

Lime Rock, 07 July 2007

Motorsport

Audi TDI Power remains unbeaten in LM P1

- **Capello/McNish win LM P1 category at Lime Rock**
- **Contact costs chance for overall victory**
- **Pirro/Werner score points despite accident**

Reigning champions Dindo Capello (Italy) and Allan McNish (Scotland) scored extended their lead in the American Le Mans Series at Lime Rock (US state of Connecticut) scoring their fifth consecutive class win and thus retaining the 100 percent LM P1 category winning record of the Audi R10 TDI in its 15th race. Their team mates Emanuele Pirro (Italy) and Marco Werner (Germany) finished fourth in the LM P1 class despite an unfortunate accident.

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The race on the shortest track of the season was incident packed as expected. Taking advantage of the enormous torque of his V12 TDI engine, Allan McNish moved from seventh position on the grid to third at the start. After 30 minutes, the Scotsman was running second just behind the pole sitting LM P2 Porsche when he was blocked twice in a row by the same backmarker at the end of the start-finish straight. On the first occasion, the Audi driver spun dropping from second to fifth position. The second time, contact caused damage to the front of the Audi R10 TDI. The spins and front bodywork change cost McNish and Capello a total of three laps and any chance to fight for overall glory. From tenth position, the reigning champions fought their way back to fifth place making up two laps with the help of good strategy.

The race of the #2 Audi R10 TDI seemed to have come to a premature end just before the end of the first hour due to a spectacular accident when Marco Werner spun off the last corner at high speed due to a puncture impacting the guard rail heavily backwards. That the #2 R10 TDI was able to get back on the track 55 minutes later with applause of the specators was thanks to the strength of the car and the quick work of the mechanics from

Team Audi Sport North America. Emanuele Pirro and Marco Werner were able to just complete the minimum distance of 70 percent to be classified finishing fourth in the LM P1 class and scoring ten precious points.

Quotes after the race

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “We had quite a good pace today but we had to go to the limit – and this is very risky on a race track where overtaking is extremely difficult. Unfortunately both of our cars were delayed by contacts and accidents. The accident of Marco (Werner) was caused by a cut tyre – most likely caused by running over debris. This caused him impacting backwards very heavily. It was a great achievement of the team to repair the car thus allowing them to score points.”

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Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #1): “Looking at the race positively, we at least somehow claimed maximum points again but for me, it was one of the most disappointing races in the American Le Mans Series I’ve ever had. Allan (McNish) and I had more incidents in today’s race than we’ve experienced in three full seasons of racing. The car unusually was very difficult to drive but we both decided that we should nevertheless push hard throughout the race despite these problems. We have managed to extend our championship lead but on this occasion, mainly due to the bad luck of our ‘sister’ car.”

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #1): “I made a good start to take third and inherited second place when Chris Dyson was penalized for a jump start. We knew that it would be a difficult race and traffic would be an important factor. I encountered the same backmarker twice, at exactly the same point of the circuit. The first time I spun after locking up the rears without damage but the second time, when I again dived down the inside, he moved over and we made contact damaging the nose of the Audi which effectively put us out of contention for overall honours.”

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #2): “Of course there is some disappointment because we wanted to do better. But the most important thing is that Marco (Werner) is okay after his big crash. It proved one more time that our Audi R10 TDI is very strong. This track is not very safe and he

crashed in the quickest corner. After that the mechanics did an unbelievable job putting the car together to make us cover enough distance to score points and still have some hope for the championship. This was the nice part of the day. My race wasn't easy because the car was not perfect after the crash."

Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #2): "This was not our day. Due to the accident we lost more ground to our 'sister' car which took another class victory. Now it's becoming tight for us in the championship. I hope we'll finally have more luck in the next races. When I suddenly lost the car entering the corner, I had absolutely no explanation for this. Now we know it was a puncture."

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Dave Maraj (Team Director Audi Sport North America): "This was a tough day for the team. The mechanics have done a very good job to get the #2 car out again after the accident. We made a few mistakes today. You have to pay for when you make mistakes. Let's hope we do better in the next races."

The results at Lime Rock

- 1 Briscoe/Maassen (Porsche) 174 laps in 2h 45m 16.615s
- 2 Bernhard/Dumas (Porsche) + 7.481s
- 3 Brabham (Acura/Honda) + 16.095s
- 4 Dyson/Smith (Porsche) - 1 lap
- 5 Capello/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) - 1 lap (1st in LM P1)
- 6 Wallace/Leitzinger (Porsche) - 2 laps
- 7 Herta/Franchitti (Acura/Honda) - 4 laps
- 8 Beretta/Gavin (Chevrolet) - 9 laps
- 9 O'Connell/Magnussen (Chevrolet) - 9 laps
- 10 van der Steurer/Pecorari (Radical) - 12 laps
- ...
- 23 Pirro/Werner (Audi R10 TDI) - 51 laps (4th in LM P1)

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