



# Presse-Information

## Press Information

Motorsport

Ingolstadt, 10 May 2002

### Difficult task for Audi in California

The Audi drivers are facing a difficult task on May 19: Audi "works" drivers Frank Biela, Rinaldo Capello, Tom Kristensen and defending champion Emanuele Pirro will not be able to use their 2002-spec Infineon Audi R8 sportscars for round two of the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) at the undulating Sears Point track near San Francisco (US state of California). Instead they will have to race "used cars".

In order not to disrupt preparations for the Le Mans 24 Hour race, the three Infineon Audi R8 cars will remain in Europe until the race on June 15/16. Thanks to the customer team, Champion Racing, two R8 cars will nevertheless start at Sears Point: Tom Kristensen joins Johnny Herbert and Andy Wallace at the wheel of the ADT Champion R8. Audi Sport North America enters a 2000-spec R8 for Frank Biela, Rinaldo Capello and Emanuele Pirro, which Champion Racing has lent to the Audi "works" squad for this race.

A large contingent of the "factory" team flew to the USA directly after the Le Mans pre-practice to take responsibility of Champion's R8 and prepare the car for the race. Team Audi Sport North America will be able to use data from the 2000 season, as the "rented" R8 is the actual car that enabled Rinaldo Capello and Allan McNish to lap the entire field at Sears Point in July 2000.

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Last year, the Infineon Audi R8 was again the dominant car on the extremely demanding track in Sonoma Valley. Rinaldo Capello and Tom Kristensen took the victory ahead of their team-mates Frank Biela and Emanuele Pirro - with a full lap advantage over the rest of the field.

Audi Sport North America and Champion Racing, however, will race with another disadvantage: Three drivers means an additional driver change during the race, as normally just two drivers share a car in the 2:45-hour ALMS races. But importantly, all Audi "works" drivers will now have the opportunity to score important points for the championship.

### Quotes before the race at Sears Point

Frank Biela (Infineon Audi R8 #1): "The track at Sears Point is very demanding. It will be even more difficult for us because we share the car with three drivers which means an additional driver change. But we will make the best out of the situation."

Emanuele Pirro (Infineon Audi R8 #1): "For the past two years I have finished second at Sears Point, so this year I am even more determined to win. I love the circuit even if it has not been kind to me so far. Overtaking and lapping slower cars is especially hard at Sears."

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Rinaldo Capello (Infineon Audi R8 #1): "There has never been a test where we really compared the 2000-spec R8 with the 2001-spec car. I hope the difference will not be too big. Our goal at Sears Point is not the victory but to score as many points as possible."

Johnny Herbert (ADT Champion Audi R8 #38): "Sears Point was my maiden ALMS race last July. It's a proven Audi track. Although we will have to make an additional driver change in the race, we will be strong I'm certain."

Tom Kristensen (ADT Champion Audi R8 #38): "Sears Point is a fantastic circuit and one which suits the Audi. It has everything, elevation changes, fast and blind corners, slow bends - a real driver circuit. I'm looking forward to driving with Johnny and Andy."

Andy Wallace (ADT Champion Audi R8 #38): "This will mark my fourth race at Sears Point. Before the ALMS was created, I won two races there on the same day in 1997. I'm hoping for another victory. But Dindo Capello is going to be tough to beat - he has won the last two ALMS races at Sears."

Reinhold Joest (Team Director Audi Sport North America): "We will prepare the car we loaned from Champion Racing in the best possible way. During the short practice sessions we will have to sort out some things, but we have data available from past years. We have always previously done well at Sears Point and I hope this will be the same again."

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Sport): "For sure Sears Point will not be an easy race, but thanks to the support of Champion Racing all our 'works' drivers will be able to participate and have the chance to score important points for the championship. We'll have to wait and see how competitive the 2000-spec car will be. Everybody is especially motivated. I am sure this will be an interesting race."

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### The schedule at Sears Point

Friday, 17 May	
12:15 – 13:45 hrs	Free practice
Saturday, 18 May	
11:00 – 12:00 hrs	Free practice
15:10 – 15:30 hrs	Qualifying (prototypes)
Sunday, 19 May	
09:15 – 09:45 hrs	Warm-up
13:00 – 15.45 hrs	Race

local times

### Drivers' championship

1. Rinaldo Capello (Infineon Audi R8)	31 Points
2. Johnny Herbert (Infineon Audi R8)	30 Points
Christian Pescatori (Infineon Audi R8)	30 Points
4. Jan Lammers (Audi R8)	27 Points
5. Andy Wallace (Audi R8)	26 Points
Stefan Johansson (Audi R8)	26 Points
7. Marc Goossens (Riley & Scott-Elan)	25 Points
8. Jim Matthews (Riley & Scott-Elan)	24 Points
Guy Smith (Riley & Scott-Elan)	24 Points
10. James Weaver (Riley & Scott-Lincoln)	23 Points

### Manufacturers' championship

1. Audi	30 Points
2. Riley & Scott	24 Points
3. Ascari	19 Points
4. Panoz	18 Points
5. Cadillac	16 Points

Photos and further information can be found on the internet:

[www.audi-sportpress.com](http://www.audi-sportpress.com) (accreditation required)

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