

St. Petersburg, 31 March 2007

Motorsport

Audi R10 TDI remains undefeated

- **Diesel sports car also wins on street course in Florida**
- **1-2 victory in St. Petersburg**
- **Tenth consecutive victory for the Audi R10 TDI**

The outstanding series of victories of the Audi R10 TDI continues: Dindo Capello/Allan McNish (Italy/Scotland) and Emanuele Pirro/Marco Werner (Italy/Germany) claimed an unexpected 1-2 victory for Audi in a turbulent and exciting race in St. Petersburg (Florida). This proved that the Le Mans sports car is capable of also winning on a “city” street course.

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In Friday’s qualifying, Audi had to settle for third position. And also in the race, the 150 kilograms lighter LM P2 cars recorded the fastest lap times. But the spectators in St. Petersburg were able to witness an impressive demonstration of Audi TDI Power: In duels, the Audi drivers were able to take advantage from the high torque of the V12 TDI engine, overtaking their competitors under acceleration. They remained faultless over the entire 2:45 hours and recorded consistent lap times.

During all five caution periods, the Audi Sport North America team always kept cool heads making the right decisions. Even a stop-and-go-penalty imposed against Allan McNish immediately after the start did not prevent Audi from taking a 1-2 victory. It took the Scotsman just 15 laps to fight his way back from 8th position to the front of the field.

In the battle with their “sister” car, Capello/McNish took advantage from a perfect tyre choice for the opening stages of the race run in gruelling heat. In the cooler final stages at dusk, Pirro/Werner had the better tyre choice giving the spectators a “photo finish” which made for a grandstand finish. At the chequered flag, the two Audi R10 TDI cars were separated by just 0.426 seconds.

The victory in St. Petersburg was the tenth in a row for AUDI AG's revolutionary Diesel-powered sports car. Since its début in March 2006 the Audi R10 TDI is undefeated. Audi recorded the fourth 1-2 victory with the R10 TDI – and this in a race which was extremely competitive, with the lead changing between the prototypes from Audi, Acura/Honda and Porsche.

Quotes after the race

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "This victory makes me more than happy. It was a great team effort under unfavourable circumstances. We didn't really expect the Audi R10 TDI to win its first ever race on a street course. The car was not designed for such tracks, and the competition in the American Le Mans Series is tougher than ever before this year with Acura/Honda and Porsche. This makes this achievement of the drivers and the whole Audi team even more remarkable. Once again they made the best out of a difficult situation."

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Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #1): "To win here is a big surprise for me and especially after the last re-start. When I took over from Allan I found the Audi understeering too much, possibly caused by the temperature dropping off. After the penultimate time behind the safety car I was really scared because the long period had allowed the tyres to get cold and I almost lost the car a couple of times. So when it went green for a final time and with Emanuele behind me, I didn't think I'd have a chance to stay ahead. But thankfully the tyres warmed up sufficiently and the grip came and I just tried not to make a mistake. It's an awesome result for Audi."

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #1): "We always knew it would be a hard fight from start to finish and so it proved. I made a good start at the green flag but it looks like I'd overtaken a car before I'd crossed the start-finish line. If that is so, that's my mistake. I was given a stop-go penalty which meant I had to fight back but my Audi was really, really good which enabled me to push hard and produce consistently fast lap times. Dindo's last stint was possibly the best I've ever seen him drive. In claiming a one-two result on a circuit not ideally suited to our diesel Audi, Audi Sport

North America has shown what a great job the entire team has done here this weekend.”

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #2): “It was a very eventful race and an unbelievable result for Audi. Unfortunately when I took over from Marco, his seat was left in the car, and so I was sitting too high which made turning the steering wheel difficult at times. Taking in to account those circumstances, I was still able to fight Dindo until the last corner after a fair and open fight to the chequered flag.”

Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #2): “Everybody at Audi can be proud of this result. Our R10 TDI was running without any problem one again. This was definitely a key to success in this race. We just had to bring the car to the finish and lap consistently. It was also decisive that we drivers did not make any mistakes – maybe apart from our tyre choice for qualifying and the first stint.”

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Dave Maraj (Team Director Audi Sport North America): “The Audi R10 TDI was not made for this type of relatively slow-speed street track so to achieve a one-two finish is much better than I’d expected. All four drivers drove magnificently while the team once again kept a cool head in a dramatic, incident-filled race and played a big part with its excellent race strategy. It’s another fabulous result for Audi.”

The results in St. Petersburg

- 1 Capello/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) 114 laps
- 2 Pirro/Werner (Audi R10 TDI) + 0.426s
- 3 Maassen/Briscoe (Porsche) + 26.350s
- 4 Bernhard/Dumas (Porsche) + 26.466s
- 5 Brabham/Johansson (Acura/Honda) + 34.079s
- 6 Fernandez/Diaz (Acura/Honda) - 1 lap
- 7 Field/Field/Berry (Creation-Judd) - 2 laps
- 8 Beretta/Gavin (Chevrolet) - 3 laps
- 9 Salo/Melo (Ferrari) - 5 laps
- 10 van Overbeek/Bergmeister (Porsche) - 6 laps

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