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## Motorsport

### Audi driver Allan McNish about Lime Rock

- **Round 6 of the American Le Mans Series**
- **Short but fast track in Connecticut**
- **110 miles northeast of New York City**

Following a seven-week break enabling teams to travel to Europe to compete in the Le Mans 24 Hours, the American Le Mans Series resumes next weekend. Round 6 of the US sportscar series takes place at Lime Rock Park (US state of Connecticut), 110 miles northeast of New York City. The track is just 2.462 kilometres (1.530 miles) long and thus the shortest of the year. It is, however, considered as one of the most challenging of the entire series. Last year's winner Allan McNish, who shares Audi Sport North America's #1 Audi R10 TDI with Dindo Capello, talks about Lime Rock Park.

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#### **Was last year's victory at Lime Rock a special one for you and Dindo Capello as it was the last race for the Audi R8?**

"In anyone's career, whether it is a person or whether it's a car, there is only one last race, so you get only one opportunity to win it. Dindo and I had a big motivation: The Audi R8 won on its debut and so in theory it should sign off its final race with a win. Thankfully we were able to do it. It would have been sad if such a great car had not won its final race. It was also the 50th victory for Audi in the American Le Mans Series."

#### **What can you say about the track?**

"Lime Rock is a very historic American track. Not one we in Europe know quite so well. But in the United States it's got a tremendous amount of history. The track is located in Connecticut, in a beautiful part of the world. The whole circuit follows the natural contours of the land. You know that it has not been made artificially but also that it's been in existence for a long time. You really get that feeling when you drive there."

**Is it a difficult track?**

“Lime Rock is definitely one of the more difficult circuits in America. It’s an extremely fast track, quite short, only 45-seconds per lap. But it has got a variety of types of corner and many different track surfaces. This means that the natural line you would take is not always the best one. In 2006, to be honest, it was also one of the more dangerous circuits we visited. But the American Le Mans Series were adamant that the circuit had to upgrade safety. Apparently this has been completed over the winter. They’ve been doing a lot of work to make sure it comes up to the standards that we need for a modern LM P1 sportscar where speeds are very high.”

**How important is qualifying on such a short track?**

“Qualifying is always important on any race circuit. But with a 2 hours and 45 minutes race staged on a short little track with about 30 cars, we’ll be overtaking four or five cars per lap. If you can be at the front at the start, it gives you the first advantage when you come to lap the backmarkers. We did not start from the front row last year but we were still able to win the race. But this year, with the amount of very fast LM P2 cars, qualifying is going to be even more critical – and close: I would expect the gap between the first six or seven cars on the grid to be covered by only a few tenths of a second.”

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