

Road Atlanta, 6 October 2007

Motorsport

Audi scores eighth consecutive Petit victory

- **Audi R10 TDI wins at Road Atlanta**
- **Outright victory and Drivers' title for Capello/McNish**
- **Lucas Luhr with impressive performance**

After the 12 Hours of Sebring and the Le Mans 24 Hours, the Audi R10 TDI has also won the third major endurance race of the year for Le Mans sportscars: At Road Atlanta (US state of Georgia), Dindo Capello (Italy) and Allan McNish (Scotland) won the 1000-mile "Petit Le Mans" race. This means Audi scored outright victories with the revolutionary diesel sportscar at Sebring, Le Mans and Road Atlanta for a second consecutive time.

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During the entire race, Team Audi Sport North America's two Audi R10 TDI sportscars set the pace with spectators witnessing one of the most exciting races in the history of the American Le Mans Series. After 9 hours and 19 minutes, Capello/McNish finished just 0.923-seconds ahead of the second-placed LM P2 Porsche.

A total of nine caution periods deleted every advantage the Audi drivers had gained. On top of that, both R10 TDI cars were involved in separate collisions around the three hour mark: Allan McNish lost a lap when three cars spun in front of him in Turn 1. Whilst the Scotsman came away with a nose-change, Marco Werner was less lucky in the 'sister' car: The German was pushed off the track by a GT1 car. The following repairs cost almost an hour and took the #2 Audi R10 TDI out of contention.

The #1 Audi R10 TDI had another unscheduled pit-stop due to a slow puncture. 19 minutes before the finish, Dindo Capello was able to pass the leading LM P2 Porsche and stay in front of him in the remaining 15 laps. Audi thus ended the eight-race long winning streak of the much lighter LM P2 sportscars.

With their eighth LM P1 class win of the season, Dindo Capello and Allan McNish successfully defended their title in the Drivers' Championship of the American Le Mans Series. Audi and Audi Sport North America had already prematurely clinched the Manufacturers' and Teams' titles.

An impressive performance at Road Atlanta was also shown by Lucas Luhr. At short notice, the German replaced Emanuele Pirro who was still suffering from concussion after an accident on Thursday. The official doctors advised the Italian not to compete in the race.

Luhr had to start from the back of the field without having practiced with the Audi R10 TDI. After a few laps he had found a very good rhythm handing the car over to Marco Werner in second position. Also in his other stints the DTM driver was able to match the pace of his team mates.

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Quotes after the race

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "What a close finish! This was really a great race for the fans and of course for Audi. Despite many things were running against us, we eventually won – and that's the only thing that counts. We are proud to have kept our 100 % winning record at this race. Congratulations to Dindo (Capello) and Allan (McNish) for their victory and their Drivers' title. It's a shame the second car could not show what would have been possible because of the accident. But that's racing."

Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #1): "The closing stages have made my fourth Petit Le Mans race victory really special – Allan (McNish) and I, together with Audi, will remember this success here for a long time. The win gives Allan and I a second Drivers' championship in a row but at the moment, it's the race win that is giving me more enjoyment. For Audi to beat the lighter Porsches, which were very fast, is fantastic. I had to prove I was able to take the pressure in those closing moments. It would have been easy to make a big mistake. I contacted a slower car four laps from the end and I thought the chance of victory had gone. But once again the Audi was strong and fast allowing me this great win."

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #1): “I’m very proud of this race victory considering the fight we faced and obstacles put in front of us at times – a perfect way to win the Drivers’ title again. Petit Le Mans is a long event not only for a car and its drivers but the entire team and everyone played a major part in this close victory. We had two unscheduled pit-stops. Dindo (Capello) and I opened up a one lap lead after seven hours but a full course caution brought the Porsche back into contention, but that’s endurance racing. Audi are back on the very top step of the rostrum and there is no better way for Dindo and I to have won a second consecutive title.”

Lucas Luhr (Audi R10 TDI #2): “Before the race I was quite excited but also nervous. I knew the car a little bit and also the track. But to go directly into the race without any practice is something very special. After a few laps I quickly realized that I had a good rhythm. It was a very tough race for me because I had to use Emanuele’s seat. Everything hurts and I had cramps in the car. Despite that, I really enjoyed it and I think I substituted for Emanuele very well. Marco’s accident was a pity because until that moment we were running second overall.”

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Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #2): “Congratulations to Audi and to Allan (McNish) and Dindo (Capello). It was important for Audi to take the outright victory – this was our target. Of course it’s a shame that we did not have both cars in front at the end. We took all the bad luck this weekend. What the Corvette did to me was totally unnecessary. Later in the race, I passed other cars at that point without any problems. I can’t understand that somebody does not slow down when you are already alongside.”

Dave Maraj (Team Director Audi Sport North America): “I’m delighted that Audi has continued its 100% winning record at Petit – this race will live long in my memory. It was just incredible. The last few races we’ve had what seemed like an outright race victory taken away from us. This time we finally made it. Audi and Audi Sport North America had already secured the Manufacturers’ and Teams’ championship and for Dindo and Allan to retain the Drivers’ title after such a tremendous battle here is very satisfying. Unfortunately the #2 Audi suffered all of the bad luck, not only in the race but in practice, but both car crews worked extremely hard and deserve credit – it was a big team effort.”

The results at Road Atlanta

- 1 Capello/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) 394 laps in 9h 18m 58.275s
- 2 Dumas/Bernhard/Long (Porsche) + 0.923s
- 3 Dyson/Smith (Porsche) - 8 laps
- 4 Mücke/Watts/Charouz (Zytek) - 11 laps
- 5 Campbell-Walter/Primat/Tinseau (Creation-Judd) - 17 laps
- 6 Wallace/Leitzinger/Lally (Porsche) - 22 laps
- 7 Maassen/Briscoe/Collard (Porsche) - 24 laps
- 8 Brabham/Johansson/Kerr (Acura/Honda) - 29 laps
- 9 Beretta/Gavin/Papis (Chevrolet) - 30 laps
- 10 von Overbeek/Bergmeister/Lieb (Porsche) - 41 laps
- ...
- 17 Luhr/Werner (Audi R10 TDI) - 64 laps (4th in LM P1)

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