

Salt Lake City, 15 July 2006

Audi R10 TDI claims victory in US comeback

- **Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro score first 2006 ALMS win**
- **Third success of the Audi diesel sportscar**
- **Tight finish on new racetrack at Salt Lake City**

Only four weeks after its historical victory as the first diesel sportscar at the Le Mans 24 Hours, the Audi R10 TDI celebrated another success: In the comeback in the American Le Mans Series on the new race track at Salt Lake City (US state Utah), Emanuele Pirro (Italy) and Frank Biela (Germany) triumphed in an exciting finish with a gap of only 0.318 seconds ahead of the Porsche drivers Lucas Luhr and Sascha Maassen.

AUDI AG
Kommunikation
85045 Ingolstadt
www.audi.com

The two Audi R10 TDI sportscars of Audi Sport North America started the fifth race of the American Le Mans Series from the front row. After 61 minutes of the race, Allan McNish (Scotland) handed over the leading #2 R10 TDI to co-driver Dindo Capello (Italy). With a pit-stop on the 40th lap, the Audi R10 TDI took enough Shell V-Power Diesel for the remaining 25 laps of race distance. Shortly before the end of the race, a Safety Car period destroyed the advantage of the Italian. A slow puncture on the rear left forced the leading Audi to make an unscheduled pit-stop during the caution period and Capello/McNish had to be content with the fourth position.

Emanuele Pirro in the #1 Audi R10 TDI overtook Lucas Luhr shortly before the Safety Car period and defended the lead after the restart for the remaining 15 minutes against the attacks of the Porsche.

The comeback in the American Le Mans Series did not start perfectly for Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro. An off-track excursion on the first lap cost pole-sitter Frank Biela the early lead. A spin while lapping a GT car meant Biela dropped to sixth position. From there the German and team-mate Emanuele Pirro charged through the field and were rewarded with an exciting race win.

With the fourth place overall and third place in the LM P1 class, Allan McNish and Dindo Capello defended their lead in the LM P1 Driver's championship.

Audi still leads the manufacturer and team championships with a maximum score.

Already next Saturday (22 July) starts the sixth race of the American Le Mans Series at Portland. The Audi “works” drivers will use the days until the first practice on Thursday for a motorbike tour from Salt Lake City to Portland.

Quotes after the race at Salt Lake City

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “It was a great race and full of tension – for my taste a little bit too much tension. Emanuele Pirro and Frank Biela drove a great race. Allan McNish and Dindo Capello showed a great pace but they were unlucky because while leading they had to make a late, unscheduled pit stop because of a puncture and fell back. Otherwise a 1-2 victory would have been possible. But motorsport is like that.”

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Frank Biela (Audi R10 TDI): “It was a good race for Audi – no question. But it was unfortunate for the second car, I don’t like to win a race like this. Early on I was unlucky when I had a small spin while I tried to avoid a Ferrari. Emanuele drove very strongly and fought back. He then faced a lot of pressure during the final laps. We are delighted about the victory.”

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI): “I was really happy with my race. The car was sliding at the beginning but the grip improved. I did some good lap times and was able to catch the Porsche. After the pace car came out, everything was under discussion and I had the hardest 15 minutes of my life, I had a lot of ‘pick-up’ on my tyres. I couldn’t afford any mistakes and I was very busy to keep the car on the track. The Porsche was biting me everywhere. It was a hot day and the track was hard and physical. I am quite tired.”

Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #2): “Ten laps before the end I was more than 30 seconds in front. It was the worst moment to get a pace car period – it had looked good for us until then. But we had the power to keep the position until the end. Suddenly behind the pace car I felt that there was something wrong. Then the pits called me in for a slow puncture on the left rear tyre. Unfortunately it happened on the last lap of the pace car. It hurts to lose a victory in the last half hour.”

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #2): “We had a victory snatched from us when almost in sight so I’m bitterly disappointed. During my stint the Audi was working very well which allowed me to build a gap of 50 seconds and Dindo was able to maintain that when he took. So it’s doubly frustrating that something out of our control stopped us from taking a deserved victory. That’s motor racing but it’s still hard to swallow.”

Dave Maraj (Team Director Team Audi Sport North America): “A crazy race! The #2 Audi did very well at the start of the race, building a good lead, and looked to have it in the bag until a slow puncture during the late full course yellow meant a late pit-stop. But the #1 Audi fought back in to contention and came through to score a narrow victory. All of our drivers and team did a really good job and the pit strategy worked very well.”

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Results at Salt Lake City

- 1 Biela/Pirro (Audi R10 TDI) 65 laps in 2h 46m 0.377s
- 2 Maassen/Luhr (Porsche) + 0.318s
- 3 Weaver/Leitzinger (Lola-AER) + 45.183s
- 4 Capello/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) + 1m 10.503s
- 5 Dyson/Smith (Lola-AER) - 1 laps
- 6 Dayton/Wallace (Lola-AER) - laps

Communication Motorsport

Telephone +49 (0)841 89 34200, Telefax +49 (0)841 89 38617

E-Mail motorsport-media@audi.de

Photographs, sound bites and additional information can be found in the Internet at: www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation required)