



Press Information

Mosport, 19 August 2001

Audi strikes back: Victory at Mosport

Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro had almost ten long months to wait for this moment: For the first time since October 2000 the two-time Le Mans winners won a race of the American Le Mans Series (ALMS). Both Audi drivers kept a cool head during the turbulent Canada guest appearance of the ALMS crossing the finish line as clear winners after 115 exciting laps ahead of the Panoz which had won at Portland.

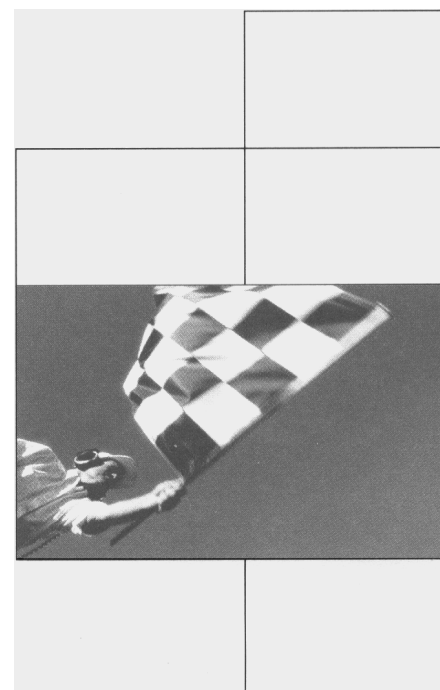
The race was decided just 15 minutes before the end when Johnny Herbert went off the track in the 2000-spec R8 of the Audi customer team Champion. Before that, the former Formula One driver, who had led stages of the race together with his partner Andy Wallace, had closed the gap on race leader Emanuele Pirro to just 2.6 seconds.

Pirro took the lead after his final pit stop thanks to a perfect strategy of the Team Audi Sport North America. While the Champion squad changed tyres during the final pit stop, the Audi works team decided to stay on the same set of tyres gaining the decisive seconds.

Like last year, torrential rain caused a lot of action at Mosport. In the early stages of the race the former Canadian Grand Prix circuit was extremely slippery. On the opening lap Rinaldo Capello and Andy Wallace spun off with their R8 sportscars with one of the Panoz. While Wallace was lucky not to hit anything hard, the repairs to Capello's Infineon R8 lasted seven laps. The car finally retired shortly after the driver change, when Tom Kristensen came onto the wet part of the track on his slick tyres while passing a slower car, crashing heavily into the barriers.

Frank Biela, start driver in the #2 Infineon Audi R8, drove very sensibly especially in the early wet stages laying the foundations for the eventual victory which Biela/Pirro were able to achieve despite a 10-second penalty.

The Team Audi Sport North America, however, has no time to party: Because the next round of the ALMS is scheduled as early as next Saturday at Mid-Ohio, the damaged Infineon Audi R8 of Capello/Kristensen has to be repaired in record time. The Champion team faces a similar challenge with the car of Herbert/Wallace.





Press Information

Quotes after the race

Frank Biela (#2): "It was hard to wait so long for a victory in the ALMS. And the race today was tough as well, but in the end we did it. It was decisive to keep the car on the track in the first laps. It made no sense to push too hard and risk going off. You have to find a compromise - obviously we found it today."

Emanuele Pirro (#2): "I enjoyed this race. My car was good and I think I was controlling the race. Key of the race was that we decided during the final pit stop to continue with the same set of tyres. I was sympathetic on the tyres trying to make it through and it worked."

Rinaldo Capello (#1): "This time it was not an advantage to start from pole position. I was ahead of Magnussen and was not even pushing hard. After the laps behind the pace car I did not expect to have so much aquaplaning at this particular point of the track. But it was so slippery that I completely lost the car. I could not do anything. I feel very sorry for the team."

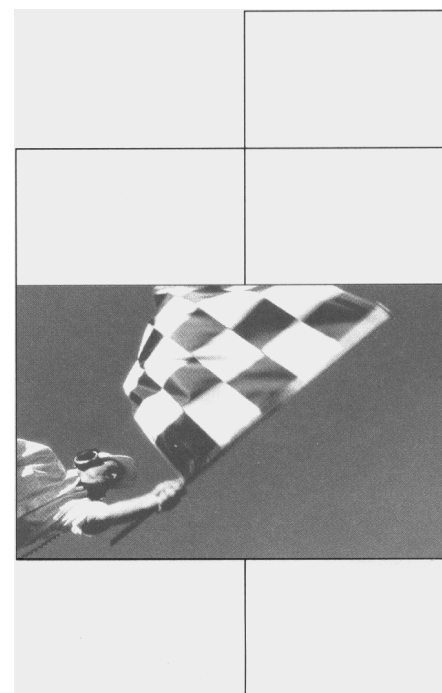
Tom Kristensen (#1): "My crash made a bad day even worse. I was on slicks and came up to a Viper. I thought he would see me, so I decided to pass him on the outside. Obviously he did not see me and caught me out. I got a little bit on the wet part of the track and lost the car there."

Johnny Herbert (#38): "I needed to get past two back-markers so that I could keep the pressure on Emanuele who was only 2.6 seconds ahead. But we went into Turn 2 three abreast and I got on to the rubber, lost grip, slid on to the grass and hit the tyre wall hard. A great shame, Andy had driven very well and the Audi was running superbly and I felt confident I could have beaten Pirro."

Andy Wallace (#38): "Johnny and I drove as hard as we could in what was an incredibly dramatic race from start to finish. The Champion Audi team should be proud of what was achieved despite what ultimately occurred. We'll win an ALMS race one day rest assured."

Reinhold Joest, Team Director Audi Sport North America:

"Frank and Emanuele drove a clean race, did not one mistake and that already was half of our success. Both drove fast and savely to the checkered flag. A big part of the victory was our pit stop strategy. Too bad for Dindo and Tom but these kind of mishaps happen in motor racing."





Press Information

Race results

1. Biela/Pirro (Infineon Audi R8)	115 laps
2. Magnussen/Brabham (Panoz)	- 2 laps
3. Tinseau/Collard (Cadillac)	- 3 laps
4. Taylor/Angelelli (Cadillac)	- 3 laps
5. Weaver/Leitzinger (Riley&Scott-Lincoln)	- 3 laps
6. de Radigues/Lambert (Reynard-Judd)	- 4 laps
7. Fellows/O`Connell (Chevrolet)	- 6 laps
8. Konrad/Borcheller (Saleen)	- 7 laps
9. Pilgrim/Collins (Chevrolet)	- 8 laps
10. Lehto/Müller (BMW)	- 8 laps

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