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MediaInfo – Audi R8 LMS Cup Round 11

Couto closes in on championship

- **André Couto takes start-to-finish victory**
- **Alex Yoong with strong race but gets penalized for false start**
- **New regulations on tyres and technical team support for 2015**

Abu Dhabi, December 12, 2014 – André Couto collected maximum points tonight at the Audi R8 LMS Cup's debut in Abu Dhabi, with a start-to-finish victory in Round 11, ahead of "Franky" Cheng Congfu. Championship rival Alex Yoong crossed the finish line in third but was later given a 25 second time penalty for a false start, meaning that Rahel Frey officially claimed the final podium spot. Yoong had to settle for sixth.

Couto had secured pole position and an extra point after clocking an exceptional lap time in qualifying. With his win tonight in the first ever night race of the Audi R8 LMS Cup, Couto retakes the lead in the championship, with 175 points, ahead of Yoong with 164. Both drivers can still win the season title, but Couto now has the upper hand.

For tomorrow's Round 12, the championship decider, Couto will again start from pole after clocking the fastest time in Round 11, while Yoong will start from position two. Crucially, Yoong will have a weight advantage as Couto will carry the maximum success ballast of 60 kg for his win today. So far this season no driver has won a race with that much extra weight, but second or third place will still be enough for Couto to seal the championship, even if Yoong wins the final Round 12.

"We are in for a fantastic conclusion to the season tomorrow. The false start penalty is unfortunate for Alex Yoong. But he is still in the game and will certainly push right from the start. André Couto has the advantage of the pole position, but he will carry an extra 60 kg in the vehicle. Throughout the season we have seen why these two drivers are leading the championship. We can expect a thrilling finale," said Rene Koneberg, Director of Audi Sport customer racing Asia.

Chinese driver Cheng cut through the field to finish second after starting from position six. He has his sights on the third position overall, with only three points between him and current third Rahel Frey. While they still had title hopes ahead of the race, third overall is now the maximum both drivers can achieve.



Behind the race leaders, Matt Solomon started brilliantly, storming forwards to take third place as the red lights went out, but was passed by Cheng several laps into the race. The youngster did well to hold his position against Rahel Frey, but disappointingly had to retire just before the end of the race due to technical problems with his gearbox.

Frey, Adderly Fong and Marchy Lee all drove consistently. Lee strategically pulled out of the race early in order to preserve his tyres for tomorrow's race, whereas Frey and Fong finished in third and fourth respectively.

Ashraff Dewal claimed his first victory in the amateur category, ahead of Zheng Ting and Sun Jingzu. 2014 Amateur Champion, Steven Lin, retired early due to a mechanical issue.

With the 26 points from Couto, Brothers Racing Team sealed the 2014 team championship with one race to go.

The winner of the 2014 Four Rings Trophy for Audi regions and dealerships was also decided on Friday. With a lead of 31 points, Team Audi R8 LMS Cup with driver Cheng cannot be caught.

On the sidelines of the season finale, the Cup announced more new features for the 2015 season. Starting in 2015, racing teams will be allowed to service their cars with their own technical personnel. The existing full-service package with Audi R8 LMS Cup mechanics will still be offered to teams as an option. Also from next season, teams can use two sets of tyres for qualifying and the two races of a race weekend, compared to one set of tyres under current regulations.

Round 12 will take place tomorrow afternoon at 16:45 local time (UTC +4) and will be broadcast live on the Cup's website.

Audi R8 LMS Cup Official Website: www.audir8lmscup.com

André Couto:

"It was a gamble coming first today. I don't know if the tyres will last tomorrow...I don't know how the car will perform tomorrow...who knows how the race will go, but bring it on!"

"Franky" Cheng Congfu:

"Second place was a great result for me. Alex and André deserve to be fighting for the championship this season. Both of them have been the most competitive drivers this year. I still have a job to do tomorrow – I will fight Rahel for third place in the championship. I will go out and enjoy the final race of the season."

– End –





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The Audi Group delivered approximately 1,575,500 cars of the Audi brand to customers in 2013. As one of the most successful models, the Audi A3 has been awarded the title of “World Car of the Year 2014” by an international jury of journalists (combined fuel consumption in l/100 km: 7.1 – 3.2; combined CO₂ emissions in g/km: 165 – 85). In 2013, the company reported revenue of €49.9 billion and an operating profit of €5.03 billion. The company operates globally in more than 100 markets and has production facilities in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm (Germany), Győr (Hungary), Brussels (Belgium), Bratislava (Slovakia), Martorell (Spain), Kaluga (Russia), Aurangabad (India), Changchun (China) and Jakarta (Indonesia). Since the end of 2013, the brand with the Four Rings has also been producing cars in Foshan (China). In 2015, Audi will start production in São José dos Pinhais (Brazil), followed by San José Chiapa (Mexico) in 2016. Wholly owned 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), the sports motorcycle manufacturer. The company currently employs approximately 76,000 people worldwide, thereof more than 53,400 in Germany. Total investment of around €22 billion is planned from 2014 to 2018 – primarily in new products and sustainable technologies. Audi is committed to its corporate responsibility and has anchored the principle of sustainability for its products and processes in its strategy. The long-term goal is CO₂-neutral mobility.

