



Press Information

14 July 2000

The chase is on for Audi

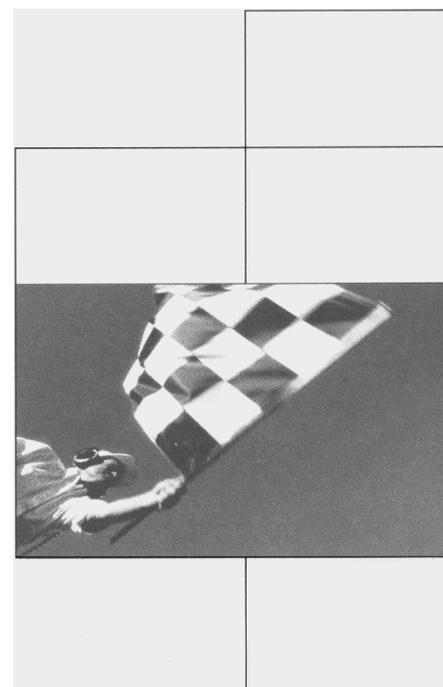
The guest appearance of the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) in Europe is over: Following the races held at Silverstone and on the Nurburgring, the fight for the title now continues at the fifth round held at California's Sears Point on the 23rd of July. For the Audi works pilots, who secured a triple victory at the Le Mans 24 Hour race in June, the goal is clear: During the remaining two-thirds of the championship their plan is to attack and take over the lead.

"The race on the Nurburgring confirmed that our custom-made Le Mans car is also quick on other race tracks," declares Reinhold Joest, who has already arrived in America with his Team Audi Sport North America and the Audi R8 racing sportscars. However, the task will not be easy for the team. "We are not at all familiar with the US circuits. Sears Point will be particularly tough because the track characteristics differ greatly from Le Mans," explains Head of Audi Sport, Dr Wolfgang Ullrich.

Prepared to face the challenge is the Audi driver line-up of Frank Biela/Emanuele Pirro and Rinaldo Capello/Allan McNish. Apart from Allan McNish, none of the other Audi drivers has competed on the Sears Point circuit – in contrast to the other competitors. Last year the teams from BMW and Panoz shared the podium at the Californian race.

"After having competed two rounds with last year's model it is now imperative to collect points. Time is running out for us in the fight for the championship," says Le Mans winner Frank Biela. However, the points system of the ALMS makes it difficult to catch up to the rivals ahead. Even when a car does not manage a placing, a driver is able to collect points for the fastest lap or for leading the race.

The 3.14 kilometre track, situated 35 minutes north of San Francisco, belongs to the most famous circuits in the USA. On 50 weekends per year a wide range of motorsport events, such as the NASCAR Series, Superbikes and Dragster racing, take place here. Alone last year, over half a million spectators followed the action on this circuit.





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Current Points Standings

Drivers

1. Jörg Müller (BMW)	105
2. JJ Lehto (BMW)	103
3. Jan Magnussen (Panoz)	95
4. David Brabham (Panoz)	94
5. Frank Biela (Audi R8)	87
6. Emanuele Pirro (Audi R8)	85
7. Allan McNish (Audi R8)	71
8. Rinaldo Capello (Audi R8)	70
9. Hiroki Katoh (Panoz)	66
10. Bill Auberlen (BMW)	64

Manufacturers

1. BMW	100
2. Panoz	90
3. Audi	87
4. Cadillac	53
5. Lola	47
6. Ferrari	38

Sears Point Timetable

Friday, 21 July

10.15 – 11.15 hours	free practice
14.35 – 14.55 hours	1 st qualifying

Saturday, 22 July

10.20 – 11.20 hours	free practice
14.20 – 14.40 hours	2 nd qualifying

Sunday, 23 July

08.20 – 08.45 hours	warm-up
12.00 hours	start

All times are local times.

Current photos and information are available on the internet: www.audi-press.com (password required)

