

Laguna Seca, 21 October 2006

Audi R10 TDI ends début season undefeated

- **1-2 victory in American Le Mans Series' finalé**
- **Low consumption of Audi's TDI engine proves decisive**
- **Eighth victory in the eighth race for the R10 TDI**

With a 1-2 victory in the finalé of the American Le Mans Series at Laguna Seca (California), AUDI AG yet again has written a piece of motorsport history: The Audi R10 TDI is the first Le Mans Prototype to remain unbeaten in its début season. The revolutionary diesel sportscar competed in eight races since the début in March, crossing the finish line eight times as the outright winner.

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Decisive in the triumph at Laguna Seca was the consumption advantage of the modern V12 TDI engine. Starting from fourth and fifth positions on the grid, both Audi R10 TDI sportscars lost a lap in a turbulent first half of the race. Emanuele Pirro had to come into the pits after just three laps when part of the onboard camera worked loose and dropped between the pedals. Just before the end of the second hour, Allan McNish collided with a competitor while braking for the famous "Cork Screw". Changing the Audi's damaged front section and the following stop-and-go penalty also cost the second R10 TDI a lap.

With a clever strategy, taking perfect advantage from various Safety Car periods, Audi Sport Team North America was able to bring both cars back onto the same lap as the leaders. In the final stage of the thrilling race, the team was able to take advantage from the low consumption of the diesel engine: While the competitors had to come into the pits once more during the final hour for refuelling, both R10 TDI cars went on until the finish without another pit-stop. Allan McNish was able to complete 64 of the 159 laps with a single tank of diesel with reduced revs and power – eight more than before.

With the last drops of Shell Diesel V-Power in the fuel tank, McNish crossed the finish line as winner. For the Scot and his Italian team-mate Dindo Capello, it was their seventh outright victory of the season in ten races. With 23 overall victories, Dindo Capello has become the most successful driver of the American Le Mans Series. On top of that, Audi have become the first manufacturer to win all races in a season in the LM P1 class of the American Le Mans Series. Dindo

Capello and Allan McNish, who had already clinched the Drivers' title, won eight times, Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro two races. The German and the Italian completed the Audi success at Laguna Seca with their second place finish giving the Audi R10 TDI its third 1-2 victory.

Quotes after the race at Laguna Seca

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "It was extremely tight today. That's why our joy about this fantastic end of the season is even bigger. During the first half of the race we had some problems, but we were able to make up most of the lost time with a great strategy. In the end we simply took advantage from the low consumption of the TDI engine. Today we really used the diesel until the very last drop. This was an impressive demonstration of Audi TDI Power."

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Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #2): "At the start of the race the car was quite good but the Zytek and Creation were a little more agile than us. We also had no possibility to compete with these similar LM P1 cars due to our weight disadvantage but I was able to stay close and then take the lead when they pitted. It's a perfect way to end a phenomenal season – it has been an awesome year for Allan (McNish) and I and of course Audi and TDI."

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #2): "It was a thrilling race, from start to finish and never an easy moment. We had a number of brushes with other cars, more than in any other ALMS race this season, including a stop-go penalty for an unfortunate situation – the incident was no one's fault. After that, we just had to throw the dice on strategy and thankfully it worked out for us. To be able to race around here for 90 minutes on one tank of diesel fuel is just amazing. I had to work quite hard on fuel saving in the closing stages but without the TDI technology, we'd never have made it without another pit-stop."

Frank Biela (Audi R10 TDI #1): "This has been a strange race for me. I drove for one hour behind the Pace Car and had just a couple of real race laps. This was not very exciting. In the end it was good for second place. Emanuele (Pirro) has done a great job. Generally, it was an interesting race and a great end of the season for Audi."

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #1): “Today it was really exciting. After the practice where we were not so happy with the set-up, the car was very good in the race. Unfortunately due to a very uncommon problem with an electronic box that went between my feet, we lost one lap. I caught back a lot and I’m really happy about my race. That’s all I could do under the given circumstances. I want to thank Audi for the nice second part of the season we did in America.”

Dave Maraj (Team Director Team Audi Sport North America): “It was an incredible race featuring brilliant driving from all four drivers, brilliant pit strategy and getting the absolute best from a brilliant car. Everyone kept their heads and concentrated despite the problems and the reward was a perfect one-two result for Audi. Today’s race, perhaps more than any other this season, was a testament to fuel-saving, diesel technology. It’s a fitting tribute to the Audi R10 TDI that it’s undefeated in its debut season.”

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The results at Laguna Seca

- 1 Capello/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) 159 laps in 4h 00m 45.954s
- 2 Biela/Pirro (Audi R10 TDI) + 18.579s
- 3 Minassian/Primat (Creation-Judd) + 29.002s
- 4 Luhr/Dumas (Porsche) + 1m 03.968s
- 5 Maassen/Bernhard (Porsche) - 1 lap
- 6 Dyson/Weaver (Lola-AER) - 1 lap

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www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation required)