

24 HEURES DU MANS

15-16 JUIN 2002



Press release # 20

Sunday, June 16th, 2002

07:00

A morning full of retirements

The 14th hour of the race began with a memorable moment for the lead #1 Audi: completing its 200th lap. At the tail end of the pack, the #74 Ferrari, the last still in the race, has been slowed by frequent electrical problems which have been forcing him to pit often.

While running as high as 9th, the #4 Riley & Scott has suffered from a fatal engine noise. Quite a shame for the car which had been having a good race thus far.

Tom Coronel, at the wheel of the #16 Dome-Judd, spun the car. He was able to conserve his 7th position, but the #14 Oreca is now dangerously close.

Serious trouble for the other Dome-Judd, as the #9 car came to a stop in Tertre Rouge. The driver returned to the pits by foot. The retirement became official at 6:25am, a broken gearbox the reason.

Panic for the Bentley team when the #8 car stopped for several seconds in the Mulsanne corner before continuing on normally. The lone LM-GTP entry remains 4th overall with a one lap lead over the #6 Cadillac.

The #73 Morgan continues to run a steady race, even though the mechanics had to replace the rear-end once again.

The sun has begun to come out at 6:00 am, and the retirement list continues to grow. The #75 Team Orbit Porsche has given up the ghost due to a transmission problem. The #85 Spyker has also retired. The Dutch car ended its first race in Le Mans after twelve and a half hours because of a significant valve problem. The #74 Ferrari has finally given up its electrical battle, thus marking the retirement of the final Ferrari. There are no more two-driver teams left in the race.

At 6:00am, the #1 Audi led the #2 by 2 laps, which in turn led the #3 Audi by 1 minute and 40 seconds. Nothing changed at 7:00am. During his 223rd lap, Tom Kristensen aboard the #1 Audi has posted the quickest race lap, 3:34.134. The #16 Racing for Holland Dome has had to replace some gears in the transmission, thus losing 7 minutes in the pits. The car is now behind the #14 Oreca. Hugues de Chaunac's cars now find themselves 6th and 7th overall.

Chronic gearbox problems for the Reynard-Lehmann cars. Following the retirement of the #28 ROC car, the #29 Noël Del Bello has pitted for repairs.

Troubled by mechanical problems, the #13 Courage found itself golfed in a gravel trap near the Playstation chicane. Thed Bjork went off the track while trying to pass the Morgan, but fortunately, was able to quickly regain the track.

The #64 Corvette, while running 2nd in LM-GTS behind the #63 Corvette, was forced to pit shortly before 7:00am to repair a small oil leak. The #52 Equipe de France FFSA Viper immediately benefited. The #68 Saleen lost a large part of its rear bodywork in the Mulsanne straight, but without any serious repercussions.

In the overall standings, behind the three Audis is the Bentley, 8 laps from the leader, but is under constant threat from the #6 Cadillac which has closed the gap to less than a minute. The #27 MG is 11th overall, and currently leads in LMP-675. The #80 Porsche continues to dominate the LM-GT class.

La course en direct sur le 0892 3500 24 *