

Road Atlanta, 5 October 2007

Motorsport

Audi TDI Power writes history again

- **Marco Werner drives record-lap at Road Atlanta**
- **First Petit Le Mans pole for a diesel sportscar**
- **Audi R10 TDI first and third on the starting grid**

The Audi R10 TDI has written another piece of motorsport history: In qualifying for the “Petit Le Mans” race at Road Atlanta (US state of Georgia), Marco Werner drove a record-lap with the 650-hp diesel-powered sportscar. The German beat Allan McNish’s track record from the 2000 season by almost 1.5 seconds.

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This means that for the first time in the tenth running of the famous American endurance race, a diesel-powered sportscar will start from pole position. Dindo Capello recorded the third fastest qualifying time overall with Team Audi Sport North America’s second Audi R10 TDI.

Following heavy rain in the morning, the track was dry again for qualifying, but extremely slippery. Marco Werner and his crew tackled these conditions best. The top spot kept swapping between the Audi and the fastest LM P2 Porsche before Werner finally clinched the pole. He ultimately won a thrilling qualifying battle by 0.133 seconds.

The Audi Sport North America team especially cheered this pole position as the #2 Audi R10 TDI had been badly damaged in a huge high-speed accident in Turn 1 the day before caused by a left rear puncture. Thanks to the strong passive safety of the R10 TDI, Emanuele Pirro remained unhurt apart from a concussion.

Friday morning, the crew had to repair the Audi R10 TDI a second time following an aquaplaning accident.

The race at Road Atlanta starts on Saturday at 11:15 a.m. local time (5:15 p.m. in Germany) and runs over a distance of 1000 miles or a maximum of 10 hours. Audi is unbeaten in seven Petit Le Mans starts. Last year's winners Dindo Capello and Allan McNish could prematurely clinch the LM P1 Drivers' title on Saturday.

Quotes after qualifying

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "It's nice having taken the first Petit Le Mans pole position for a diesel. Qualifying was close and exciting. But our boys have earned this pole position because they worked hard for it. Of course I'm happy about this result. Now we have to get the best set-up from all the data we have collected in order to have a consistent fast pace in the race."

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Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #2): "This pole position is good for our motivation. The race is so long that it does not give you any advantage starting from pole position. But it is very important for everybody after all the problems we went through here. It was my turn for qualifying, but I stepped down because I did not feel so well after my accident yesterday. I'm happy that Marco (Werner) did such a fantastic job. It's a good start for tomorrow."

Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #2): "This pole position was quite unexpected for me because it was not my turn to qualify here. On top of that I married two weeks ago – and people say marriage and getting children makes you lose a second... I'm glad that's not the case! But let's get serious: I did not drive so much here before qualifying. Also we gambled a bit with the set up, but this worked out well. With little fuel in the tank, Road Atlanta is really something special and I enjoyed that. Thanks to the team and Audi: Our car had two accidents and everybody really worked hard. This pole position is for the boys!"

Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #1): "I had big understeer in qualifying which was surprising. Right hand corners were particularly difficult and at the moment it's a bit of a mystery. I pitted and swapped the tyres over which made the handling better in the faster sections but was still losing too

much time in the slower corners. The race, I hope, will be another story once we've solved this problem. I've already won Petit outright three times and a fourth victory here would be very satisfying for me."

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #1): "We've experienced a difficult few days in terms of changeable weather conditions so I don't think any team is 100% prepared. However, Audi has a lot of experience in this race although in some respects, because the track has been recently re-surfaced, it can be considered 'new'. Our qualifying times show that our car wasn't quite dialled in perfectly although the #1 Audi had been quickest in most of the other sessions and I'm confident we'll get it sorted out for the race. It's a long race and I'm expecting a hard battle – especially looking at the times of the Penske Porsches."

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Dave Maraj (Team Director Audi Sport North America): "I'm very happy with our qualifying positions. It's the first Petit Le Mans pole for Diesel Power – and this after the huge accident in practice yesterday. Thankfully Emanuele (Pirro) was uninjured. That car's crew did a great job to give Marco (Werner) a good car for qualifying. The times weren't ultra quick because of the track conditions after this morning's rain. As more rubber is laid, the race will get faster. So far so good but the race will be hard."

The starting grid at Road Atlanta

- 1 Pirro/Werner (Audi R10 TDI) 1m 08.906s (1st in LM P1)
- 2 Dumas/Bernhard/Long (Porsche) 1m 09.039s
- 3 Capello/McNish (Audi R10 TDI) 1m 09.366s (2nd in LM P1)
- 4 Maassen/Briscoe/Collard (Porsche) 1m 09.462s
- 5 Brabham/Johansson/Kerr (Acura/Honda) 1m 10.000s
- 6 Herta/Meira/Kanaan (Acura/Honda) 1m 10.223s
- 7 Wallace/Leitzinger/Lally (Porsche) 1m 10.499s
- 8 Fernandez/Dias (Acura/Honda) 1m 10.713s
- 9 Field/Field/Berry (Lola-Judd) 1m 10.973s (3rd in LM P1)
- 10 Pickett/Graf/Gidley (Lola-AER) 1m 11.031s (4th in LM P1)

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**Photographs, sound bites and other information can be found in the Internet at:
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