

## Communications Motorsport

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## News from the Audi Le Mans team

- **French Prime Minister visits Audi pits**
- **Pop star James Morrison sings in the Audi Racing Arena**
- **Audi R8 is the Official Safety Car at Le Mans for the first time**

**Ingolstadt/Le Mans – The Le Mans 24 Hours is one of the biggest sporting events of the world. So it comes as no surprise that the twice-around-the-clock race generates enormous interest. Prime Ministers, pop stars, movie makers, business leaders and motor racing legends mixed with a crowd in excess of 200,000.**

Fashionable helmets: Two Audi drivers sported helmet liveries developed especially for the endurance classic. Lucky Design painted **Emanuele Pirro's** head protection in a florescent white that "glowed" at night. The paint had originally been developed by US space agency NASA. On the top of the helmet of local hero **Alexandre Prémat**, JCD Création painted a drawing of the Le Mans track layout. Even the famous names of the corners are displayed.

On the occasion of the 76<sup>th</sup> edition of the 24 Hour classic, Audi handed over the latest **safety cars** to the Le Mans organisers ACO: For the first time, a brace of **Audi R8** safety cars is being used at the Sarthe. In addition to the safety lights on the roof, the sports cars are equipped with flashing full LED headlights as well as racing bucket seats and six-point safety harnesses.



**James Morrison** conquered the charts with his hits “Wonderful World” and “You Give Me Something”. In Le Mans, the young Briton entertained the guests in the Audi Racing Arena with his exclusive performances.

**Prince Albert II of Monaco** was present at the traditional return of the Le Mans trophy by **Rupert Stadler**, Head of the Board of Management of AUDI AG, to **ACO president Jean-Claude Plassart**.

**French Prime Minister François Fillon** didn't miss the 24 Hour race either. The Le-Mans-born politician is a car enthusiast. The motorsport fan who accompanied Fillon was not a bodyguard but **Secretary of State for Sports, Bernard Laporte**, a former rugby player and coach. Both walked through the pitlane, thereby visiting the Audi pits as well.

Fillon visited the Audi pits at 8 p.m. for a second time. Yet again he did not come alone. This time with him: **Jan Peter Balkenende**. The **Prime Minister of the Netherlands** got first-hand information from Head of Audi Motorsport Dr Wolfgang Ullrich.

Amongst the many guests in the Audi Hospitality facility in the paddock was visited by two true Le Mans legends: **Jacky Ickx** and **Gijs van Lennep**. Ickx, with six overall victories under his belt, is the number two in the historic statistics behind Audi works driver Tom Kristensen in the endurance classic that is held since 1923. The distance record is held since 1971 by van Lennep. The former racer who is now 66-years-old achieved 5335.313 kilometres in the twice-around-the-clock encounter together with his team mates. Meanwhile, van Lennep is chief instructor for Audi Netherlands in their driver training programmes.

Wherever the Audi R10 TDI and his drivers are seen these days, they will be accompanied by a **movie team of nearly 20 staff**. The crew from the USA are producing a 2-hour film around the two-time Le Mans winning machine that will be shown in public in the autumn at film festivals in the USA so as to accompany the introduction of the Audi Q7 TDI in to the US market.



Never mind a joke: When **Allan McNish** went to his Audi A3 on Thursday evening in the parking space at the track, the tyres of the rental car had been removed and been put underneath the car. It was the revenge of the Audi “youngsters” Alexandre Prémat, Mike Rockenfeller and Lucas Luhr – McNish previously had put a considerable amount of yoghurt on their car’s windscreen.

Audi welcomed several guests from the DTM in Le Mans: **Hans-Jürgen Abt** (Team Principal of Audi Sport Team Abt Sportsline), **Ernst Moser** (Team Principal of Audi Sport Team Phoenix) and Alexandre Prémat’s DTM race engineer **Pascal Zurlinden** had come to the Sarthe. Another true motorsport enthusiast is **Markus Winkelhock**. The Audi DTM works driver preferred to celebrate his 28th birthday in France and not in his Swabian home.

**Tom Kristensen** and his team-mate **Dindo Capello** visited three camping areas where an estimated 38,000 Danish fans were based. Both drivers gave interviews and lots of autographs.

Audi’s “**Camp Le Mans**” had been increased to cater for 450 people but it was again totally sold out. On a site of 14,500 square meters, employees of Audi Sport came privately to Le Mans to set up their race camp.

Board members of the brand and the group followed Audi’s efforts at Le Mans: AUDI AG was represented by **Rupert Stadler** (Head of the Board), **Ulf Berkenhagen** (Purchase), **Michael Dick** (Technical Development), **Frank Dreves** (Production), **Peter Schwarzenbauer** (Sales and Marketing), **Axel Strotbek** (Finance and Organisation) and **Dr Werner Widuckel** (Personnel and Social Affairs). Volkswagen AG was represented by **Prof Dr Ferdinand Piëch** (Head of the Supervisory Board), **Prof Dr Martin Winterkorn** (Head of the Board), **Francisco Javier Garcia Sanz** (Purchase), **Prof Dr Jochem Heizmann** (Group Production) and **Hans Dieter Pötsch** (Finance and Controlling). Also at Le Mans were **Hans-Joachim Stuck** (Motorsport Representative of the Volkswagen Group), **Kris Nissen** (Volkswagen Motorsport Director) as well as **Donatus Wichelhaus** (Head of Engine Development of Volkswagen Motorsport).



**Lucas Luhr** had the pleasure to show the Audi pits to German TV beauty **Lara Joy Körner** (“Traumschiff”, “Rosamunde Pilcher”).

**Photographs and information can be obtained at [www.audi-motorsport.info](http://www.audi-motorsport.info)**

AUDI AG sold a total of 964,151 cars in 2007 and thus achieved its twelfth consecutive record year. With revenue of € 33,617 million and profit before tax of € 2,915 million, the company attained its best figures ever. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). At the end of 2007, production of the Audi A6 started in Aurangabad, India. The company is active in more than 100 markets worldwide. AUDI AG's wholly owned subsidiaries include Automobili Lamborghini Holding S.p.A. in Sant'Agata Bolognese, Italy, and quattro GmbH in Neckarsulm. Audi employs about 54,000 people worldwide, including 45,000 in Germany. The brand with the four rings invests more than €2 billion each year in order to sustain the company's technological lead embodied in its “Vorsprung durch Technik” slogan. Audi plans to significantly increase the number of models in its portfolio by 2015, from the 26 currently on offer to 40.