

Third ALMS success in a row for Audi

In the 2002 motorsport season, Audi not only achieved a hat-trick in the Le Mans 24 Hour race: After winning the titles in 2000 and 2001, Audi also marked the third triumph in a row in the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) – a championship based in one of the most important car markets.

Audi works driver Tom Kristensen clinched the Driver's title and follows in the wheeltracks of Allan McNish and Emanuele Pirro. Winning eight out of ten races, Audi again comfortably secured the ALMS Manufacturers' championship. Team Audi Sport North America was also able to defend its title in the Teams' championship.

Winning eight races, setting ten pole-positions and ten fastest race laps, the FSI powered Infineon Audi R8 was once again the car to beat. The reliability of the 610 hp sports car was also outstanding: Not a single technical failure stopped the Audi drivers during the 2002 season.

The success of the "works" team was completed by Audi "customer" team Champion Racing which finished seven times on the podium in the ten ALMS races securing second position in the Teams' championship.

Review: The ten ALMS rounds 2002

Sebring: Audi wins the 12 Hours of Sebring for a third time in a row in front of a record crowd of more than 150,000 spectators and under intense heat of up to 34 degrees Celsius in the shade. Rinaldo Capello, Johnny Herbert and Christian Pescatori share the winning R8. Customer team Champion Racing finishes second making it an Audi 1-2. The other "works" R8 of Frank Biela, Tom Kristensen and Emanuele Pirro is involved in a collision which causes a number of unscheduled pit-stops.

1. Capello/Herbert/Pescatori (Infineon Audi R8)	346 laps
2. Johansson/Lammers/Wallace (Audi R8)	- 1 lap
3. Mathews/Smith/Goossens (R&S-Elan)	- 9 laps
4. Weaver/Leitzinger/Forbes-Robinson (R&S-Lincoln)	- 16 laps
5. Biela/Kristensen/Pirro (Infineon Audi R8)	- 19 laps
6. Collins/Vann/Wilson (Ascari)	- 23 laps

Sears Point: In order not to disrupt preparations for the Le Mans 24 Hour race, the three Infineon Audi R8 cars remain in Europe. Team Audi Sport North America enters the race with a 2000-spec car. After an accident and the subsequent change of the R8's rear section, Frank Biela, Rinaldo Capello and Emanuele Pirro finish 8th in the prototype class. Tom Kristensen shares the cockpit of the Champion R8 with Johnny Herbert. Despite torrential rain showers,

Herbert and Kristensen miss victory with their “customer” car of Champion Racing in a photo finish by just 0.482s.

1. Magnussen/Brabham (Panoz)	83 Laps
2. Herbert/Kristensen (Audi R8)	+ 0.482s
3. Herta/Auberlen (Panoz)	- 1 lap
4. Weaver/Dyson (R&S-Lincoln)	- 2 laps
5. Fellows/O’Connell (Chevrolet)	- 2 laps
6. Luhr/Maassen (Porsche)	- 3 laps
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15. Biela/Capello/Pirro (Audi R8)	- 6 laps

Mid-Ohio: After dramatic finale, Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro celebrate their first ALMS victory of the season. The crew of the other Infineon Audi R8 with Rinaldo Capello and Tom Kristensen gambles by not bringing in their car for the second scheduled fuel stop. The courageous strategy almost pays off but 300 metres before the finish line, Kristensen drops behind his team-mate Pirro taking the chequered flag on his car’s last drop of fuel in second place. 62 laps in a row without refuelling, however, prove the incredible economical fuel consumption of the FSI engine in the rear of the Infineon Audi R8. Tom Kristensen takes the lead in the Driver’s Championship.

1. Pirro/Biela (Infineon Audi R8)	111 laps
2. Capello/Kristensen (Infineon Audi R8)	+ 6.248s
3. Magnussen/Brabham (Panoz)	+ 24.955s
4. Herta/Auberlen (Panoz)	+ 40.230s
5. Weaver/Dyson/Leitzinger (R&S-Lincoln)	- 2 laps
6. Fellows/O’Connell (Chevrolet)	- 5 laps

Road America: The entire 4:15-hour duration in the 500 mile race sees Team Audi Sport North America’s two R8 sportscars battle for the lead leaving everybody breathless. The two Infineon Audi R8 sportscars exchange the lead several times. Two stop-and-go-penalties against Rinaldo Capello seem to decide the race in favour of Emanuele Pirro and Frank Biela before a puncture drops them to second position. Capello and Kristensen celebrate their first common ALMS victory of the season. Despite an off-road excursion, “customer” team Champion Racing makes it an Audi 1-2-3 result.

1. Capello/Kristensen (Infineon Audi R8)	118 laps
2. Pirro/Biela (Infineon Audi R8)	+ 32.172s
3. Herbert/Johansson (Audi R8)	+ 1m 34.666s
4. Field/Field (Lola-Judd)	- 7 laps
5. Pilgrim/Collins/Freon (Chevrolet)	- 9 laps
6. Fellows/O’Connell/Gavin (Chevrolet)	- 10 laps

Washington: 60,000 spectators in the heart of Washington see an enthusiastic début for the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) in the US capital. The two Infineon Audi R8 sportscars fight the entire race against the fastest Panoz for the lead. Despite a stop-and-go-penalty, Rinaldo

Capello and Tom Kristensen cross the finish line in second position just 0.766s behind the winning Panoz. Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro lose time due to a caution period, but are still able to finish third.

1. Magnussen/Brabham (Panoz)	140 laps
2. Capello/Kristensen (Infineon Audi R8)	+ 0.766s
3. Biela/Pirro (Infineon Audi R8)	+ 8.701s
4. Tinseau/Angelelli (Cadillac)	- 1 laps
5. Herbert/Johansson (Audi R8)	- 2 laps
6. Herta/Auberlen (Panoz)	- 2 laps

Trois-Rivières: On the narrow street circuit in Canada's Trois-Rivières, Rinaldo Capello and Tom Kristensen are making possible what seems to be impossible: They win the race despite starting from 20th place on the grid. They beat the sister car of Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro, which is leading the race for a long time, thanks to a luckier pit strategy. Champion Racing completes Audi's second 1-2-3 "whitewash" of the season despite Johnny Herbert being involved in a start crash.

1. Capello/Kristensen (Infineon Audi R8)	166 laps
2. Biela/Pirro (Infineon Audi R8)	+ 17.802s
3. Herbert/Johansson (Audi R8)	- 1 laps
4. Herta/Auberlen (Panoz)	- 4 laps
5. Pilgrim/Collins (Chevrolet)	- 11 laps
6. Magnussen/Brabham (Panoz)	- 12 laps

Mosport: During the first half of the second Canadian ALMS race, Team Audi Sport North America's two Infineon Audi R8 sportscars have an exciting battle with the fastest Cadillac. For 2001 Mosport winners Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro, the race comes to a premature end on lap 89 of 121 following an accident. Rinaldo Capello and Tom Kristensen take the victory. Johnny Herbert and Stefan Johansson give Audi another 1-2 success.

1. Capello/Kristensen (Infineon Audi R8)	121 laps
2. Herbert/Johansson (Audi R8)	- 1 lap
3. Lehto/Angelelli (Cadillac)	- 2 laps
4. Magnussen/Brabham (Panoz)	- 3 laps
5. Herta/Auberlen (Panoz)	- 3 laps
6. Bernard/Collard (Cadillac)	- 3 laps

Laguna Seca: In California, Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro achieve a dominant start-finish victory. They do not even lose their lead during the pit-stops. A collision with a slower car damages the rear suspension of the other "works" Audi. The mechanics of Team Audi Sport North America change the suspension's toe-link in record time. Having dropped to 8th position, Rinaldo Capello and Tom Kristensen miss the podium narrowly following an impressive recovery back up the leaderboard.

1. Biela/Pirro (Infineon Audi R8)	112 laps
2. Herbert/Johansson (Audi R8)	+ 25.799s
3. Lehto/Angelelli (Cadillac)	- 1 lap
4. Capello/Kristensen (Infineon Audi R8)	- 1 lap
5. Magnussen/Brabham (Panoz)	- 2 laps
6. Herta/Auberlen (Panoz)	- 2 laps

Miami: By winning the street race in Miami, Audi prematurely clinch the ALMS Manufacturers' title while Team Audi Sport North America successfully defends its Teams' title. With their second victory in a row, Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro keep their championship hopes alive. Rinaldo Capello and Tom Kristensen are running second before Kristensen has to serve a stop-and-go-penalty shortly before the end of the race for touching a backmarker. Kristensen finishes the race in third position.

1. Biela/Pirro (Infineon Audi R8)	122 laps
2. Angelelli/Lehto (Cadillac)	+ 14.021s
3. Capello/Kristensen (Infineon Audi R8)	+ 14.536s
4. Magnussen/Brabham (Panoz)	+ 48.620s
5. Herbert/Johansson (Audi R8)	- 1 lap
6. Goossens/Ave (Riley&Scott-Elan)	- 1 lap

Road Atlanta: Before the final race of the series, "Petit Le Mans", five Audi drivers still have the chance to clinch the Driver's title. Lap 150 of 394 is decisive when Emanuele Pirro can't avoid a collision with another car which has blown its engine. The repair drops the Infineon Audi R8 to the back of the field. Thanks to a mistake-free race and the right pit-stop strategy, Rinaldo Capello and Tom Kristensen beat the Champion R8 of Johnny Herbert and Stefan Johansson after 9:27 hrs by less than one minute. By winning the race, Tom Kristensen clinches the ALMS Driver's title ahead of Rinaldo Capello.

1. Capello/Kristensen (Infineon Audi R8)	394 laps
2. Herbert/Johansson (Audi R8)	+ 59.972s
3. Angelelli/Lehto/Tinseau (Cadillac)	- 4 laps
4. Bernard/Collard/Taylor (Cadillac)	- 5 laps
5. Auberlen/Herta/Jeanette (Panoz)	- 14 laps
6. Biela/Pirro (Infineon Audi R8)	- 18 laps

Final 2002 American Le Mans Series Championship points

Drivers:

1. Tom Kristensen (Audi)	232	
2. Rinaldo Capello (Audi)	230	
3. Frank Biela (Audi)		209
4. Emanuele Pirro (Audi)	206	
Johnny Herbert (Audi)	206	
6. David Brabham (Panoz)	177	
7. Stefan Johansson (Audi)	175	

8. Jan Magnussen (Panoz)	171	
9. Bill Auberlen (Panoz)	161	
10. Bryan Herta (Panoz)		153

Manufacturers:

1. Audi	252	
2. Panoz		188
3. Lola	121	
4. Cadillac		116
5. Riley & Scott	113	
6. Dome		37

Teams:

1. Audi Sport North America		243
2. Champion Racing		195
3. Panoz Motor Sports		186
4. Intersport		121
5. Team Cadillac	116	
6. Dyson Racing Team		81

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