automobile industry. The manufacturers increasingly align themselves with electric mobility. And for this reason it is only logical that they come to Formula E and produce electric drivetrains. Furthermore, Formula E as a race series has become very popular and professional after a very short period of time.

### **Coming up next week**

- 14-15.10 Oschersleben (D), DMV GTC, races 15 and 16
- 14-15.10 Nürburgring (D), Spezial Tourenwagen Trophy, races 13 and 14
- 14-16.10 Fuji (J), WEC, round 7
- 14-16.10 Hockenheim (D), DTM, races 17 and 18
- 14-16.10 Hockenheim (D), Audi Sport TT Cup, races 13 and 14
- 14-16.10 Mugello (I), Italian GT Championship, races 13 and 14
- 14-16.10 Brno (CZ), International Endurance Series, round 7, 12-hour race
- 15-16.10 Penbay (RC), Audi R8 LMS Cup, races 9 and 10

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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. 100-percent subsidiaries of AUDI AG 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, AUDI AG 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.