



Press Information

19 March 2000

Audi scores one-two result at Sebring

Dreamstart for Audi in the USA: At the Sebring 12 Hour race – the season opener of the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) – the Audi Sport North America team finished in first and second place. Frank Biela, Tom Kristensen and Emanuele Pirro won the famous long distance race just ahead of their teammates Michele Alboreto, Rinaldo Capello und Allan McNish.

The fascinated race fans around the track saw an exciting week of motorsport, which Audi dominated from the beginning. After setting fastest times in almost every free practice, Frank Biela took pole-position with the silver-red painted Audi R8. Along side him on the front row was Rinaldo Capello who set second fastest time in qualifying.

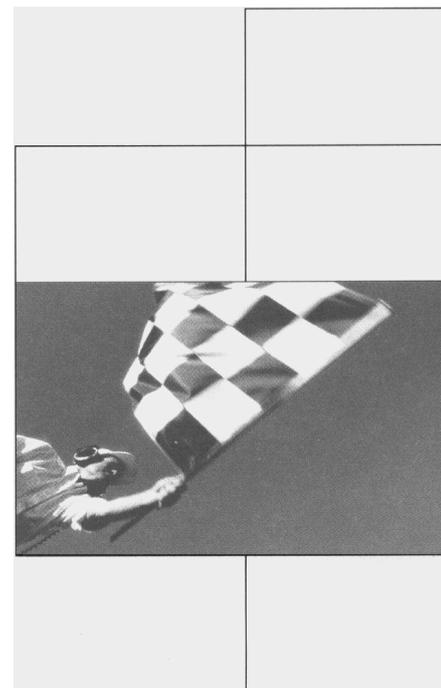
During the race, which was attended by over 110,000 spectators, the two 610 bhp R8s shared the pace and only lost the lead after the pit stops. There were no major problems with the car. „Engine and gearbox worked fine“, says Team Director Reinhold Joest. The mechanics just had to work on the brakes of car number 78. A tyre blew on sportscar number 77 driven by Michele Alboreto losing him time as well.

„It was a long time before the race was decided and so a bit too exciting“, admitted Head of Audi Sport, Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich, with a smile. Emanuele Pirro, who set the fastest race lap as well, took over the lead only during the last hour of the race. „But I think everybody enjoyed this race.“

On 1 April, the second race of the season is held at Charlotte (North Carolina). Afterwards the ALMS moves across to Europe: It starts on 13 May at Silverstone (GB) and on 9 July at the Nürburgring (D).

Quotes after the race

Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich, Head of Audi Sport: „Of course I'm very happy now. Now we have a good foundation for the Le Mans race and the entire American Le Mans Series. But still there is a lot of work to do.“





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Reinhold Joest, Director Audi Sport North America: „That is really a big story for us to achieve this success just after one year with Audi. We can praise each other for sure. The little problems we had are quite normal. We will have them sorted out by Le Mans.“

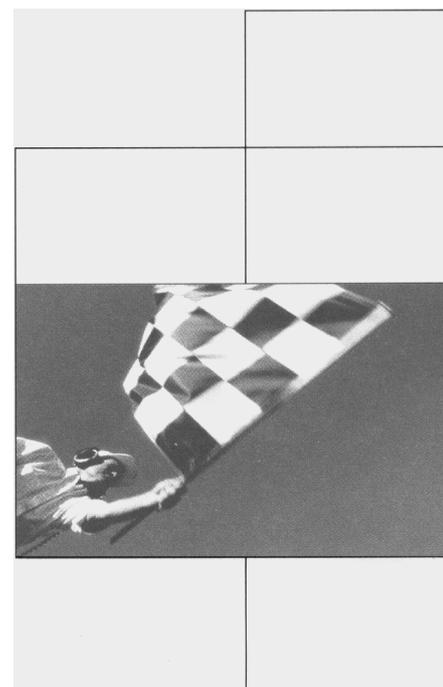
Michele Alboreto (#77): „Now we continue the season with a lot of self confidence because we know we have a very fast car. I did not drive much today because I could not get the right feeling for this race.“

Rinaldo Capello (#77): „It seemed to me as if the track was smoother than last year. But that was because we improved our set-up a lot. This victory is a great success for the whole team.“

Frank Biela (#78): „We had bad luck several times during the race but we always managed to get back on the pace. That was a great teamwork.“

Tom Kristensen (#78): „I took the car over from Frank twice and unfortunately there was always a problem. So I had to take more risks to make up time. Luckily it worked out every time.“

Emanuele Pirro (#78): „Normally I do not believe there are ghosts. But after today I believe in the night-ghosts of Sebring. We never gave up and fought the whole race long. That is why this victory is even sweeter.“



Results

1. Biela/Kristensen/Pirro (Audi R8)	360 laps
2. Alboreto/Capello/McNish (Audi R8)	+ 39,111sec.
3. Lehto/Müller (BMW)	- 1 lap
4. Auberlen/Gounon/Soper (BMW)	- 2 laps
5. Lienhard/Theys/Baldi (Doran-Judd)	- 23 laps
6. Taylor/Angelelli/van de Poele (Cadillac)	- 29 laps
7. Beretta/Wendlinger/Dupuy (Dodge)	- 33 laps
8. Archer/Donohue/Duez (Dodge)	- 34 laps
9. Belloc/Amorim (Dodge)	- 39 laps
10. Müller/Luhr (Porsche)	- 47 laps

You will find updated pictures taken at on the Internet:

www.audi-press.com (User: Audi, password: MotoR8)

This password lasts for the next week. You have the opportunity to accredit under this address..