

Long Beach, 14 April 2007

Motorsport

Audi R10 TDI extends championship lead

- **Audi claims double victory in LM P1 category**
- **Emanuele Pirro loses lead after accident**
- **R10 TDI remains unbeaten in the LM P1 category**

With a double victory in the LM P1 category, Audi extended the championship lead in the American Le Mans Series (ALMS). The Audi R10 TDI achieved in Long Beach (US state of California) the eleventh consecutive LM P1 win. On the street circuit, Dindo Capello/Allan McNish (Italy/Scotland) recorded seventh place overall while their team-mates Emanuele Pirro/Marco Werner (Italy/Germany) achieved second in the LM P1 category and ninth overall. Finishing ahead of the two Audi R10 TDI sports-prototypes were the 150 kilograms lighter LM P2 cars. After 10 outright ALMS victories, the 650 hp Audi R10 TDI suffered its first overall defeat since making its debut 13 months ago.

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After 45 minutes of the 1:40 hour city race – the shortest race in ALMS history – pole-setter Dario Franchitti (Honda/Acura) lost the lead to Emanuele Pirro. At mid-distance, Pirro's R10 TDI was hit up the back by another car at the hairpin and was turned around. As a result, Pirro had to pit with a punctured rear tyre. Co-driver Marco Werner took over the Audi with a one lap deficit but ended the race in second position in the LM P1 category.

Dindo Capello in the Audi R10 TDI #1 pitted after 30 minutes because the brake cooling was blocked by a piece of debris. As there was only one yellow caution during the race, co-driver Allan McNish had to take diesel again before the end of the race. Nevertheless the Scotsman drove to victory in the LM P1 category.

The next race for the Audi R10 TDI is 21 April with the fourth race of the American Le Mans Series in Houston (US state of Texas).

Quotes after the race

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “After what we had learned in St. Petersburg, we knew before the race that on a street circuit with these regulations it would be difficult for us to fight against the lighter LM P2 cars. Additionally, the Acura/Honda and Porsche competitors in the American Le Mans Series are stronger this year than ever. In the LM P1 class, the R10 TDI in Long Beach was again unbeatable. That we collected the maximum points was very important for the championship.”

Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #1): “It was not an enjoyable race for me because after only a handful of laps, I had a brake problem – debris blocking a brake duct causing overheating. The race strategy of an early stop was correct, especially as it enabled our crew to clear the duct, but obviously we hoped for a second yellow to prevent a late splash and dash. But we lead the championship and can hopefully have a better race at Houston.”

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #1): “From a race perspective the overall result is disappointing. But after qualifying, and the speed of the LM P2 Acura and Porsche cars, we knew they would run a fast race pace. We hoped it would be a hot day and the grip of the track surface would come to us and help but unfortunately it wasn't to be. We must now analyse all of the data to try to make the situation better for Houston. But in the bigger picture, we won our class which is good for the championship.”

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #2): “We have finally been beaten which is something that had to happen sooner or later. The negative thing is that we lost the race by an accident which was completely out of my control. I was hit by a Porsche GT3 in a slow corner. The positive thing is that we would have had the potential to win the race. The car was very strong; I was in the lead and was having a good race.”

Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #2): “It was not our weekend. Emanuele drove a good race but he lost one lap when he was touched by another car in the rear which caused a puncture. When I took over, I could only do my race but nothing more.”

Dave Maraj (Team Director Audi Sport North America): “We have a saying that ‘not everyday can be Sunday’ meaning it cannot be a perfect world all of the time and today was just one of those days. The #1 Audi had some brake and tyre issues and because of the early stop required another stop for diesel when we didn’t get a late yellow. Meanwhile the #2 Audi ran very competitively too until a GT2 car ran up the back of it at the hairpin and punctured a rear tyre. The phenomenal run of Audi R10 TDI victories was always going to be in jeopardy especially on a street circuit and so it is proved.”

The results in Long Beach

- 1 Bernhard/Dumas (Porsche) 74 laps
- 2 Maassen/Briscoe (Porsche) + 0,770s
- 3 Leitzinger/Wallace (Porsche) + 13,467s
- 4 Brabham/Johansson/Dayton (Acura/Honda) + 35,121s
- 5 Dyson/Smith (Porsche) + 48,391s
- 6 Herta/Franchitti (Acura/Honda) + 59,451s
- 7 Capello/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) + 1m 4,315s
- 8 Fernandez/Diaz (Acura/Honda) - 1 lap
- 9 Pirro/Werner (Audi R10 TDI) - 1 lap
- 10 Beretta/Gavin (Chevrolet) - 3 laps

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Photographs, sound bites and other information can be found in the Internet at:
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