

24 HEURES DU MANS

15-16 JUIN 2002



Press release #19

Sunday, June 16th, 2002

05:30

The Prodrive Ferrari is out of the race

As the Audis run like clockwork, the same can not be said of the rest of the pack.

The most significant event is undeniably the lead change in the GTS class. The #58 Prodrive Ferrari, which had set a fast pace from the beginning, caught fire in the Karting corner, forcing it to retire. Following just a few laps behind, the #63 and #64 Corvettes have now taken over the lead, ahead of the FFSA Chrysler Viper.

More bad luck for the Ferrari crew, following the #70 car's earlier retirement, the #71 has now officially retired from the race. The last Ferrari in the race is the #74 Auto Palace 360 Modena, though it is having numerous battery and electrical problems.

Panoz's problems aren't over yet, as Bill Auberlen had to push his car the last few meters into the pits. The Roadster grinded to a halt just before the pit entrance. The team proceeded to change the rear axle, just like the #27 MG's mechanics, the only Lola left running since the start.

The night is taking its toll on the drivers, Val Hillebrand drove off in the Mulsanne straight while Del Bello drove the #29 car off track at Arnage. The latter had to pit a few minutes later to repair the left headlight.

Another noteworthy shunt is the #66 car which went off into the gravel trap, requiring the marshals' help to move the car. A few laps later, the S7 stopped in the pits with a smoking engine.

Things also started heating up among the leaders when the #8 Bentley, while in 4th position, went off the track. After having taken the advantage for a few laps, the #6 Cadillac slipped back down into 5th place following a longer-than-expected pit stop.

The #13 Courage/Judd completed the 13th hour of the race by pitting to repair a gearbox problem.

As for the standings, the #2 and #3 Audis continue to pass one another for 2nd place, much to the delight of the #1 Audi which continues to stretch its gap.

A leader change in the GT class, with the Racers Group Porsche back in front.

La course en direct sur le 0892 3500 24 *