



## Press Information

Dallas/Fort Worth, 3 March 2001

### Audi on pole position for the season opener

At the season opener of the 2001 American Le Mans Series (ALMS), Audi continues the successes of last year: The #1 Infineon Audi R8 will start the race from pole position. During the thrilling 20 minutes of qualifying on Saturday afternoon, Frank Biela in the #2 R8 set fastest time. But the time was nullified by the officials afterwards because the diffuser was 152mm high and the rules only allow it to be 150mm according to the Sportscar regulations. Rinaldo Capello in the companion R8, who set the second fastest time, will now take over pole position. According to the rules the #2 Infineon Audi R8 will start from the back of the field.

Although it was only the first qualifying session of the year, it seems quite clear that Audi faces a great challenge in defending its titles in the ALMS and at Le Mans: First position changed again and again until Biela and Capello drove their fastest times on their very last laps. Beside the new Panoz model also the private Audi R8 of the Champion team is hunting the squad of Audi Sport North America.

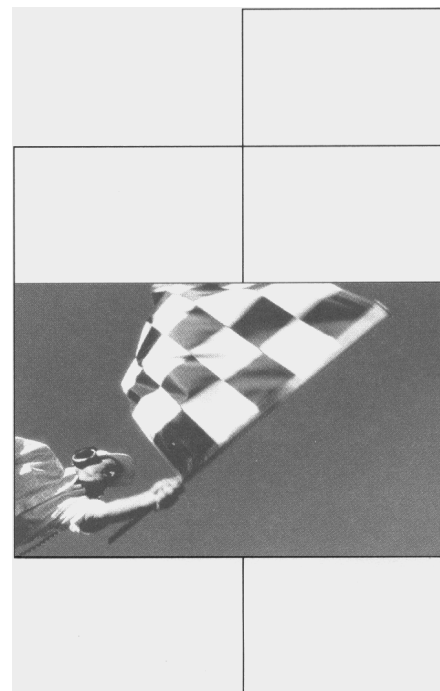
While the drivers suffered from cruel heat during last years race at Texas Motor Speedway, they face completely different conditions this time. With cold and rainy weather the track conditions change from minute to minute.

The first round of the American Le Mans Series starts on Sunday, 1 pm local time and runs over a distance of 2:45 hours. Rinaldo Capello (#1) and Frank Biela (#2) will start the race in the two Infineon Audi R8s.

### Quotes after qualifying

Rinaldo Capello (#1): "I'm satisfied with my time. Yesterday I drove just two laps, so I did my first fast lap under dry conditions during qualifying. I made some small mistakes but I doubt I could have reached Franks time."

Tom Kristensen (#1): "Of course we hoped for pole position but we wanted to earn it by our speed. I would have liked to do some more laps on this circuit before the start, but now I will learn during the race. Our competitors are very strong, so we will have to give our very best."



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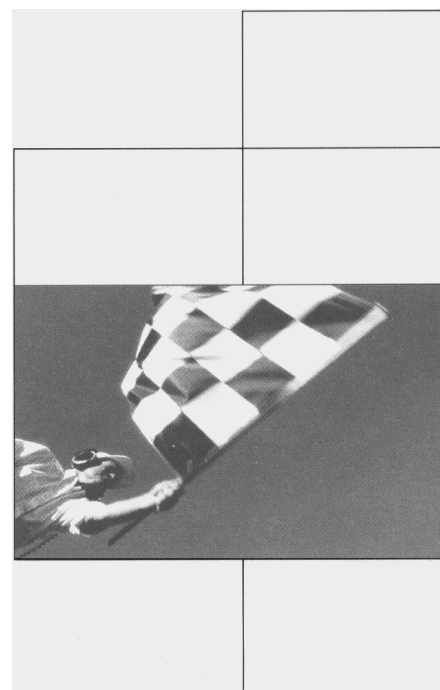


Frank Biela (#2): "The decision of the officials is disappointing because pole position would have been a very good start into the season. However, those are the rules. It definitely gives the team extra motivation to get us back to the front."

Emanuele Pirro (#2): "I'm happy with the way the car is working and with our speed today. We have to accept that because of two millimetres we have to start from the back of the field – maybe we now have to win by two millimetres."

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich, Head of Audi Sport: "We respect the ruling of the Sportscar officials on the #2 car. We look forward to watching Frank fight his way through the field in the race tomorrow. The qualifying was extremely tight. As we expected, the new Panoz is very fast. The session today was difficult because the conditions were always changing. The more you drove the faster you could go. At the very end everybody improved his time and it seems as if we caught the best moment."

Reinhold Joest, Team Director Audi Sport North America: "I'm content with our performance today although I'm disappointed by the result of scrutineering. But of course we honour their decision. Anyway, to be on pole at the season opener is a great feeling. Now the race is going to be very exciting: Frank and Emanuele now have an extra challenge to prove that they have the fastest car on the track."



### Starting grid at Dallas/Fort Worth

1. Capello/Kristensen (Infineon Audi R8)	1m 16.350s
2. Brabham/Magnussen (Panoz)	1m 16.634s
3. Graf/Salles (Panoz)	1m 17.222s
4. Wallace/Schroeder (Audi R8)	1m 18.389s
5. Cochran/Dean (Panoz)	1m 21.852s
6. Fellows/O'Connell (Chevrolet)	1m 23.963s
7. Pilgrim/Collins (Chevrolet)	1m 24.106s
8. Luhr/Maassen(Porsche)	1m 25.653s
9. Pobst/Menzel (Porsche)	1m 26.259s
10. Lehto/Müller (BMW)	1m 26.441s
...	
22. Biela/Pirro (Infineon Audi R8)	1m 15.887s

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