



Press Information

Sebring, 20 March 2004

Historic 1-2-3 victory for Audi at Sebring

For the fifth consecutive time, Audi has won the 12 Hour race at Sebring (Florida), again writing motorsport history. The Audi R8 is the first sports car that has won the endurance race, held since 1952, five times in a row. For Frank Biela, who shared Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx's winning Audi R8 with rookie Pierre Kaffer and Ex-Formula 1 driver Allan McNish, it was also a historic success: After Olivier Gendebien, Phil Hill, Mario Andretti and Hans-Joachim Stuck, the Audi works driver is only the fifth driver who achieved three Sebring victories.

The race at a glance

- Start positions: 1 #38 Lehto; 2 #28 McNish; 4 #88 Herbert
- Start: #38 Lehto takes the lead in front of #28 McNish, #16 Weaver and #88 Herbert
- Hour 1: #88 Herbert moves to third on lap 5 making it an Audi 1-2-3 lead. #28 McNish takes the lead from #38 Lehto on lap 13 and opens a gap of 10 seconds
- Hour 2: #28 Biela loses about 10 seconds during pit-stop when the car is released to the ground too early. As a consequence, #38 Werner closes the gap again and passes #28 Biela on lap 62
- Hour 3: #38 Werner extends lead to 30 seconds
- Hour 4: #38 Werner loses most of his lead due to a caution period. After the restart, #38 Werner and #28 Biela go wide under braking at the same time, #88 Davies passes both of them. #38 Werner makes contact with a GT car, repairs of damaged right side-pod and coolers during another caution period cost nine laps, dropping the #38 car to 7th position. #28 Kaffer goes wide after a restart
- Hour 5: #28 Kaffer takes the lead, #38 Pirro moves to fourth position
- Hour 6: #28 Kaffer loses lead to #88 Smith after precautionary rear bodywork change, #38 Pirro promoted to third
- Hour 7: #28 Kaffer retakes lead from #88 Smith. #88 Herbert loses 13 laps (39 minutes) due to seal change of left rear drive shaft, dropping him to 5th place. #38 Lehto promoted to second place
- Hour 8: Contact between #38 Lehto und #28 McNish
- Hour 10: #88 Herbert moves to third, giving Audi a 1-2-3 lead again
- Hour 12: Stop-and-go penalty for #38 Pirro (speeding in the pit-lane)
- Finish: #28 Kaffer crosses the finish-line five laps ahead of #38 Pirro and 12 laps ahead of #88 Davies
- 5th consecutive Sebring victory for Audi and the Audi R8
- Third Sebring triumph for Frank Biela
- Pierre Kaffer wins at his sports car debut
- First Sebring success for Allan McNish
- Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx wins at its debut
- 34th ALMS victory for the Audi R8

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Quotes after the race

Frank Biela (Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx Audi R8 #28): "Like Le Mans, Sebring is a very special race. Winning Sebring for the third time is fantastic. We had very strong competition today which makes this victory even sweeter. This is a perfect way to start off my 2004 season – I hope I can enjoy the same success in DTM and at Le Mans."

Marco Werner (Team ADT Champion Racing Audi R8 #38): "Second place is certainly a good result, despite being very unhappy. At the beginning the car was perfect, but after the first caution period the trouble started. The collision with the GT car, that suddenly moved over on me, cost us the race. This was not my day."

Johnny Herbert (Audi Sport UK Team Veloqx Audi R8 #88): "I thought I'd got a puncture at first but it was obviously lubricant spraying on to the tyre. It's a shame, everything was looking good, we were comfortably in second place less than half a minute behind our team-mates but to recover on to the rostrum is pleasing."

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "Sebring is one of the very hard endurance races. By winning this race five times in a row you can say with a good conscience that this is no coincidence. This 1-2-3 victory proves that Audi has built a great car and we are again and again able to get strong drivers and teams."

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Results

- 1 Biela/Kaffer/McNish (Audi R8) 350 laps in 12h 01m 22.576s
- 2 Lehto/Pirro/Werner (Audi R8) - 5 laps
- 3 Davies/Herbert/Smith (Audi R8) - 12 laps
- 4 Fellows/O'Connell/Papis (Chevrolet) - 21 laps
- 5 Short/Barff/Barbosa (Dallara-Judd) - 24 laps
- 6 Weaver/Wallace/Leitzinger (MG Lola) – 27 laps
- 7 Lewis/Drissi/Rice (R&S-Lincoln) - 29 laps
- 8 Bernhard/Bergmeister/Maassen (Porsche) - 33 laps
- 9 Bouchut/Blanchemain/Berville (Panoz) - 33 laps
- 10 Dumas/Lieb/Luhr (Porsche) - 33 laps

Photographs and further information available on the Internet:
www.audi-sportpress.com (accreditation necessary)