

Press Information

1 April 2000

Audi on the second row at Charlotte

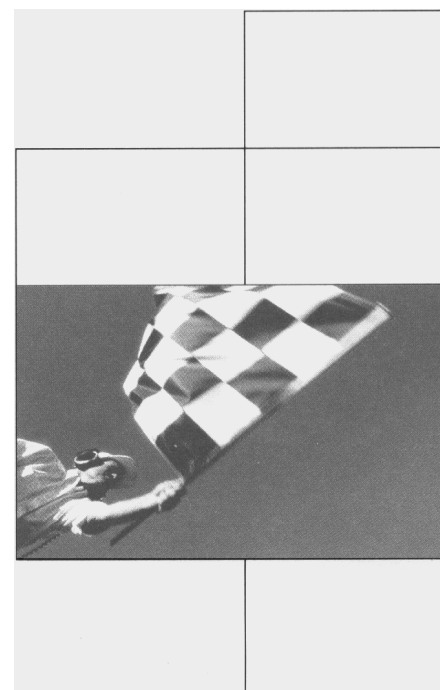
The Audi Prototypes will start fourth and fifth in the two-hour, forty-five minute American Le Mans Series race at Charlotte (North Carolina).

Emanuele Pirro missed pole position by less than 0.4s on Friday. "I am quite happy with the qualifying result. I had some trouble with the gearbox, I believe I could have been close to pole position. The race will be very interesting because the cars are very close together."

Less than a second covered the top six cars during qualifying. Allan McNish was only 0.1s behind his team mate with the #77 Audi. "I made a small mistake on my qualifying lap, I had a little oversteer onto the banking and I did a half spin." Despite Audi using last year's cars, McNish looks forward to the race, too: "In Audi's favour, the cars have always been very reliable. This track is very hard on car and driver and the competition is very close."

Team director Reinhold Joest shares the optimism of his drivers: "I think we made the optimum qualifying result with the R8R. Without the problems we could have even gone faster. Overall I am very satisfied."

The race at Charlotte will start at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday. The track uses the famous banking of the NASCAR races combined with a very tight infield section.



Quotes after final qualifying

Emanuele Pirro (#78): "I was happy with the car in qualifying, so we will keep it the same for the race. We have not yet done any long runs, so the tyre choice will be a key for the race. The track is different every time you go out, that makes it really difficult."

Allan McNish (#77): "The key is to get through the infield and on to the banking. It is important to be clean and tidy through the chicane. The g-forces we are pulling around the banking are very high here, add that to the infield and you don't get a chance to rest."

Frank Biela (#78): „I think qualifying went very well. We are very close to BMW and Panoz, to be that close with the R8R is a good performance for the whole team. For the race, consistency and pit stops will be important. The track asks a lot from the drivers. The banking is new to me, but I like it."

Rinaldo Capello (#77): „I am very happy with our overall performance even with the '99 car. This means we have improved with the '99 car a lot."

Michele Alboreto (#77): "It will be difficult to repeat the result from Sebring. You have to drive harder with the '99 car to get fast lap times."

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Reinhold Joest, Director of Audi Sport North America: „Overall we can be happy with the result, we are looking forward to the race.“

Qualifying results

1. Lehto/Müller (BMW)	1m 04.096s
2. Magnussen/Brabham (Panoz)	1m 04.202s
3. Schiattarella/de Radigues (Lola-Judd)	1m 04.431s
4. Biela/Pirro (Audi R8R)	1m 04.439s
5. Alboreto/Capello/McNish (Audi R8R)	1m 04.563s
6. Auberlen/Gounon (BMW)	1m 04.695s
7. O'Connell/Katoh (Panoz)	1m 05.361s
8. Blieninger/Simon/Simo (R&S-Judd)	1m 06.665s
9. Beretta/Wendlinger (Chrysler)	1m 10.141s
10. Archer/Donohue (Chrysler)	1m 10.884s

You will find updated pictures on the Internet:
www.audi-press.com (pass word required)

