

**Audi**

# Presse-Information

## Press Information

Motorsport

Road America, 6 July 2002

### Audi driver Tom Kristensen starts from pole position on his birthday

In an exciting qualifying session, Audi has captured the top two places on the starting grid for the 500-mile race at Road America (US state of Wisconsin). Due to oil on the track, Saturday's qualifying session was interrupted exactly when Tom Kristensen and Emanuele Pirro left the pits with their Infineon Audi R8 sports cars, making it a race against time for Team Audi Sport North America. Just eight minutes left for the Audi works drivers – and thus just two flying laps on the four-mile long, very fast and demanding Road America track.

Despite the time pressure and high outside temperatures, Tom Kristensen recorded the fastest time of the whole weekend in 1m 52.166s (= 128.381 mph) taking pole position. Emanuele Pirro, unfortunately, ran into traffic on both attempts. Despite that, the reigning ALMS champion was able to move into the front row of the grid shortly before the end of the session.

A slower car also deprived Audi's customer team Champion Racing a better position on the grid: Stefan Johansson spun off the track with the 2001-spec R8 while trying to avoid another car slightly touching the wall. After a short repair, Johansson was able to continue qualifying securing 6th position on the grid.

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Running over the distance of 500 miles, the „Road America 500“ is a real endurance race. The start is on Sunday at 12:30 p.m. local time. Emanuele Pirro (#1) and Tom Kristensen (#2) are scheduled as start drivers in the two Infineon Audi R8 sports cars. Tom Kristensen celebrates on race day, July 7, his birthday. The ALMS points leader becomes 35.

### Quotes after qualifying

Rinaldo Capello (Infiniteon Audi R8 #2): "So far we have progressed very well, Tom proved this in qualifying recording an incredibly fast time. Our tire choice was the right one despite the higher temperatures. The race is very long. It is nice to start from pole position especially after we were unlucky in qualifying at Mid-Ohio."

Tom Kristensen (Infiniteon Audi R8 #2): "I was going just out the pits when a car lost a lot of oil in Turn 1 and 2. The marshalls have done a fantastic job to clean the track in that short time. I am very happy with our R8. This time the engineers and mechanics get the reward, because to go quick on the edge here, you need a perfect car."

Frank Biela (Infiniteon Audi R8 #1): "Road America is fast and very interesting. It reminds me a little bit of Spa-Francorchamps. It's fun to drive here, but the race will be very tough because

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the speed difference to the slower cars is quite big. You have to be very careful. We will start from the front row. The race is very long – so everything is possible for us.”

Emanuele Pirro (Infineon Audi R8 #1): “I am disappointed because the car runs very well and was capable of doing a really good time. But because of the black flag the session was very short. In the two quick runs I had to back off two times. We are lucky to be on the front row. We have a good car and anything is possible.”

Johnny Herbert (ADT Champion Audi R8 #38): “Qualifying was not very satisfying. We will be up for the challenge for tomorrow’s race fight. We have a little understeer and that is scrubbing speed especially around the Carousel. We will work on that for the warm-up tomorrow.”

Stefan Johansson (ADT Champion Audi R8 #38): “I got caught up with a LMP675 car on my fast lap. I went off and gently touched the wall at the exit of Turn 5. The team did the repairs rapidly but when I went out again the extra 10 percent in the tires which gives you a fast qualifying lap were gone. For the race we have to work to reduce our understeer.”

Ralf Jüttner, Technical Director Team Audi Sport North America: “We are very satisfied having both cars on the front row of the grid. The time Tom drove in the afternoon heat is exceptional. Emanuele was a little bit unlucky with the traffic on the track. The racetrack was new to our drivers, but they learned it very quickly. I also have to give our engineers a compliment because this circuit is not only very demanding to the pilots, also to the engineers who found an excellent setup. The whole team did a real good job and that makes me happy.”

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich, Head of Audi Sport: “That was a qualifying session with a very long interruption, so in the end only about eight minutes were left for us to secure our starting positions. Tom managed to catch a clear lap and drove an excellent time. Emanuele took a different strategy and tried to let everyone pass to save his fastest laptime for the end of qualifying. But that did not work out because there were some slower cars in his way, nevertheless the time was still good enough for the second starting position. For the race tomorrow it looks quite good for us.”

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### Starting grid at Road America

1. Capello/Kristensen (Infineon Audi R8)	1m 52.166s
2. Biela/Pirro (Infineon Audi R8)	1m 53.999s
3. Magnussen/Brabham (Panoz)	1m 54.486s
4. Herta/Auberlen (Panoz)	1m 54.866s
5. Field/Dayton/Durand (MG Lola)	1m 54.909s
6. Herbert/Johansson (Audi R8)	1m 55.284s
7. Field/Field (Lola-Judd)	1m 59.579s
8. de Radigues/Graham (Panoz-Mugen)	1m 59.886s
9. Duno/Maxwell (Panoz-Mugen)	2m 00.414s
10. Knight/Hawkins/Block (MG Lola)	2m 03.439s

Photos and further information can be found on the internet:  
[www.audi-sportpress.com](http://www.audi-sportpress.com) (accreditation required)

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