



AUTOMOBILE CLUB DE L'OUEST

*Créateur et Organisateur  
des 24 Heures du Mans*

# INFORMATIONS

## PRESE

DEPARTEMENT COMMUNICATION

JUNE 5<sup>TH</sup> TEST DAY. AFTERNOON 14:00hrs-19:00hrs

After an hour-long break for lunch, the second test session got underway right on time. The weather forecast indicated that there should be no change in temperature and only a 10% chance of rain between 14:00 hrs and 19:00 hrs.

It was interesting to see which teams appeared to be looking to set competitive times and which ones seemed more concerned with car set-up and driver qualification. One team concentrating on lapping at close to race pace was Pescarolo. The two cars spent very little time in the pits and by the end of the session, Emmanuel Collard in the No.16 car had clocked the sort of times that claimed the 2004 pole for Johnny Herbert and the Audi. The No.13 Courage was not far behind that pace. The Audis seemed unable to match the French cars, with the No.3 car of Lehto/Werner/Kristensen the fastest, some 6s away from the Pescarolos.

LMP2. The No.25 RML MG-Lola started the session in the lead but that was gradually reduced by the Intersport Racing No.32 Lola B05/40 AER. These two cars share a similar Lola chassis but have different engines. The closeness of this class shows that the new regulations are working well and the times were very close. In two weeks time, this class is likely to be a straight fight between the Lola and the Courage C65 chassis.

LM-GT1. The Aston Martins were here to prove a point and straight away they began putting in fast times, never losing their 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> position in class throughout the session. The two DBR9 cars swapped positions from the first session, with the No.58 Kox/Lame/Engel car finishing ahead of the No.59 Brabham/Turner/Sarrazin car. The No.63 (Fellows/O'Connell/Papis) and No.64 (Gavin/Beretta/Magnussen) Corvette C6-Rs appeared to be working to a totally different agenda, concentrating on a race set-up.

Possibly, the surprise of the day in the GT1 class was the No.61 Cirtek Ferrari 550 Maranello of Bouchut/Fomenko/Vasiliev. They were only 3 secs off the pace of the Aston Martins. The two Astons did 78 and 77 laps respectively until 17:40 hrs, when it started raining. The Ferrari covered 53 laps and the faster of the two Corvettes, No. 64, driven by Beretta, Gavin, and Magnussen, 85.

LM-GT2. The class leader during testing was undoubtedly the No.90 White Lightning Porsche GT3-RSR. Their pace became very obvious when Timo Bernhard set a new unofficial GT2 track record during morning testing. But towards the end of the second session the rest of the teams had begun to catch up. The No.71 Alex Job Racing Porsche GT3-RSR of Rockenfeller/Lieb/Hindery closed the gap to within 1.5 secs and within 0.5 sec of them was the No.77 Panoz Esperante of Auberlen/Liddell/Maxwell. The No.93 Scuderia Ecosse Ferrari 360 Modena had a troubled time, finishing the day 6<sup>th</sup> fastest in class. Considering a fuel pick-up problem that made them run on full tanks all day, this was an excellent for their relatively inexperienced drivers Kinch, Kirkcaldy and Reid.

Another UK-based team working at their own pace was the No.95 Racesport Peninsula TVR Tuscan 400-R of Hartshorne/Stanton/Johnson.

"We are just being cautious," explained Team manager Dennis Leech, "we are trying something with the differential and that caused a small oil leak. There is no rush today so we did a 'spanner check' on the whole car. We are concentrating on handling today. Due to the high speed nature of the track it calls for different aerodynamics than we would use anywhere else and at the moment we are a couple of miles an hour down on our top speed."

One of today's big stories was Sébastien Loeb's ambitious dash from Turkey to put in his mandatory 10 laps. His plane was delayed an hour and Loeb arrived with barely enough time to complete the all-important tenth lap – he started it with just 21 seconds to spare!

Post-Session press conference:-

Franck Montagny (No.4 Playstation Team Oreca Audi R8): "Today was not a bad day. We're quite happy with today's result with our car, it was what we expected. I used to work with the same people back in 2002, and everyone has improved – the reactions of everyone are better. It was a perfect day; we had no problems with the car, we didn't touch any kerbs or go through any gravel traps."

Sebastien Loeb (No.17 Pescarolo C60 Judd): "There were two stages of the Rally of Turkey left today; I started the stages with a 1:15s lead, drove carefully and won by a minute. I had authorisation from the FIA to miss the press conference, and flew straight here. Now it's okay, we've done our ten laps. The conditions were difficult, as I was on slick tyres and there was some rain on the track. The car was well prepared – Pescarolo had the two best times of today. Obviously going from the Citroen Xsara it's very different, but the car was okay. I was driving how I felt; I did a lap in 3:45s, the track wasn't too wet and I was going quicker, but then it started to get wetter. After that I just concentrated on staying on the track and doing the ten laps."

Emmanuel Collard(No.16 Pescarolo Sport C60 Judd): "For sure we could go quicker. Today we were just using race tyres, and we were quick. If we had used qualifying tyres, we would definitely have been quicker – maybe 2 seconds. I was very happy with the set-up, and I have to say thank-you to my team-mates; my first lap in the car was a 3:36s. It just seems perfect."