

Mosport, 3 September 2006

Audi claims American Le Mans Series title

- **Allan McNish and Dindo Capello are ALMS champions**
- **Diesel sportscar of Audi remains unbeaten**
- **Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro in fourth place**

With victory in the eighth race of the season at Mosport (Canada), Allan McNish (Scotland) and Dindo Capello (Italy) in their Audi R10 TDI clinched the LM-P1 title in the American Le Mans Series ahead of time. With their fifth outright race victory of the season, the two Audi “works” drivers now have an unassailable championship lead with the final two races at Road Atlanta and Laguna Seca remaining. The Audi R10 TDI, that celebrated a race-winning début at Sebring in March and then won the Le Mans 24 Hours in June, remains unbeaten and is the first diesel-powered sportscar to win an important championship. After the success with the legendary R8 it is the seventh title in the prototype class for Audi. While Allan McNish was already ALMS champion in 2000, his co-driver Dindo Capello wins the championship for the first time on this occasion.

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After qualifying on Saturday was cancelled due to heavy rain, it remained dry during the 2:45 hrs race on Sunday. Dindo Capello, who started next to Butch Leitzinger (Lola-AER) from the first row, had an exciting duel with Leitzinger on the 4.106 kilometre-long and fastest ALMS track of the season. Invariably the two prototypes were only separated by a few seconds. Capello handed over his leading Audi R10 TDI to his co-driver Allan McNish in the 73rd minute. After various lead changes, McNish won with a gap of 2.79 seconds ahead of the two Dyson Lolas of Chris Dyson/Guy Smith and James Weaver/Butch Leitzinger.

After for the times of the free practice sessions on Friday and Saturday were taken into account, Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro started the second Audi R10 TDI from the third row of the grid and finished the race in fourth place.

Quotes after the race at Mosport

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “By prematurely clinching the drivers’ title in the American Le Mans Series with the R10 TDI, Audi has yet again demonstrated ‘Vorsprung durch Technik’ on the race track. Bringing new technology in to a racing series and immediately clinching the title, is a tremendous achievement. It also shows how quickly the team has got used to the diesel engine. Congratulations to the team of Audi Sport North America and of course to Dindo (Capello) and Allan (McNish), who withstood enormous pressure from the Dyson Lolos at Mosport and have earned the title!”

Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #2): “I managed to get past the Dyson on the straight when he was slowed in traffic but I collected a lot of ‘pick-up’ on the tyres by going ‘off line’ to overtake which caused me to immediately run wide in Turn 1 and I lost the lead. Once I had overtaken him for a second time I managed to pull away. Allan drove a great second part of the race which was good because Guy Smith was driving very fast. Having finished second in the ALMS championship in 2000 and 2002, I’m very proud to have finally won the Drivers’ title and that it was decided in such a close race which required us to push hard from start to finish.”

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #2): “I had a good race with Butch [Leitzinger] after I took over from Dindo but I ran wide due to ‘pick up’ and he slipped ahead but almost immediately I had the opportunity to re-take the lead. The Dyson Lolos were quicker than us today and we had to rely on good pit and race strategy. I’m very pleased to have wrapped up the Drivers’ title in such a hard race and ultimately a victory. Audi’s diesel sportscar made history when Dindo, Tom [Kristensen] and I won at Sebring, Frank [Biela], Emanuele [Pirro] and Marco [Werner] made history by winning Le Mans and now Dindo and I have made history by winning an international championship with a diesel which makes me proud. I’m also very happy for Dindo who missed out on the ALMS title with me in 2000.”

Frank Biela (Audi R10 TDI #1): “I am not happy with fourth place. My car was understeering and oversteering today, the tyres had a lot of ‘pick-up’. I don’t know what I did wrong today, because it went well for my team-mates. Once I had to lock up the brakes when another car pulled over in front of me and after that I had vibrations. I hope it will be better in Atlanta where I won last year with Emanuele.”

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #1): “It’s a great day for Audi Sport North America. Dindo and Allan did a very good race. It was very exciting and I congratulate them. I was happy with my race, I followed Dindo and had to be careful not to disturb him.”

Dave Maraj (Team Director Team Audi Sport North America): “It’s a great day for Allan and Dindo and of course Audi after developing revolutionary diesel technology. But we shouldn’t forget that we relied on the Audi R8 for three races and the ‘old girl’ did us proud. On this occasion, it was a difficult race for the #1 Audi. The Dysons were very quick today which is underlined by Guy Smith’s fastest race lap. It is good to have won the Drivers’ title and that Audi Sport North America has captured the Teams’ championship. In the final two races, we will concentrate on winning the Manufacturers title for Audi for the seventh consecutive year.”

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Results at Mosport

1. Capello/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) 133 laps in 2h 45m 0,142s
2. Dyson/Smith (Lola-AER) + 2,794s
3. Weaver/Leitzinger/Dyson (Lola-AER) + 37,130s
4. Biela/Pirro (Audi R10 TDI) – 1 lap
5. Luhr/Dumas (Porsche) – 1 lap
6. Maassen/Bernhard (Porsche) – 2 laps

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