

24 HEURES DU MANS

15-16 JUIN 2002



Press release #2

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Jan Lammers strikes hard from the get-go

Jan Lammers winner of the 1998 24 Hours of Le Mans in a Jaguar XJR has just shown that he is fully prepared to give Audi a run for its money. The Dutch driver, co-owner of the Racing for Holland team, has surprised observers by clocking in a lap at 3.31.355 after 54 minutes. Tuesday, however, during scrutineering, he had clearly stated his ambition: "I think I can get the pole, and the car has such potential that we can shoot for a time of 3.30".

No sooner said, than done!

A performance that left Oreca team manager, Hugues de Chaunac, in awe, he stated at the end of the session: "It's a big surprise to see the Dome in this place after such a short time. Clocking a time like this in the first part of the session on the first day is surreal". As for Oliver Beretta's Oreca, it clocked a 3.36.121 giving it a 5th place in the temporary standing.

The Audis, the big favorites in this edition have come in with a near perfect trifecta 2nd, 3rd, and 4th places. Tom Kristensen behind the wheel of the #1 R8 sounded the charge to catch up to Jan Lammers. The Dane, however, had to yield to the Dutchman by 414 hundredths.

The Audis' reponse should come during the second part of the session.

A minor disappointment for the LMP675; since the leading MG #27 has only placed 10th with a modest time of 3.41.600. Indeed, during the prelims, the "little English ladies" clocked in a nice 3:33.414, which skyrocketed them to 5th place in the general standing. #26 ended the session earlier than planned due to its stopping in the Mulsanne corner.

In the GTS category, once again the Maranello Ferrari (#58) from Prodrive has proven to be the fastest by getting a lap time of 3.58.867.

Finally, in the GT category, Racer Group's Porsche #81 took the direction of operations with a time of 4.12.744.

It stands to reason now that the contenders for 2002 are an excellent crop; since the pole time made by Rinaldo Capello last year has already been beaten, and this, despite a change in the track at the Chapelle corner.

As far as incidents go, Porsche #80 (Freisinger team) was a victim of a flat. The Porsche is listed among the favorites for the GT title.

The prototypes have not been spared either; since Cadillac #7 was unable to complete a lap before getting back to the pits to repair a defective alternator belt. At Panoz, #12's clutch reared its head and forced the team to stop the session sooner than planned.

Following the #71 Ferrari's trip into the gravel pit in the Dunlop chicane, the red flag came out to clean the track and the first part of the session officially ended 10 minutes early.

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