

Houston, 21 April 2007

Motorsport

Audi R10 TDI on the podium in Texas

- **McNish/Capello only 1.3 seconds behind the overall winner**
- **1-2 victory for TDI power in the LM P1 category**
- **Audi extends championship lead**

Dindo Capello/Allan McNish (Italy/Scotland) and Emanuele Pirro/Marco Werner (Italy/Germany) claimed another 1-2 victory for Audi in the LM P1 category after a turbulent and exciting race. In the fight for the overall victory, Capello/McNish were only beaten by 1.341 seconds on the 1.7 mile city circuit at the “Reliant Park” Stadium in Texas, achieving third place overall behind two lighter LM P2 category cars.

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At the very start of the 2.45 hours race, Allan McNish – who was beaten in qualifying by only 0.006 seconds to pole-position – took the lead. He handed over the leading Audi R10 TDI after 54 minutes to Dindo Capello. Twelve minutes later, Capello had to pit again because of a front left puncture and continued in third position but later “overshot” and touched a backmarker, dropping to fourth place. But in a strong finish to the chequered flag, he pressured the leading Porsche and second placed Honda/Acura. Just 1.341 seconds behind at the flag, he finished the race as the winner in the LM P1 category.

Marco Werner started from sixth position but made up places early on. Whilst in third place, he took the emergency exit but continued without damage. However, he spun soon afterwards and touched a tyre barrier, damaging the back of his Audi R10 TDI forcing him to pit. Co-driver Emanuele Pirro took over from Werner in 23rd position, but battled back to 12th position overall, ensuring a double win for Audi in the LM P1 category.

After three city circuits the next race of the American Le Mans Series is staged on a permanent race track in Salt Lake City on 19 May.

Quotes after the race

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): “Today we have seen again that it is difficult for the LM P1 cars to fight against the much lighter LM P2 cars. The team did the best possible work to achieve a podium and another victory in the LM P1 category.”

Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #1): “It was unfortunate to get a puncture. I then lost time when I overshot – I went over a big bump lapping a backmarker and we touched – I just couldn’t stop. I did my very best to catch the leaders which I managed but just ran out of time to get in front. This is the third consecutive LM P1 class win Allan and I have achieved and we now have a small lead in the championship.”

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Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #1): “It was an extremely close race from start to finish. I managed to snatch the lead into Turn 1 and built a small advantage. After handing over to Dindo, he unfortunately soon had to pit again with a punctured tyre effectively meaning we made three pit-stops – one too many. But Dindo drove superbly to haul us back into contention and to finish just over a second behind the winner confirms what a sterling job he did.”

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #2): “This race was not a lot of fun. When I took over the car, we were some laps behind. I only had to finish the race. I could not drive too hard because I needed to back off a little bit to cool down the brakes. It is good that we scored second place in the class but this Audi R10 TDI deserves more.”

Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #2): “The car was very good at the beginning and I was third overall. Then I had too much pick-up on the tyres making the car difficult to drive. Once I had to use the emergency exit. Then a second time, I ‘lost’ the car at the rear, hit a tyre barrier backwards and damaged the rear end. When I handed over the Audi to Emanuele we had to change the rear wing and lost a lot of time in the pits. For that we have to be satisfied with second place in the LM P1 category.”

Dave Maraj (Team Director Audi Sport North America): “It was an incredibly exciting race. Allan made an excellent start while Dindo did a great job to get so close to earning Audi an unexpected outright win after his unfortunate problems. After a good start, Marco made a small mistake due to ‘pick-up’ on his tyres and was very unlucky. But the Audi Sport North America team did a great job in getting the #2 Audi repaired and back out to claim another TDI 1-2 result and Emanuele drove well to the finish.”

The results in Houston

1. Bernhard/Dumas (Porsche) 146 laps
2. Herta/Franchitti (Acura/Honda) + 0.490s
3. Capello/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) + 1.341s
4. Maassen/Briscoe (Porsche) + 14.110s
5. Brabham/Johansson/Dayton (Acura/Honda) - 1 lap
6. Smith/Dyson (Porsche) - 2 laps
7. Leitzinger/Wallace (Porsche) - 2 laps
8. Fernandez/Diaz (Acura/Honda) - 2 laps
9. Devlin/Bach (Lola) - 6 laps
10. Magnussen/O’Connell (Corvette) - 8 laps
12. Pirro/Werner (Audi R10 TDI) - 8 laps

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www.audi-motorsport.info (accreditation required)