

## Press Information

2 April 2000

### Audi rewarded with points after determined effort

With a determined effort Audi brought both vehicles across the finish line and in the points at Charlotte (North Carolina). Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro finished the second round of the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) sixth. Michele Alboreto, Rinaldo Capello and Allan McNish secured eighth place in the prototypes class despite a 30-minute pitstop for repairs following an accident.

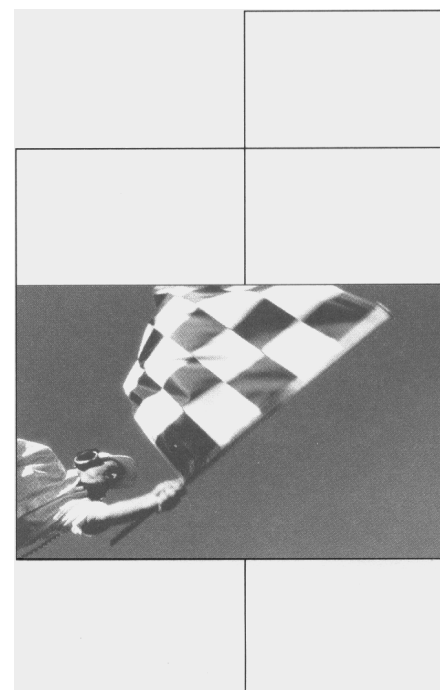
"Today was not our day," explained Team Director Reinhold Joest after the finish. "But we fought like lions." Audi did not race the victorious cars from the season-opener in Sebring, but instead contested the 2:45 hour event with modified vehicles from last year. The new Audi R8s are already being prepared in Ingolstadt for the Le Mans 24 Hour race (17-18 June).

A good start saw both Audi R8R cars gain one position. After almost 45 minutes Frank Biela experienced a few frightening seconds when he had a close encounter with the BMW driven by Jean-Marc Gounon. "The BMW went onto the grass and then clipped the rear of my car," said Biela, who slid across the grass for a good 500 metres.

As a consequence of the collision, the diffuser of the Audi with starting number 78 came loose and had to be removed. Later, Biela's teammate Emanuele Pirro was plagued by gearbox problems, losing fifth and sixth gear. Nevertheless, the German/Italian duo reached sixth place overall.

Rinaldo Capello experienced an even tougher time in his Audi R8R with starting number 77. While attempting to lap a GT contender after almost one and a half hours, the two vehicles collided. Capello hit a wall hard. It took the Audi Sport North America team just 30 minutes to rebuild the front section and have the R8R back in the race. The reward for this excellent team effort were 12 points for eighth place.

The American Le Mans Series now travels to Europe. The next round starts in Silverstone (GB) on May 13th. On July 9th the ALMS makes a guest appearance at the Nürburgring.



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### Quotes after the race

**Michele Alboreto (#77):** "The team did a fantastic job in bringing our car back into the race. That made it possible to secure points today. Thanks to the entire team."

**Frank Biela (#78):** "It was important to score points and even with the gearbox problem we finished sixth. The BMW got onto the grass, he came back on and then he hit me in the rear. After that the car still felt okay, but I dropped to the back of the field."

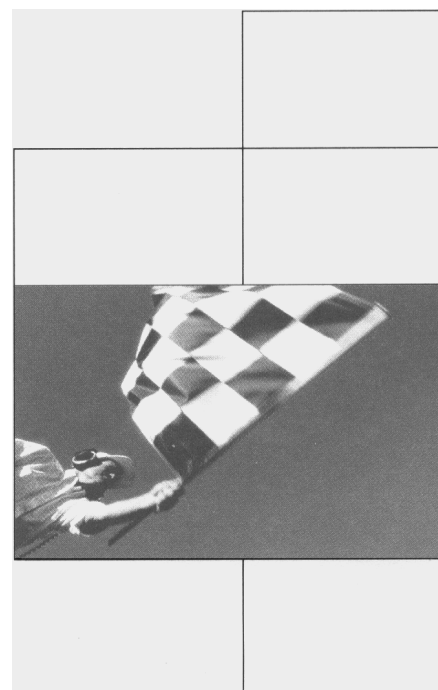
**Rinaldo Capello (#77):** "I was on a new set of tires and had really bad understeer. I passed the GT car on the right side, but I don't think the driver saw me because he turned in and hit the back of my car sending me into the wall."

**Allan McNish (#77):** "I was quite surprised at the pace of the race, the slower cars in the other classes were very aware of the faster cars and that is why the pace was so quick. It took about 45 minutes for someone to touch the chicane, which is quite remarkable."

**Emanuele Pirro (#78):** "We were third after one hour and then we broke the top two gears – fifth and sixth. Considering everything we brought the car home and scored some points toward the championship."

**Reinhold Joest, Team Director Audi Sport North America:**

"It was not our day, but we fought like lions. The team did an excellent job to repair the 77 car and get it back into the race. Michele was able to do some fast lap times with the car. After Frank's accident, the car was not the same. The diffuser came loose as a result of the accident. We were able to match the pace of the frontrunners which shows that even the '99 car can run with the best."



### Race results

1. Lehto/Müller (BMW)	125 laps
2. Magnussen/Brabham (Panoz)	+ 7,884 sec.
3. Schiattarella/de Radigues (Lola-Judd)	- 1 lap
4. Gounon/Auberlen (BMW)	- 1 lap
5. O'Connell/Katoh (Panoz)	- 1 lap
6. Pirro/Biela (Audi R8R)	- 3 laps
...	
20. Alboreto/Capello/McNish (Audi R8R)	- 32 laps

Updated pictures on the Internet:

**[www.audi-press.com](http://www.audi-press.com)** (password required)