21 March 1999

Audi Tests successful at

12 hours of Sebring/USA

In its first test under race conditions at the 12 hours of Sebring, Audi took third and fifth place with its R8Rs.

After twelve hours, 310 laps and more than 1,800 kilometers, the team of Michele Alboreto (Italy), Rinaldo Capello (Italy) and Stefan Johansson (Sweden) gave a flawless performance when they finished third at 10:15 p.m. local time.

„The first endurance test under race conditions was extremely satisfactory" said Stefan Johansson, two-time Sebring winner, after crossing the finish line. „But for Le Mans, the first thing we need to work on, is increasing the speed."

The R8R of the team Frank Biela (Germany), Perry McCarthy (Great Britain) and Emanuele Pirro (Italy) finished six laps behind their team colleagues, taking fifth place. Frank Biela, the only German driver, said: „Everything went well apart from one problem with the clutch which kept us in the pits for nearly fifteen minutes."

After following the action of the race on the nearly six kilometer long race track, Member of the Board of Management for AUDI AG responsible for Technical Development Dr Werner Mischke said: „This endurance test under race conditions showed that we are on the right track with our development efforts but we have a lot of work left to do before Le Mans."

At 10:15 a.m. (local time) the two R8Rs started on the grueling race track from grid positions eleven and twelve and proved their reliability in the following twelve hours. Audi Sport Director Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich: „We did reach our goal of finishing this twelve hour race with both cars. I am also happy about where we placed with our R8Rs but this weekend also showed that we have much to do before Le Mans."

The final results:

1. Kristensen/Lehto/Müller J. BMW V12 LMP	313 laps	
2. Forbes-Robinson/Leitzinger/Weaver	Riley&Scott/Ford	+9,292 seconds
3. Alboreto/Capello/Johansson	Audi R8R	-3 laps
4. Boutsen/Müller D./Wollek Porsche 911 GT1	-5 laps	
5. Biela/McCarthy/Pirro	Audi R8R	-9 laps