

Racing as another mainstay

- **Rolf Michl, Managing Director Audi Sport GmbH: “The Nürburgring-Nordschleife is considered a Mecca for all motorsport fans. For me, the 24-hour race is one of the most beautiful things you can experience in motorsport.”**

Ingolstadt/Neckarsulm, May 15, 2023 – Audi has had a customer racing program since 2009, which was transferred to quattro GmbH in 2011. Audi Sport customer racing develops and distributes the various customer racing models, provides technical support for customer teams around the world and also makes Audi Sport drivers available. Currently, the sports car portfolio comprises four racing categories: the R8 versions for the GT3, GT2 and GT4 classes, as well as the Audi RS 3 LMS for production-based touring car championships.

Audi Sport GmbH produced a total of 750 race cars by the end of 2022. Of these, around 300 GT3 versions of the Audi R8 have been delivered to customer teams worldwide. The Audi RS 3 LMS, of which 260 units have been sold to date, is also extremely popular as an entry-level touring car with a near-production bodyshell and an almost standard two-liter turbo engine.

In 2009, the first-generation Audi R8 LMS was the first model of the brand with the four rings to be developed specifically for customer use. The then Managing Director of quattro GmbH Werner Frowein – an absolute motorsport fan – played a decisive role in this. “All the customer racing with the R8 wouldn’t have happened without Werner,” Stephan Reil, longtime head of development at quattro GmbH, says with certainty. What started in its debut year with eight GT3 race cars based on the road-going version of the R8, which was released shortly before, grows rapidly into a highly extensive and successful program. As early as 2011, the Audi R8 LMS celebrated its 100th race victory.

High mileage, ease of maintenance and handling that can be easily mastered, even by non-professionals, are the strengths of the Audi R8 LMS, which is now successful on race tracks worldwide in its second generation. “Whether engine characteristics, interior climate control, suspension or traction control: we have consistently implemented the wishes that our globally active teams have expressed to us,” says Chris Reinke, Head of Audi Sport customer racing. The racing and road-going models of the second-generation mid-engine coupe with rear-wheel drive are consistently developed hand-in-hand and tested under extreme conditions – like all high-performance vehicles from Audi Sport. The GT3 race car shares 50 percent of its components with the Audi R8 road car, even 60 percent in the case of the GT4 race car.

The track record of the Audi R8 LMS is impressive: In just under a decade and a half, the GT3

**The collective fuel/electric power consumption and emissions values of all models named and available on the German market can be found in the list provided at the end of this text.*

version has scored a total of 105 overall titles and won 152 GT3 championships. The younger GT4 version has been successful in 31 championships so far. The Audi R8 LMS GT2 has been available since 2019 as the youngest offering and its output of 640 hp makes it the most powerful sports car by far in the customer racing program. It has also won various championships in its category. A further 72 titles worldwide are attributable to the Audi RS 3 LMS entry-level touring car, which has been sold by Audi Sport customer racing since 2016.

But Audi Sport customer racing is also making motorsport history with numerous race victories. In 2011, the Audi R8 LMS clinched its first triumph in a 24-hour race at Spa, followed by three more victories at the Belgian classic. At the Nürburgring, the Audi R8 LMS has crossed the finish line as the overall winner of the 24-hour race a total of six times in 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2022. “The Nürburgring-Nordschleife is considered a Mecca for all motorsport fans. For me, the 24-hour race is one of the most beautiful things you can experience in motorsport. But the Nürburgring is also essential for the development of our production cars. All our models are tested there under extreme conditions and brought to production maturity,” says Rolf Michl, Managing Director of Audi Sport GmbH and Head of Motorsport at Audi.

Another customer racing race car from Audi Sport customer racing, the TT RS, also celebrated a special success. In 2011, Michael Ammermüller, Frank Biela and Christian Hohenadel, sharing the touring car with a 5-cylinder turbo engine, clinched the only overall victory to date for a front-wheel-drive car in the 6-hour race of the VLN Endurance Championship that has been held on the Nürburgring-Nordschleife since 1977. There, in the 2011 edition of the 24-hour race two months earlier, Michael Ammermüller, Frank Biela, Jens Klingmann and Martin Tomczyk, had already won their class with the TT RS.

With the Audi TT cup model, Audi Sport GmbH created the basis for the first one-make racing cup under the banner of the four rings in Germany in 2014. From 2015 to 2017, the Audi Sport TT Cup took place as a springboard for young international talent in the supporting program of the popular DTM touring car series, wherein Audi was involved with factory teams at the time. The project manager in the set-up phase and in the first season of racing was Rolf Michl, who today is the Head of Audi Motorsport and, together with Sebastian Grams, is one of the two managing directors of Audi Sport GmbH. In addition to its lightweight construction of aluminum and carbon fiber, the Audi TT Cup compact touring car impressed above all with a safety concept that was unique for its class. Audi specifically combined components that had proven themselves in its Le Mans sports prototypes, DTM Class 1 touring cars and the Audi R8 LMS GT race car.

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