



Press Information

Ingolstadt / Le Mans, 15 June 2003

Audi drivers on the podium for the fifth time in a row at Le Mans

The balance of Audi at the famous Le Mans 24 Hour race remains unique: Following three consecutive victories of the Audi factory team in the years 2000, 2001 and 2002, an Audi customer team repeated the result, that Audi had achieved in 1999 on their Le Mans debut. Finishing third with the Audi R8 of Team ADT Champion Racing, Stefan Johansson, JJ Lehto and Emanuele Pirro made it the fifth time in a row that Audi drivers have stood on the podium at Le Mans. The R8 of Audi Sport Japan Team Goh finished fourth. The R8 of Audi Sport UK ran out of fuel and retired already in the early stages of the race.

The race at a glance

Hour 1 (16 – 17 hrs): #6 Lehto temporarily in the lead, #6 Lehto third at the end of the first hour ahead of #5 Magnussen and #10 Biela

Hour 2 (17 – 18 hrs): Shortly before 18 hrs #10 Biela runs out of fuel and retires

Hour 3 (18 – 19 hrs): #6 Lehto drops to 4th behind #5 Magnussen due to a puncture

Hour 4 (19 – 20 hrs): #6 Johansson refuels during a Safety Car period, loses time due to red light at pit exit. #5 Werner has to change the front section of the bodywork

Hour 6 (21 – 22 hrs): #6 Pirro moves to 3rd in front of #5 Ara

Hour 10 (1 – 2 hrs): #5 Magnussen has front right suspension changed (lost about 9 minutes)

Hour 12 (3 – 4 hrs): #5 Werner reports misfire, spark plugs and other parts of the engine peripherals are changed. Lost about 11 minutes

Hour 15 (6 – 7 hrs): #6 Pirro has battery changed (lost about 4 minutes and 30 seconds)

Hour 18 (9 – 10 hrs): #6 Lehto hits oil and slides into gravel of first chicane, about 4 minutes lost

Hour 23 (14 – 15 hrs): #6 Johansson has puncture and battery changed again

Hour 24 (15 – 16 hrs): #6 Pirro finishes third behind the two Bentley factory cars. #5 Ara crosses the finish line in fourth position

Quotes after the race

Emanuele Pirro (Team ADT Champion Racing Audi R8 #6): "It's an amazing feeling to be on the winners' rostrum for a fifth consecutive year here at Le Mans. We did the best job possible in the circumstances and for a privateer team to climb on to the podium here is an incredible achievement."

Marco Werner (Audi Sport Japan Team Goh Audi R8 #5): "We were fast but did not have the necessary luck. After finishing third last year, of course I would have liked to step on the podium again. But a third and a fourth place in my first two Le Mans races are still quite an achievement."

Frank Biela (Audi Sport UK Audi R8 #10): "I am just so upset for the team. I found myself baulked by another car beside me and I couldn't turn into the pit-

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lane which meant I had to start another lap. I knew immediately that I would not have enough fuel to do so. When the engine died, I tried to get back to the pits using the starter but it was impossible.”

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Sport): “The Audi customer teams have done a great job and proven how good the Audi R8 is as a year old ‘used car’. You should not forget the basic concept of the R8 is now four years old. Bentley has developed a completely new car for this year’s race and has earned the victory. The early retirement of Audi Sport UK was a shame. But it proves once more how difficult it is to win Le Mans. Even the smallest mistake can upset your plans.”

Results

- 1 Kristensen/Capello/Smith (Bentley) 377 laps
- 2 Brabham/Herbert/Blundell (Bentley) - 3 laps
- 3 Johansson/Lehto/Pirro (Audi R8) - 5 laps
- 4 Ara/Magnussen/Werner (Audi R8) - 7 laps
- 5 Beretta/Jeanette/Papis (Panoz) - 17 laps
- 6 Lammers/Bosch/Wallace (Dome-Judd) - 17 laps
- 7 Cochet/Gounon/Gregoire (Courage-Judd) - 17 laps
- 8 Boullion/Lagorce/Sarrazin (Courage-Peugeot) - 21 laps
- 9 Helary/Ayari/Minassian (Courage-Peugeot) - 25 laps
- 10 Kox/Enge/Davies (Ferrari) - 41 laps

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