

Communiqué n° 10

19/06/2005 07h00

OVERNIGHT

- **02:20 hrs**
- No. 25 RML Lola MG rejoined the race at the stroke of 02:00am.
- No. 24 Rachel Welter WR Peugeot had an accident between the Mulsanne chicanes and limped home.
- 3rd-placed in GT2, the No. 76 Raymond Narac Porsche 911 GT3 RSR pitted for a routine stop at 02:13.
- The No37 and 36 Belmondo Courage Fords took a leaf from the Corvette book and pitted together at 02:14. The 37 car was pushed into the garage and 36 rejoined.
- The second placed No. 2 Champion Audi made a routine stop at 02:17 for fuel and Pirro remained in the car for a 3rd stint.
- Flying Lizards Rookies No. 80 Flying Lizard Porsche 911 GT3 RSR continued to go well. They made yet another smooth stop at 02:18am.
- **02:40 hrs**
- The No. 72 Luc Alphand Adventures Porsche 911 GT3 RS went straight on the Playstation chicane at 02:25am. It appeared to get away unscathed.
- No. 30 Kruse Motorsport Courage Judd spun and rejoined at Ford chicane at 02:20am.
- The No. 95 Racesport Peninsula TVR Tuscan 400 R was pushed into its garage at 02:26am.
- No. 5 Jim Gainer International Dome-Mugen pitted at 2:32 and made a driver change, with Kaneishi out and Michigani in.
- The Aston / Corvette battle remains close as ever with Pedro Lamy in the No. 58 Aston Martin DBR9 leading Magnussen in the No. 64 Corvette C6-R by only just over a minute.
- **03:00 hrs**
- The GT1 leader No. 58 Aston Martin DBR9 (Kox in) made a routine stop at 02:47. The Corvettes and Astons seem to be following a similar pit rotation. Only a minute or two later the No. 63 and 64 Corvette C6-Rs came in for driver changes.
- The 'Russian' No. 61 Cirtek Ferrari 550 Maranello made a stop at 02:40
- The No. 4 Audi Playstation Team Oreca Audi Audi and No. 7 Creation Autosportif DBA Judd entered the pit lane nose to tail.
- Werner brought in the leading leading No. 3 Champion Audi in for an early stop at 2:54. Fuel and tyres were changed.

- At the end of the 11th hour, the standings are as follows:
- LMP1
No. 3 Champion Audi, Werner
No. 2 Champion Audi, Pirro
No. 5 Jim Gainer International Dome-Mugen, Michigami
- LMP2
No. 36 Belmondo Courage Ford, Ojeh
No. 37 Belmondo Courage Ford, Andre
No. 25 RML Lola MG, Newton
- GT1
No. 58 Aston Martin DBR9, Kox
No. 64 Corvette C6-R, Gavin
No. 63 Corvette C6-R Papis
- GT2
No. 71 Alex Job Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Rockenfeller
No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Long
No. 76 Raymond Narac Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Narac
- **3:20**
- The Champion Audis continued to show championship performance as they soldiered on through the comfortable Le Mans night. Twenty-one degrees, balmy, with a slight breeze.
- Just after 03:00, the second-place No. 2 Champion Audi came in for a scheduled stop – tyres, fuel and a driver swap - Pirro climbs out, McNish takes over. The car re-entered the race three laps ahead of the third-place No. 5 Dome Mugen.
- The No. 37 Belmondo Courage Ford pitted unexpectedly and was pushed into the garage for a check.
- The No. 10 Racing for Holland Dome Judd finally emerged from its garage.
- The Kruse Motorsport No. 30 motored through the pits after being given a penalty.
- Nicolas Minassian, having just been relieved of duty in the No. 7 DBA Judd No.7, was enthusiastic after completing triple stint. At 01:10 hrs the former Champ Car driver did the fastest lap of the DBA's day - 3:39.073. "The car is perfect. I love it!" he said. " It's very well balanced and I have to say that Michelin have come out with a fantastic hard compound tyre. We could have done a quadruple stint on it if we wanted to. It allows you to be very consistent in the car. I'm feeling very good. I was pushing very hard but still within the margin you need at Le Mans."
- In the GT2s, the No. 89 Sebah Automotive Ltd. Porsche 911 GT3 RSR made a scheduled pit stop for fuel, tyres and driver change – Thorkild Thyrring out, Lars-Erik Nielsen in – then back in the hunt.

- The Corvettes kept the pressure on the No. 58 Aston. Oliver Gavin in the No. 64 set that car's fastest lap (3:54.484), closing the gap to the Aston to 1'11".
- The No. 8 Rollcentre Dallara Nissan steamed into the pits. Engine cover off, steam rolled out from under the cover. Looks like another trip into the garage.
- **03:40**
- The battle at the top remains Audi, Audi, Dome, Pescarolo and Audi – but the last Audi encountered a problem.
- The fifth-place Audi, the No. 4 Audi Playstation Team Oreca Audi now being driven by Franck Montagny, reported a puncture and was forced to motor slowly back to the pits. Once in, tires were changed and Montagny handed the driving chores over to Stephane Ortelli.
- Courage continued to struggle. The No. 12 headed into the pits, Christian Vann at the wheel. The front bonnet was removed and the car was checked over. Satisfied with what they saw, Courage switched drivers – Alexander Frei taking over – and the car headed back into the night.
- The No. 17 Pescarolo Judd pitted from eleventh position, a routine stop and driver change. WRC ace Sebastien Loeb took over.
- Two minutes later, at 03:20, the No. 16 Pescarolo followed its sister car into the pits, still holding its fourth-place position.
- The Champion Audi team produced some of their classic ALMS-bred pitwork as the No. 2 Audi came into the pits for a quick refuelling and tyre change.
- Vanina Ickx replaced Joao Barbosa in the No. 18 Rollcentre Dallara Judd.
- Alternator problems in the No. 72 Luc Alphand Adventures Porsche 911 GT3 RS forced a longer than desired stop.
- Moments after following the No. 2 pit-stop, the No. 3 Audi pitted for a routine fuel-only stop.
- Just as the Audi pitted, the leading No. 58 Aston made a similar quick stop for service.
- **0400**
- Bourdais in the No. 78 Panoz and Johnson in the No. 95 TVR suffered an unexpected problem - spins reported at the Mulsanne Corner, sending the TVR into the gravel. Both cars rejoined the race.
- The Corvette Racing No. 64 pitted for tyres and fuel at 03:45, and just as it pulled out, the No. 63 Corvette rolled in behind – routine stop and a driver change. GrandAm star Max Papis took over driving responsibilities. "I think the guys here in the Corvette organization are doing a great job," he said. "Unfortunately, we're slow in a straight line. We're working on the car to make it faster and faster. We can't catch the Aston on speed. We can beat them on teamwork, that's for sure."
- The third-place No. 5 Dome pitted, Michigami staying in the cockpit for another

stint, but problems in the back of the car required the removal of the engine cover. Frantic work was needed for an alternator and electronic control unit change. Repairs completed, the Dome's ten-minute stop came to an end and Michigami moved back into the race

- The unexpectedly long Dome stop allowed the No. 16 Comas-driven Pescarolo to move up to the top three, to the satisfaction of the bleary-eyed French fans.
- LMP1
No. 3 Champion Audi, Werner
No. 2 Champion Audi, McNish
No. 16 Pescarolo Judd, Comas
- LMP2
No. 36 Belmondo Courage Ford, Sharpe
No. 37 Belmondo Courage Ford, Andre
No. 25 RML Lola MG, Hughes
- GT1
No. 58 Aston Martin DBR9, Kox
No. 63 Corvette C6-R, Gavin
No. 64 Corvette C6-R, O'Connell
- GT2
No. 71 Alex Job Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Rockenfeller
No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Bernhard
No. 76 Raymond Narac Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Dumez
- **04:20**
- The temperature was a balmy 21 degrees, heated by the action on the Circuit. The Champion Audis remained three laps ahead of the No. 16 Pescarolo in the LMP1 class.
- The two Belmondo Courages struggled on leading the depleted LMP2 field.
- Perhaps the hottest contest remained between the GT1 powerhouses - the No. 58 Aston Martin DBR9 and the two Corvettes.
- In GT2, White Lightning Racing continued its pursuit of its third-straight class victory here at Le Mans as it pursued the No. 71 Alex Job Porsche.
- Just after mid-race, the No. 37 Belmondo Courage returned to the pits for several minutes, the driver complaining about vibrations. Lots of clumps of cast-off rubber were removed from the car's wheel wells. Work completed, the car was refueled and headed back into the race, Didier André at the wheel.
- The No. 12 Courage suffered a stop and go penalty. The reason: too many mechanics working on the car on its previous pit stop.
- On the course, the No. 78 Panoz spun at the notoriously tricky Playstation chicane on the Mulsanne.
- Sébastien Loeb continued to show his aptitude for endurance racing as he entered his third stint in the No.17 Pescarolo after a stop for fuel.

- The fifth-place Oreca Audi, driven by Ortelli, came in for a standard refuelling and tyre replacement.
- Driver change at Pescarolo – the No. 16 came into pits and Emmanuel Collard took over from Erik Comas.
- Franck Hahn in the No. No. 35 G-Force Racing Courage Judd found his way into tyre wall at Dunlop Chicane.
- **04:40**
- The top three overall were the two Champion Audis and the No. 16 Pescarolo, and Pescarolo Sport driver Erik Comas remained optimistic. After getting out of the car he said: “It’s the best car I have ever driven at Le Mans. The gearbox let us down, but we’ll try and make it up. The car is fast and well balanced. We’re running it at 98%. We’re only half way, we hope we can do better than 3rd. The race starts now.”
- The No 2 Audi executed another clockwork stop.
- The No. 18 Rollcentre Dallara, still struggling with power steering issues, pitted as scheduled. Vanina Ickx remained in the car, taking another stint.
- Twenty-five minutes after the hour, the No. 35 G-Force Racing Courage Judd headed back toward the pits after being extracted from the gravel at the Dunlop Chicane.
- The leader, No. 3 Champion Audi, pitted without incident –Marco Werner at the controls. Fuel only.
- In 25th position, the No. 25 RML Lola MG rolled in for what looked to be a routine stop, but the crew jacked up the rear of the Lola and rolled it and driver Warren Hughes into the garage. The problem was traced to a damaged clutch cable.
- At 04:34, the No. 2 Audi, No. 36 Courage and No. 58 Aston Martin entered the pits simultaneously for simple service – fuel and tyres.
- In the Corvette pits, Olivier Beretta prepared to replace for Oliver Gavin in No. 64, now ahead of the No. 58 Aston Martin.
- **05:00**
- The LMP1 battle remained unchanged, but the Aston/Corvette battle developed into a cat and mouse confrontation.
- Corvette driver Oliver Gavin saw the contest as Aston speed versus Corvette cornering. “It’s gonna be close, and if everybody’s reliable, it’s going to be like this to the end. We seem to be able to match one of the Astons for pace, but the other one’s very quick. The Turner car (No. 58) is very fast on the straights – like a bullet.”
- The LMP2 class second-place car, the No. 37 Belmondo Courage Ford, came into the pits to deal with a right-rear tyre puncture. After taking care of some askew bodywork, the Courage was returned to the race.

- At 04:50, the sixth-place Team Jota No. 9 Zytek took on fuel and tyres, changing driving duties from Hignett to Stack.
- The No. 17 Pescarolo pitted for fuel and tyres. Driver change - Loeb out, Ayari in.
- Positions at 05:00 hrs
- LMP1
No. 3 Champion Audi, Werner
No. 2 Champion Audi, McNish
No. 16 Pescarolo Judd, Collard
- LMP2
No. 36 Belmondo Courage Ford, Sharpe
No. 37 Belmondo Courage Ford, Andre
No. 25 RML Lola MG, Hughes
- GT1
No. 58 Aston Martin DBR9, Enge
No. 64 Corvette C6-R, Beretta
No. 63 Corvette C6-R, O'Connell
- GT2
No. 71 Alex Job Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Lieb
No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Bernhard
No. 76 Raymond Narac Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Dumez
- **05:20**
- Twenty minutes into the hour and the Audis still lead, but Collard's No. 16 Pescarolo Judd hovers just a lap behind, closing, closing.
- Both the No. 36 Belmondo Courage Ford and No. 34 Miracle Motorsports Courage AER were rolled into the garage at the top of the 14th hour. With the 37 car already in garage, forward progress was halted for both Belmondo cars.
- In the pits, Henri Pescarolo was still pleased with his cars' performance, "I tell you we have no problem with the 16 car, the 17 car. But anyway, the race is still long."
- The No. 5 Dome-Mugen being driven by Ara was spotted being driven slowly and subsequently stopped on the track at the Porsche curves.
- The No. 18 Rollcentre Dallara Judd came in for routine pit stop and a driver change. Vanina Ickx handed over to Martin Short.
- The No. 37 Belmondo Courage finally came out of the pits and headed back out on the track with a new rear wing.
- **05:40**
- No change in positions as the leaders make their last stop before dawn. But the Pescarolos and Andy Wallace in the No. 7 DBA Judd are still fastest on the track.

- O'Connell in the No. 63 Corvette C6-R set a best time of 3:55:757 as the No. 10 Racing for Holland Dome Judd with Julian aboard did a 3:44:422, it's best lap of the race.
- Ara pulled the No. 5 Jim Gainer International Dome-Mugen back onto the track having dropped to 6th place.
- It must be the hour: Warren Hughes in the No. 25 RML Lola MG has pushed it to a fast lap of 3:47.875.
- Julian brought the No. 10 Racing for Holland Dome Judd into the pits to change the rear bodywork and tyres.
- The leading No. 58 Aston Martin DBR9 Aston Martin into the pits, but no driver changes. Tomas Enge stalled it on the way out, but quickly got back onto the track.
- Beretta brought No. 64 Corvette C6-R into the pits, fuel, tyres and back out again, followed by O'Connell in the sister car No. 63 Corvette C6-R. Ron Fellows got in, took on tyres and fuel and back out.
- At 5:35 Werner was into the pits in the leader No. 3 Champion Audi, took on tyres and fuel, and 6-time winner Tom Kristensen hurried back out. Marco said the change was a little earlier than planned, he flat-spotted the tires and was forced to come in early.
- 5:37 and the No. 59 Aston Martin DBR9 came in for its scheduled pit stop. Shortly after the Collard brought the No. 16 Pescarolo Judd in as well.
- **06:00**
- As dawn broke over the Circuit de la Sarthe, the leaders remained in position after pit-stops.
- Into the pits for a quick stop was Ayari in the No. 17 Pescarolo. The No. 7 Creation DBA with Andy Wallace at the wheel was rolled into the garage with smoke coming out of the engine. Wallace hopped out of the car but said that as soon as the radiator problem could be fixed all should be well. "Apart from that, we're going strong."
- The No. 35 G-Force Racing Courage Judd was once again rolled into the garage and appeared to be in for a long stop.
- No. 4 Team Oreca Audi pitted with a driver change; Gounon took over from Ortelli.
- Word came through that the No. 5 Dome had sadly retired due to a broken gearbox at 5:48 a.m.
- **At 06:00, the standings were as follows:**
- LMP1
No. 3 Champion Audi – Kristensen
No. 2 Champion Audi – McNish
No. 16 Pescarolo Judd - Collard

- LMP2
 - No. 25 RML Lola MG – Hughes
 - No. 37 Belmondo Courage Ford
 - No. 30 Kruse Motorsport Courage Judd
- GT1
 - No. 58 Aston Martin DBR9 – Enge
 - No. 64 Corvette C6-R - Beretta
 - No. 63 Corvette C6-R - Fellows
- GT2
 - No. 71 Alex Job Porsche 911 GT3 RSR – Lieb
 - No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR – Bernhard
 - No. 76 Raymond Narac Porsche 911 GT3 RSR - Dumas
- **06:20**
- While the first- and second-place Audis upped their pace, the Pescarolos are faster yet and inching ever closer.
- The third-place No. 16 Pescarolo Judd stopped at the Michelin Chicane, but Collard got it right back on track and maintained his spot. McNish brought the second-place No. 2 Champion Audi in for very quick stop for fuel and stays in the car.
- No. 36 Belmondo Courage Ford pitted around 06:05 and Sharpe got out. He didn't know he was leading the LMP2 class and declared himself ready for bed.
- Tom Kristensen whipped the No. 3 Champion Audi to a 3:40.774, his fastest lap, responding to Alan McNish's challenge. Then moments later blazed to 3:39.586, increasing his lead over the No. 2 Champion Audi to over a minute.
- The No. 36 Belmondo Courage Ford changed drivers and tyres and added fuel and Gosslein wheeled it out at 06:07.
- The bedevilled No. 8 Rollcentre Dallara Nissan, firmly in last place, and the No. 9 Team Jota-Zytek Engineering Zytek pitted at 06:15. At the same time the No. 17 Pescarolo Judd moved into 5th place, putting Pescarolos in 3rd and 5th.
- Collard in the No. 16 Pescarolo Judd puts in a time of 3:35.875.
- **06:40**
- Emmanuel Collard in the No.16 Pescarolo Judd posted the fastest lap of the race at 3:35.875 shortly before handing the car over to Jean-Christophe Boullion. After a brilliantly quick fuel and tire change the car was back out on the track.
- The Corvette team had another excellent pit stop as the No. 64 car was in and out just before the No. 63 Corvette's pit battle with the No. 58 Aston Martin. This time, the Aston Martin just squeezed out ahead of the Corvette.
- Terada in the No. 24 Rachel Welter WR Peugeot spun in the Dunlop chicane causing a few tense moments as other cars abruptly changed their line to avoid him. Finally, after a quick push he was back on track and a few moments later

rolled into the pits.

- More drama on the track as the No. 4 Audi went into the gravel right in front of Kristensen in the No. 3, who narrowly escaped disaster.
- The No. 18 Rollcentre Dallara Judd was still having power steering fluid problems and got another top-up before Martin Short started his third consecutive stint, still in 11th place.
- **07:00**
- Dale White, No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR Team Manager said “We’re halfway home now but there is still a long way to go. We’ve still got a whole Sebring left in the race. The good part about that is that we have plenty of time to pressure the BAM team. The bad part is there is still a lot of negative that can happen to us, too, for sure. We’re going to keep sticking to our plan and see where we’re at in the end.”
- At 6:62 the No. 89 Sebah Automotive Ltd. Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Nielsen driving, began to slow down.
- Climbing out of the No. 25 RML Lola MG Warren Hughes said, “We’re just trying to keep the thing going. We’ve had no radio contact through the night. In the car it’s not really a big deal.”
- Fifteen minutes before the hour, McNish went off and into the tire wall at Indianapolis with the second-place No. 2 Champion Audi. He had to be towed out and, sparks flying, limped back to the pits, bodywork dragging and with front suspension damage. The car was taken straight into the garage for new front bodywork and work on the suspension. There was speculation that the front suspension may have broken and caused the accident.
- With the No. 2 Audi in the pits, Lieb in the No. 71 Alex Job Porsche 911 GT3 RSR and Franchitti in the No. 78 Panoz Elan spun at Playstation around 6:40 but all seems well.
- With the No. 2 Audi in the pits, Boullion moved the No. 16 Pescarolo Judd into second place, three laps behind leader Kirstensten in the No. 3 Champion Audi. Boullion was trying, and just before the hour struck he put in the fastest lap of the race at 3’34.968.
- Martin Short turned the No. 18 Rollcentre Dallara Judd over to Joao Barbosa at 6:57.
- At the top of the hour, Pompidou in the No. 91 T2M Motorsport Porsche 911 GT3 RS went into the barrier at Indianapolis.
- At 07:00, the standings were as follows:
- **LMP1**
No. 3 Champion Audi, Kristensen
No. 16 Pescarolo Judd, Boullion
No. 4 Audi Playstation Team Oreca Audi, Gounon
- **LMP2**

No. 36 Belmondo Courage Ford, Gosselin
No. 25 RML Lola MG, Erdos
No. 37 Belmondo Courage Ford, Belmondo

- GT1

No. 58 Aston Martin DBR9, Lamy
No. 64 Corvette C6-R, Gavin??
No. 63 Corvette C6-R, Fellows

- GT2

No. 71 Alex Job Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Lieb
No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Bergmeister
No. 76 Raymond Narac Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Narac

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