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## Racing Version of Audi R8

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**"Ever since the R8 was unveiled we've been inundated with enquiries about a race version," says Head of Audi Motorsport Dr Wolfgang Ullrich. Enter 'project R16' (as it's called within Audi Sport) - the new 500bhp-plus Audi R8 GT3 race car. .**

The new mid-engined racer has been developed specifically for customer use, with deliveries expected to start in Autumn 2009. In the meantime, Audi Sport is scheduling test races in various European series throughout next year. The first prototype has already completed a roll-out, when Audi factory driver Frank Biela took the car for its first test runs just a week or so ago.



To allow the R8 racer to be eligible for a wide range of national and international series, it is being built to conform to the production-based GT3 regulations – which means four-wheel drive is prohibited. Hence the race car is rear-wheel drive, the power transmitted via a newly developed six-speed sequential sports gearbox. The suspension relies almost exclusively on production car components but a modified front end and large rear wing ensure the necessary additional downforce.



“With the Audi R8 we will offer customers a racing sportscar equipped with high-calibre technology and the typical Audi qualities, but which is nevertheless easy to handle,” concluded Dr Ullrich. He also confirmed that the factory space needed for the new AUDI AG customer programme will be created over the next few months in Ingolstadt, Neckarsulm and Győr.

*Text: Charis Whitcombe*

*Photos: Audi*

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