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Interview with Rinaldo Capello

Winner of the pole position for the second year in a row, Rinaldo Capello answered a few questions during the press conference.

Once again, you have dominated the other Audi drivers, do you have an explanation ?

It's always very hard to win the pole, we don't really fight among one another for it. In the end, it's the driver with the less amount of traffic who wins out over the others. Today, I was the lucky one.

It appeared as though you didn't try to improve your time in the second part of the session ?

Because Johnny needed to complete three night-time laps, we wanted to play it safe, which is why we didn't try to improve our time during the last part of the 2nd session. Michael and Tom still had some qualifying tires to use so I was convinced that they were going to better my time. Both of them ended up being slowed by traffic and even though Tom went quicker, it wasn't enough to pass in front of me.

What are your impressions of your car ?

At the moment, my teammates and I aren't very happy with the setup of the car. It's very hard to drive, and felt a lot better on Wednesday. I don't know what's wrong, because we haven't changed anything, but since the beginning of the week, we've been unable to find the same setup that we had during the preliminary tests. During the 2nd part of the second session, the situation got even worse and the car was really handling poorly. We absolutely need to finalize the setup on the car before the warm-up so as to build our confidence for the actual race.

Had you doubted that you'd be able to go under 3:30 ?

This evening, I was so far from the ideal setup that I was quite surprised to learn of my time. If I would have had the same conditions on Wednesday, during the first afternoon of qualifying, I would have probably been able to go even quicker than 3:29.905.

Now that you have qualified the car, who's going to take over ?

Johnny is going to take the start in our car, while Frank will be in the #1. It's a very important part of the race and we're going to do everything we can to stay in front. Last year, we were passed by the Dome and because it had a higher top speed, we were unable to re-pass it. Plus, when we're in front, we're exposed to fewer problems caused by the middle of the pack.

How long are your stints going to be ?

With the tires that Michelin has given us, we can do double stints and in the night-time, depending on the conditions, we can even try to go for triple stints.

Other than the other Audis, who are you worried about on the track ?

In terms of speed, we've seen that Oreca can be very competitive. For the race, we're keeping our eye on Bentley, even though they didn't particularly shine during qualifying, they're a very dangerous adversary.

What do you think of the Le Mans track ?

I like the track a lot, especially the Porsche Esses and the last section. On the other hand, I don't like the new turn after the Dunlop chicane, as passing in this area is very difficult. Plus, the brake zone is very bumpy, so finding the ideal line is not an easy task.

How do you evaluate your chances in the race ?

Audi is here to win, but it's always difficult to come out on top in this race. I really hope that we'll bring the trophy home to Ingolstadt indefinitely. I would definitely like to be aboard the winning car, but what's most important is that Audi is victorious, not which team.

Where does your nickname "Dindo" come from ?

When I was 3 or 4 years old, I lived with my family near a church and we heard the bells ringing throughout the day. My older brother liked to harass me and kept on saying to me, " Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong " until it finally became " Dindo ". Everyone calls me Dindo now and I must admit that most of the time, when someone calls me Rinaldo, I don't even react.

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