

24 HEURES DU MANS

15-16 JUIN 2002



Press release #15

Sunday, June 16th, 2002

00:16

#30 Lola-MG catches fire

The 8th hour of the race had just started when Henri Pescarolo's #17 Courage-Peugeot stopped in the pits. Sebastien Bourdais, then in 8th position, complained of intense vibrating in the front axle caused by a break in undertray supports. In contrast, the Courage-Judd returned to the track after being stuck in the pits for a long time due to clutch change.

The undertray was also responsible for an 8 minute stop for the #25 WR-Peugeot.

PK Sport's #78 Porsche experienced a very serious engine problem caused by a blown gasket. The oil temperature rose to 135°C. The great adventure stopped there!

The blow out epidemic has hit the lead car. Tom Kristensen's #1 Audi limped back to the pits with its front right tire flat. Fortunately for the two-time winning team in Le Mans, the chassis was not hit. Less luck for the #7 Cadillac, which also returned on a rim; since the rear right part of the car is damaged. The American team has decided to change the complete rear axle. Victim of a 4th flat for his team, Luc Alphand went off the track with his #72 Porsche at the Indianapolis turn but managed to return to his garage. But during this incident, the brake hose sustained damaged.

The #14 Oreca is in the pits for a full rear axle change, because of gearbox problems.

The heat got intense in the Mulsanne straights, when Knight Hawk's #30 Lola-MG caught fire, driving around in 30th place. The irony is that this sleek black LMP-675 was decorated with flames. Fortunately, Mel Hawkins, the driver, was able to get out of the cockpit. To be sure, the car is retired. Because of this incident, race management decided to send out the safety car for the first time at 11:49pm.

This 8th hour of the race subsequently ended with the pace car. The #12 Panoz took advantage of the red flag conditions to repair its power steering.

In the standings, the three works Audis still hold the top three places (#1, #2, #3), separated by a lap. The #26 MG is on the brink of yielding a lap to the #3 Audi, but still solidly holds 4th place, ahead of another British car: the #8 Bentley.

The #58 Ferrari and #80 Porsche are still in the lead of the respective categories LM-GTS and LM-GT.

La course en direct sur le 0892 3500 24 *

* 0.34 €/minute



A.S.A. A.C.O. des "24 Heures du Mans"
CIRCUIT DES 24 HEURES DU MANS
SOCIÉTÉ SPORTIVE AUTOMOBILE DE L'A.C.O.
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