

24 HEURES DU MANS

15-16 JUIN 2002



Press release #24

Sunday, June 16th, 2002

12:57

Audi is going to be hard to beat

The last two hours (from 11:00am to 1:00pm) have been rather uneventful, especially for the Audis, who hold a very comfortable lead over the rest of the pack.

Five hours before the checkered flag, the two leading Audis find themselves on the same lap. However, the drivers of the #2 car are unable to outpace the #1 car. The #3 car seems to have already assured itself of its final podium position. The gaps are too large for the Bentley to realistically lose or gain any places. The two Oreca's behind could well face an awesome fight to the finish, as the #15 car is only 1 minute and 30 seconds ahead of the #14.

Meanwhile, at 11:20am, the #1 Audi crossed the 300 lap mark.

On the other hand, the #25 WR Peugeot, the current leader of the LMP 675 class, has lost a number of laps in order to replace the radiator after a small water leak was discovered. The only other running car in the class is the #29 Reynard Lehmann which went straight off at Arnage. With the help of the corner workers, Christophe Pillon was able to quickly rejoin the race. The #29 is currently 6 laps behind the WR.

At noon, the #1 Audi was again one full lap ahead of the #2, the result of strategically planned offset pit stops, but by the end of the hour, the two Ingolstadt cars were separated by less than 3 minutes when Frank Biela handed the lead car over to Tom Kristensen. Fifteen minutes later it was the #2 car's turn to pit. Christian Pescatori handed the car over to Rinaldo Capello. Like last year, the #2 car finds itself one lap behind the #1 car just before the finish.

The battle continues in LM GTS, even though it appears that the two Corvettes will again take the top 2 spots this year (#63 in front of #64) thanks to its respective 10 and 6 lap lead over the 3rd place car, the Americans could still run into some problems.

The final podium position is still up for grabs though between two of the Vipers. The #52 Equipe de France FFSA Viper currently leads the #50 Larbre Competition Viper by more than one lap. Just behind these two cars is the #81 Porsche, 16th overall, and comfortably in the lead of the LM GT class. The GT class has been relegated to a strictly Porsche affair now that the Ferraris, Spyker and Morgan have all retired.

The Racers Group Porsche only has a 1:40 lead over the #81 Freisinger Motorsport Porsche. The race is far from over for the two favorites. After having finished 2nd in 2001, the German team will be fighting all the way to the end. The pace of both Porsches is even quick enough to close the gap between themselves and the WR, the leader in LMP 675.

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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