



Press Information

Le Mans / Nürburgring, 13 June 2004, 09:00 hrs

Audi continues to lead at Le Mans, fighting back at Nürburgring

After a relatively calm night, two Audi R8 sports cars continue to lead the Le Mans 24 Hours. At the Nürburgring 24 Hours, held simultaneously, Infineon Team Abt Sportsline can still hope for a podium result: Sunday morning, the best Abt-Audi TT-R was running fourth.

Following thrilling early stages of the race, there were no major dramas for the Audi teams at Le Mans during the night. Despite that, the lead changed in the early morning: Seiji Ara, Rinaldo Capello and Tom Kristensen took the lead shortly after 7 a.m., when the push-rod of the left rear suspension had to be changed on the #88 Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx Audi R8 which had been in the lead from the start. James Davies, Johnny Herbert and Guy Smith lost two laps and are now one lap behind in second position.

The charge through the field was successful for the other two Audi R8 cars which had dropped to the back after early accidents. Team ADT Champion Racing (JJ Lehto/Emanuele Pirro/Marco Werner) moved from 41st to fourth and can still look forward to finish on the podium. The performance of Frank Biela and Pierre Kaffer, making their way up from 44th back into the top ten during the night in Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx's second Audi R8, was especially remarkable. The two Germans have to finish the race alone as the doctors recommended Allan McNish, following his accident on Saturday, not to continue in the race.

In continually difficult weather conditions on the Nürburgring Nordschleife, both Abt-Audi TT-R are running among the leaders. Shortly after midnight, Fredrik Ekblom spun into the barriers at the Döttinger Höhe due to aquaplaning. Repairs at the car's front and the rear sections cost 48 minutes, the #7 car consequently dropping to 8th position. Making up lost ground, Ekblom and his team-mates Mattias Ekström and Christian Abt progressed to 7th. The #8 Abt-Audi TT-R, driven by Patrick Huisman, Frank Stippler and Karl Wendlinger, cruised through the night without a single unscheduled pit-stop, running now second just a few seconds behind third place.

Editorial notes

We can be contacted on location at Le Mans and at the Nürburgring by E-mail at lemans@audi-motorsport.info and nuerburgring@audi-motorsport.info.

Photographs and further information are available in the Internet:
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