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Motorsport

Audi dominates qualifying at Road America

- **Both Audi R10 TDI sportscars on the front row of the grid**
- **Tenth pole position for Allan McNish**
- **Track record beaten by 1.5 seconds**

With a record lap Allan McNish (Scotland) has captured pole position for Audi in round eight of the American Le Mans Series at Road America. Marco Werner (Germany) set the second fastest time in qualifying making sure that both Audi R10 TDI sportscars from Team Audi Sport North America will start Saturday's race from the front row of the grid.

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On the fastest track of the American Le Mans Series' schedule, Audi thus ended the streak of pole positions of the lighter LM P2 cars. For the first time since the season opener at Serbing in March, a car of the "top class" starts from the top spot of the grid.

At Road America, the Audi drivers were setting the pace from the very beginning. An Audi R10 TDI was fastest in all practice sessions. In qualifying, Allan McNish was even able to beat his own track record from last year by 1.5 seconds. It was the tenth pole position for the Scotsman in the American Le Mans Series.

The performance of his team-mate Marco Werner was also impressive: Because the gearbox of his Audi R10 TDI had to be changed, the German was able to join qualifying just eight minutes from the end of the session. Despite not having driven in the previous practice session, his first flying lap allowed him to get onto the front row – a feat greeted with cheers by his crew after changing the gearbox in a very short time.

The race at Road America starts Saturday at 4 p.m. local time (11 p.m. in Germany) with a distance of four hours.

Quotes after qualifying

Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #1): “We knew that Road America would suit our Audi R10 TDI really well, but the gap is even bigger than we thought. However, this is only qualifying. In the race we have more handicaps compared to the LM P2 cars. Our refuelling time is longer, and as everybody knows, we have a smaller fuel tank. This means we need to open a gap on the race track in order to stay ahead also during the pit stops. This will be a difficult task for us tomorrow.”

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #1): “I’m delighted that Audi Sport North America plus McNish and Capello are back in the number one position. From a team and personal perspective, I’m very happy with the results of qualifying. Road America is a track I love and enjoy and after claiming a second consecutive record pole here, is obviously a circuit well suited to the Audi R10 TDI. We’ve worked hard setting up the car over the past two days. The engineers did a very good job. I had a very good car for qualifying and one I believe will be excellent for the race too.”

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Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #2): “It’s great to have two Audis back in front again. This is a really good feeling. The highlights of the day were our mechanics and Marco (Werner). I think few people would have been able to do the job our mechanics did: to change the whole gearbox in such a short time. And very few drivers would have been able to be so fast without having had practice before. Big applause for all of them!”

Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #2): “We simply have to be happy with this qualifying result under these difficult circumstances. The most important thing is we have both Audis on the front row. After the gearbox change I had only three laps. I had to make the best out of this. I think I was able to get the maximum because I achieved a lap time we never did before – and this with a setup I did not know after ‘EP’ (Emanuele Pirro) changed quite a bit in the last practice session.”

Dave Maraj (Team Director Audi Sport North America): “It is a very good feeling to see both cars on the front row. Allan (McNish) was superb. The crew of the #2 car did a great job to change the gearbox in such a short

time and allow Marco (Werner) up get so close to the pole. It was a great effort by all.”

The starting grid at Road America

- 1 Capello/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) 1m 47.665s (1st in LM P1)
- 2 Pirro/Werner (Audi R10 TDI) 1m 48.036s (2nd in LM P1)
- 3 Dumas/Bernhard (Porsche) 1m 48.833s
- 4 Maassen/Briscoe (Porsche) 1m 49.117s
- 5 Brabham/Johansson (Acura/Honda) 1m 49.767s
- 6 Herta/Franchitti (Acura/Honda) 1m 50.100s
- 7 Dyson/Smith (Acura/Honda) 1m 50.311s
- 8 Fernandez/Diaz (Acura/Honda) 1m 51.265s
- 9 Wallace/Leitzinger (Porsche) 1m 51.289s
- 10 Bach/Devlin (Lola-Mazda) 1m 52.877s

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www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation required)**