

04-15-2011 United Autosports Begins Quest For British GT Championship Title Honors

- **First races for Bintcliffe & Palmer in Audi R8 LMS on United Autosports début**
- **Anglo-American team aiming for solid points haul at “home” Oulton track**



Twelve months ago in the corresponding British GT Championship opener at Oulton Park (England), United Autosports made its race début just three months after the formation of the Anglo-American team and three weeks after taking delivery of its Audi R8 LMS sports cars.

Nothing more than a glorified test session in preparation for its maiden FIA GT3 European Championship program resulted in the ambitious Leeds-based outfit scoring two fourth placings, a fifth and an eighth to mark a successful British series début of the mid-engined R8 LMS.

But after a hectic and ultra-successful maiden 2010 season in which it scored class podiums not only in the FIA series but in the 24 Hours of Spa (Belgium), Intercontinental Le Mans Cup (Zhuhai, China) and Macau (China), United Autosports returns to the burgeoning Avon Tyres British GT Championship for a full season campaign in which it will bid for title honors in the GT3 category.

Matt Bell (GB) and Michael Guasch (USA), who raced in the FIA series with United Autosports last year albeit in different cars, team together for the first time while former “factory” Audi Sport UK British Touring Car Championship race winner John Bintcliffe (GB) has been tempted back in to full time competition after a multi-year break to partner long-time friend Jay Palmer (GB).

Bintcliffe and Palmer experienced their first ever runs in the Audi R8 LMS only last month (March 4) and then joined Guasch and Bell, the latter again competing in the FIA series, at Oulton Park (March 25) for their only runs at the picturesque track near Chester ahead of the Easter race weekend which commences with testing and practice on Easter Saturday.

The #23 & #24 Audi R8 LMS sports cars will contest two 60-minute races around Oulton's 2.692-mile "International" circuit on Easter Monday (April 25) featuring a mandatory 'driver change' pit-stop which must be carried out between 23 and 37 minutes – the pit-stop being of a minimum specified duration. For the second race, an additional time penalty will be applied to the top-three finishers in the opening race.

Oulton Park is actually United's third race meet of the 2011 season. In partnership with Michael Shank Racing, United Autosports recorded fourth (Rolex 24 Of Daytona) and sixth positions (Grand Prix of Miami) in the opening two rounds of the GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series.

Provisional Timetable:

Saturday – 0930-1030 Practice; 1220-1320 Practice; 1630-1645 Qualifying Race 1; 1650-1705 Qualifying Race 2

Monday – 0935-0945 Warm-up; 1118-1218 Race 1; 1540-1640 Race 2

* All times are UK "local"

2010 Formguide:

Apr 05 – BGT Rds 1 & 2 – Oulton Park, England (#22: Guasch/Patterson; #23: Brown/Dean)

Rd 1 Qualifying: 3rd #23 Brown, 1m 40.381s; 4th #22 Guasch, 1m 40.533s. Weather: Dry/Cloudy.

Rd 1 Result: 4th #23; 8th #22. Weather: Dry/Cloudy.

Rd 2 Qualifying: 5th #23 Dean, 1m 38.340s; 11th #22 Patterson, 1m 41.004s. Weather: Dry/Cloudy.

Rd 2 Result: 4th #23; 5th #22. Weather: Dry/Cloudy.

Mike Guasch (left) with co-driver Matt Bell



#23 Molecule – Audi R8 LMS

Matt Bell (GB). Age: 21. Born: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, T&W. Lives: Barningham, N. Yorks, England:
“The first round marks my Oulton race début but not my first BGT race having contested an event at Silverstone in a Ginetta last summer. I drove the Audi at Oulton in testing earlier this year and it felt like the track had shrunk and makes the circuit even more challenging and exciting. With so many new cars entering BGT it makes it a bit of an unknown quantity. I think we have grown as a team from our experiences last year in the FIA series and have taken steps forward. So long as the ‘balance of performance’ is fair and doesn’t cripple the Audis like in the FIA series for the first half of 2010 we could be aiming for a podium finish at Oulton.”

Michael Guasch (USA). Age: 53. Born: Palo Alto, California. Lives: Walnut Creek, California, USA:
“I made my Oulton, United Autosports, Audi R8 LMS and BGT début in the corresponding races last Easter, claiming fifth and eighth places. I love the Oulton track. It has a little bit of everything, fast, slow plus technical corners although there is very little run-off area so little room for mistakes. I believe Matt and I are going to be a very competitive pairing for the season but it is hard to know what some of the new cars and teams will bring to the table. Matt and I raced a R8 LMS in the FIA GT3 series last year so it’s not new to us. My biggest concern is that the series immediately gets the ‘balance of performance’ close and fair. As long as the cars are properly ‘balanced’ by the organizers, we have a very good chance of winning races.”



John Bintcliffe (left) with co-driver Jay Palmer

#24 Teknava – Audi R8 LMS

John Bintcliffe (GB). Age: 45. Born: Bridlington, E. Yorks. Lives: Harrogate, N. Yorkshire, England:
“My aim is to be as near to the front as possible. Jay [Palmer] and I have limited mileage with the R8 LMS and there is definitely a knack in getting the most out of it. I first raced at Oulton in a Honda CRX while my last run there was in 1998 for Audi Sport UK in a British Touring Car Championship race. The track felt narrow when I tested there last month and it felt a lot faster between the corners than back

then. It's great to see a variety of manufacturers in the series – it's good for British motorsport. I'm sure certain tracks will suit certain cars making the series more interesting.”

Jay Palmer (GB). Age: 38. Born: Harrogate. Lives: Harrogate & London, England / Barbados:

“The last time I raced at Oulton was eight years ago in a Westfield - I qualified on pole, won the race and set a new lap record – that would be nice to repeat but these races mark my first in six years so I'm just looking to enjoy myself. The Audi R8 LMS was fun to drive around Oulton but made the track feel like a go-kart circuit – it's a great machine to drive with huge amounts of technology on board. I'm certain that this year's BGT is going to be very competitive and hopefully the 'handicapping' system to equalize the performance will be fair.”

Richard Dean (GB), Managing Director & Co-Owner of United Autosports:

“Oulton is United Autosports' UK operations 'home' circuit. We will have lots of guests, family and friends in attendance. I love Oulton Park, it's one of the few remaining circuits in the world that has retained its originality and atmosphere. From a team perspective, we'll be back at Oulton one year on from United Autosports' very first race. It will be interesting to see any differences both operationally and on track as we return with our Audi R8 LMS sports cars. Matt Bell and Mike Guasch also have a year racing with us under their belts and should pose a competitive pairing all year. John Bintcliffe and Jay Palmer embark on their first season in BGT and both have approached the year seriously.”

United Autosports

Created in 2009, United Autosports is co-owned by American Zak Brown and Briton Richard Dean, both successful entrepreneurs and international race car drivers. The unique Anglo-American racing team fields GT3 class Audi R8 LMS sports cars from its United Kingdom headquarters in Leeds. It also races a fleet of “Legends of Motorsports” historic racing cars from its US facility in Indianapolis, Indiana. In 2011, the team competes in full-seasons of FIA GT3 European Championship, Avon Tyres British GT Championship and the “Legends of Motorsports” series. It will additionally contest selected GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series events, the 24 Hours of Spa (Belgium) and Macau GT Cup race (China).

Audi R8 LMS

V10 5.2-liter engine, 4 valves per cylinder, petrol direct injection, 365-412 kW (496-560 PS), emission control by two racing catalytic converters, rear-wheel-drive, traction control (ASR), sequential pneumatic activated 6-speed sport gearbox with shift-paddles, Audi Space Frame (ASF) made of aluminum with bolted steel roll-cage, carbon-fiber composite/aluminum bodywork, Avon radial tires. Start weight TBA. Limitation at 8500rpm for every gear. Developed by Audi Sport with cooperation from quattro GmbH. Won seven championships across Europe in 2009-2010 plus Spa 24 Hours class victory in début 2009 season and Nürburgring 24 Hours class victories in 2009-2010 and scoring a total 64 victories.

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