

Sebring, 16 March 2006

Motorsport

Audi R10 TDI takes pole position on début

- **Allan McNish sets new track record at Sebring**
- **Marco Werner second fastest in qualifying**
- **First ever pole position for a Diesel sportscar**

The new Audi R10 TDI has written a piece of motorsport history making its début at Sebring (USA): For the first time ever, a diesel powered car has claimed pole position in a sportscar race. In Thursday's qualifying session, Scotland's Allan McNish broke the track record by over two seconds, impressively underlining the performance of the modern Audi TDI technology.

AUDI AG
Kommunikation
85045 Ingolstadt
www.audi.com

Setting the second-best time, Marco Werner guaranteed that both new Audi R10 TDI prototypes will start from the front row on Saturday at 10:43 a.m. local time (4:43 p.m. in Germany). Because of an electronics problem, the German could record only one timed lap moving from last spot to second position shortly before the end of qualifying.

The 12 Hours of Sebring is the most prestigious sportscar race in America, the season opener of the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) and for Audi Sport, first and foremost, a test race for the 24 Hours of Le Mans on 17/18 June. In qualifying, the Audi R10 TDI proved to be fast. It will, however, be an even bigger challenge to survive the 12-hour distance on a track which is especially tough for the material.

Quotes after qualifying at Sebring

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "In qualifying, Allan McNish has achieved an impressive track record with the new R10 TDI. That said, we know we still have a lot of work to do before Le Mans because we had a sensor problem with the number #1 car. Marco achieved second place despite that with a single lap, which was a strong performance. The whole team has worked hard."

Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #2): “This is the best result we could dream of in qualifying. Now Audi and the R10 TDI are in the motorsport history books with the first diesel car on pole position in a sportscar race. Congratulations to Allan (McNish) who did a fantastic lap. And congratulations to Audi who proved once again that if they start something new they know what to do.”

Tom Kristensen (Audi R10 TDI #2): “An all Audi front row shows clearly the potential we have in our hands with the Audi R10 TDI. It’s perfect to have the new diesel technology on pole on its début. But nevertheless the race is long. Today we could see with our ‘sister’ car how dangerous the smallest problem can be.”

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #2): “Although qualifying doesn’t mean so much in a 12-hour race, it is great to start from pole position on the début of the Audi R10 TDI and the TDI technology. The car ran fantastically well. I was able to push from the very beginning and set the time within three laps. So I could save the tyres for the race itself.”

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Frank Biela (Audi R10 TDI #1): “We already came to Sebring with a good car and since then made further steps forward. Today we had bad luck because we suffered from some electronic problems which seem to have appeared overnight and stopped us in qualifying. But we will sort this out during the next practice sessions.”

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #1): “Our priority now is to fix the electronics problem which stopped us this morning and prevented Marco (Werner) to do a better qualifying lap. Despite that he managed to put our R10 TDI in to second place so that we have a good position for the race. And I’m sure that our technicians will find the problem for the race.”

Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #1): “After a week without any troubles the problem came just in time for qualifying! Now we have to search for the reason. Thank goodness we still have some time until the race on Saturday. We are lucky to have both cars on the front row although my lap was very difficult.”

Ralf Jüttner (Technical Director, Team Audi Sport North America): “The problems with the #1 car were a little strange. A few minutes before qualifying everything seemed to be all right but then Marco (Werner) lost a lot of time in the

pits. That he still managed to do such a strong lap deserves great credit. We put bets on Allan's lap time before qualifying, but even the best one was more than one second over his real time."

Communication Motorsport

Telephone +49 (0)841 89 34200, Telefax +49 (0)841 89 38617

E-Mail motorsport-media@audi.de

Photographs of the Audi R10 TDI at Sebring, sound bites and additional information to download at: www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation necessary)

AUDI AG
Kommunikation
85045 Ingolstadt
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