

Sebring, 18 March 2007

## Motorsport

### Audi TDI Power wins again at Sebring

- **Eighth Sebring victory in a row**
- **Audi R10 TDI remains unbeaten**
- **Successful dress rehearsal for Le Mans**

Despite new regulations, the Audi R10 TDI remains the sports car to beat. By achieving an impressive victory in the 12 Hours of Sebring (USA), AUDI AG made a perfect start into the 2007 motorsport season with its revolutionary diesel sports car and also a successful dress rehearsal for the Le Mans 24 Hours on 16/17 June. It was the eighth victory in a row in the classic American endurance race for the manufacturer from Ingolstadt.

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The Audi R10 TDI, which remains unbeaten in its ninth consecutive race, had to start for the first time with a 10 percent smaller fuel tank (81 instead of 90 litres). This meant the Audi had to come to the pits for refuelling up to five laps earlier than their competitors. Despite the R10 TDI being the fastest car on the 3.7-mile track, also setting a new track record, newcomer Acura/Honda was able to get into the lead on various occasions with its 150-kg lighter LM P2 cars. Only in the penultimate hour, Frank Biela (Germany), Emanuele Pirro (Italy) and Marco Werner (Germany) took the lead for good in an extremely exciting and competitive sports car race. Frank Biela equalled Tom Kristensen's record of four overall Sebring victories.

The 2007-spec R10 TDI ran without the slightest technical problem during the whole 12 hours on the extremely demanding track. The only unscheduled pit stop was caused by a puncture in the second hour costing the winning car two laps. Also two time penalties and a stop-and-go penalty were imposed against the winning Audi team.

The updated engine, featuring among other things more compact diesel particle filters from Dow Automotive, further developed suspension, the

latest generation of Michelin tyres and the weight-optimised transmission of the R10 TDI worked perfectly during the Le Mans dress rehearsal.

Meanwhile the Sebring week did not run to plan for the second Audi team with the defending champions of the American Le Mans Series, Dindo Capello (Italy) and Allan McNish (Scotland) plus Le Mans record winner Tom Kristensen (Denmark). Following an accident in Thursday evening's night practice session, the R10 TDI had to be completely rebuilt over night. Despite not having the opportunity to set up the car perfectly, Capello/McNish/Kristensen were leading the race before the starter and the battery had to be changed twice. Finishing fourth overall, they finished second in the LM P1 class scoring precious points.

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## Quotes after the race

**Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport):** “The team really has earned this victory. It has worked hard for it. We are happy winning Sebring another time and are unbeaten at Sebring since 2000. But we’ve also seen today how close it is now between the LM P1 and LM P2 cars. My fear that the two categories have been put together too closely, have been proved by today’s race.”

**Frank Biela (Audi R10 TDI #2):** “Of course it’s nice to equal Tom Kristensen’s Sebring record. I’m very pleased. After the problem in the warm-up and the puncture at the beginning of the race I was not really expecting the victory anymore. It’s just superb that it ended this way.”

**Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #2):** “It’s been a great race for us. We had quite a few problems at the start of the race and were almost two laps behind. But in such long races you should never give up. In the end of the day the fastest and strongest car won. It was a nice win for us and a great start of the season. It was a race full of mechanical problems for everybody. But our car was really strong throughout the race.”

**Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #2):** “I’m absolutely happy despite the day did not start too good in the warm-up. Also the beginning of the race was not the best with the puncture and the penalties in pit lane. But the car ran

perfectly in the race – it's simply an Audi, and you can rely on that. The race was fun although the last stint was very long. I was thinking about the brakes from time to time, but most of the time about the next restroom..."

**Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #1):** "It was a shame to effectively be out of contention for overall race honours before mid distance after losing around 30 minutes to replace the starter motor twice but that is motor racing sometimes. It is very good for Audi to repeat our Sebring win of last year with the R10 TDI."

**Tom Kristensen (Audi R10 TDI #1):** "We were grateful to be in the race after the accident on Thursday night – the team and mechanics worked very hard to get us to the grid. The early stages of the race looked good for us. We came to Sebring for our car to win so of course it's disappointing to have encountered these issues. But again the mechanics got us out and up to speed so that we could fight back but unfortunately not right at the front at the finish. Apart from the starter problem, the car ran beautifully."

**Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #1):** "We encountered starter problems on our car which was a shame because we were in a very strong position. But to finish 1-2 in LM P1 is still very pleasing. Our team showed a lot of strength of character to keep fighting. It's now very clear that we have stiff competition from both Acura/Honda and Porsche – it's going to be a tough battle with those cars."

## The results at Sebring

- 1 Biela/Pirro/Werner (Audi R10 TDI) 364 laps in 12h 01n 14.838s
- 2 Herta/Franchitti/Kanaan (Acura/Honda) - 6 laps
- 3 Fernandez/Diaz/Martinez (Lola-Acura/Honda) - 8 laps
- 4 Capello/Kristensen/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) - 11 laps
- 5 Dumas/Bernhard/Castroneves (Porsche) - 13 laps
- 6 Brabham/Johansson/Dayton (Acura/Honda) - 18 laps
- 7 Beretta/Gavin/Papis (Chevrolet) - 23 laps
- 8 O'Connell/Magnussen/Fellows (Chevrolet) - 23 laps
- 9 Wallace/Leitzinger/Lally (Porsche) - 24 laps
- 10 Dyson/Smith (Porsche) - 31 laps

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