



Communications Motorsport

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Quotes after qualifying at Le Mans

Ingolstadt/Le Mans – The three Audi R15 TDI start the 24 Hours of Le Mans (France) on Saturday from the first four rows of the grid. The quotes after qualifying on Thursday evening.

Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “Today we didn’t really concentrate on going for times. Instead it was a very intensive day’s work for the mechanics. Between the two segments of qualifying we fitted all the parts planned for the race to the cars, which then had to be adjusted. This cost quite some time. Afterwards we drove very good long-runs on slicks and were able to prepare ourselves well for the race. It’s a good sign that we were still able to fight so closely for pole position in the process.”

Dindo Capello (Audi R15 TDI #1): “I hope the fans will be party to a race equally as exciting as qualifying was. However, I would still like to swap positions at head of the field. It’s difficult to assess the relative strengths after qualifying because you just don’t know with which tires and which set-up the competition were running today. Nevertheless, I’m still not entirely satisfied with our car, which is why we have a lot of work to do before race day. But I know that I can rely on the engineers and mechanics.”

Tom Kristensen (Audi R15 TDI #1): “I’d like to have had a few more laps in the R15 TDI today. But my engineer said that I had already driven here so often and should rather concentrate on the essential things. So, towards the end of qualifying I drove the fourth stint on a used set of tires, which brought us extremely useful information for the race. Our target was to find a set-up which allows us to drive as long as possible on a single set of tires but to be quick at the same time. We only made one attempt to put in a quick lap – Allan (McNish) used



this opportunity perfectly in the ideal conditions towards the end of the first session with a little diesel in the tank.”

Allan McNish (Audi R15 TDI #1): “In fact we really should be very pleased with our performance. The weather conditions were tricky yesterday, which is why we had to work through a large program during the four hour qualifying session. We wanted to understand the tires better on this track and to find out how the track conditions change. We also had to set-up the car. The battle with Sarrazin at the end was a lot of fun. The reality is that its only about the balance for the race. We still have room for improvement. We work closely together with the crews of the other cars in the Audi team and see all the data so that everything is just right on Saturday at 3.00 p.m.”

Lucas Luhr (Audi R15 TDI #2): “I hope that all the problems you can have are now behind us. We drove by far the least amount of laps when compared to the others. Due to a problem with the car we were unable set-up the car as we wanted in qualifying. This isn’t so bad, these things do happen. Unfortunately we lost time in the pits again in second qualifying. I now hope that we can have a trouble free race. The Audi R15 TDI is good. Unfortunately we didn’t get any set-up work done. We’ll probably have to copy the set-up of one of the other cars.”

Mike Rockenfeller (Audi R15 TDI #2): “Unfortunately qualifying didn’t go well for our car. Several small problems meant that we didn’t drive very much, couldn’t try very much and are now sixth. This obviously doesn’t influence the race but we hoped for more. We would have particularly liked to have driven more and would like to have tested more.”

Marco Werner (Audi R15 TDI #2): “We know what the car is capable of, but with us there is a problem somewhere and our car had too much push at the start. I don’t think that I’ve ever started a race at Le Mans in a new car with so few laps under my belt. In qualifying I only got two timed laps. I only got involved in the action fifteen minutes before the end. On top of this came the fact that the floodlight in the Porsche Curves was switched off in the last two laps. To drive this car for the first time in the night and to run through such a dark section made things very difficult. Even though we improved the time I wasn’t able to make up any positions on the grid.”



Timo Bernhard (Audi R15 TDI #3): “I feel at home in the Audi R15 TDI. Qualifying was not the focus of our attention today, we didn’t even bother investing in a new set of tires to go for a time. Romain (Dumas) and I are two newcomers in the car, which is why, for us, it was all about completing as many kilometers as possible. This also explains the seventh position, with which I am nevertheless pleased. After all seven is my lucky number, because I won two championships in the USA with this number.”

Romain Dumas (Audi R15 TDI #3): “For our car it wasn’t at all about qualifying. Alexandre (Prémat) drove the first outing, then Timo (Bernhard). I started into the night immediately at the beginning of the second half of qualifying. The goal was simple, to complete as many laps as possible to get used to the car because I hadn’t run in the dry beforehand. Of course it wasn’t easy to do this in the darkness. I drove a complete stint, and it went very well.”

Alexandre Prémat (Audi R15 TDI #3): “Our approach was very simple: We didn’t run with new tires or drive with low fuel. We weren’t so bad on a single lap, but other laws apply at the 24 hours. We didn’t even start a single serious qualifying attempt, but in fact prepared exclusively for the race. Seventh on the grid for a 24-hour race is meaningless. I’m really happy that the other two drivers have acclimatized themselves well with the car and track – they were really fast during both the day and night. We have a very good drive line-up for this 24-hour race.”

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director Audi Sport Team Joest): “Today we packed as much work into qualifying as we normally distribute on a test day and could complete in free practice. The main focus of attention was the work with the tires, which is why we drove so many long-runs. Fast qualifying times were effectively of minor importance for us. So much the better that Allan (McNish) managed such a fantastic lap. However, we were well aware that there would be a reply. But we accept this, congratulate the competition and continue to concentrate on our logical preparation before the start of the race.”

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Photographs and information available at www.audi-motorsport.info



AUDI AG sold a total of 1,003,469 cars in 2008 and thus achieved its 13th consecutive record year. The Company posted new record figures with revenue of €34.2 billion and profit before tax of €3.2 billion. Audi produces vehicles in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Changchun (China) and Brussels (Belgium). Aurangabad in India saw the start of CKD production of the Audi A6 at the end of 2007 and of the Audi A4 in early October 2008. 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 currently employs around 58,000 people worldwide, including 46,500 in Germany. The brand with the four rings invests around €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 to 42. The AUDI brand celebrates its 100th birthday in 2009. The company was founded by August Horch in Zwickau on July 16, 1909; he named it AUDI after the Latin translation of his surname ("hark!").