

Communiqué n° 13

19/06/2005 14h30

12h – 14h

- **12:20**
- Four hours and 29 cars remained as the No. 16 Pescarolo Judd continued to eat away at the lead of the No. 3 Champion Audi – now down to a little over a lap. The pride of the French drove with Emmanuel Collard as he gained time on the Werner-driven Audi R8.
- The GT1 battle alone was enough to distract even the most red-skinned sun worshipper at the Circuit from his or her upcoming discomfort. The No. 64 Corvette, No. 59 and 59 Aston Martins and No. 63 Corvette were all covered by a little over a lap.
- At 12:10, the comparable lap times of the four cars were:
No. 64 Corvette C6-R - 3:56.109 (Magnussen)
No. 59 Aston Martin DBR9 - 3:53.776 (Brabham)
No. 58 Aston Martin DBR9 - 3:55.047 (Lamy)
No. 63 Corvette C6-R - 3:57.727 (Fellows)
- The GT2 battle was in a similar state, the No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR tailing the No. 71 Alex Job Porsche 911 GT3 RSR by a lap.
- Timo Bernhard of the No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR was pragmatic about his team's chances catching the No. 71 and "three-peat" here at Le Mans. "I certainly hope we can," he said, "we still have more than an ALMS race to go (in the race), so I'm hopeful. You can't slow down – you have to stay focused."
- At 12:20, the No. 7 Creation Autosportif DBA Judd suffered a right rear puncture as it passed Tertre Rouge and was forced to limp almost the length of the circuit back to the pits.
- **12:40**
- The No. 16 Pescarolo Judd rolled into the pits on schedule, Jean-Christophe Boullion taking over driving chores, resulting in a 1:15 second stop. It was valuable time lost to the leader that would be made up on-track.
- Jamie Campbell-Walter finally got the damaged No. 7 Creation DBA back to the pits - right rear tyre in shreds. The crew quickly dealt with the tyre issue and checked the bodywork for damage.
- The No. 63 Corvette took care of routine maintenance and a driver change, putting former Champ Car driver and GrandAm series star Max Papis behind the wheel.

- Just before 12:30, the Oreca Audi, Stephane Ortelli at the helm, entered the Arnage corner just a little too quickly and barely missed the tyres on the outside run-off area.
- At the front, Tom Kristensen was still doing his best to keep the No. 3 Champion Audi ahead of the No. 16 Pescarolo. The leader had tallied 316 laps, about a full lap ahead of the challenger.
- Kristensen's teammate, Alan McNish, was four laps down on the Pescarolo, hanging onto third over the No. 4 Audi Playstation Team Oreca Audi, Jean-Marc Gounon now at the wheel.
- Mike Rockenfeller and Marc Lieb have handled the lion's share of the work driving the No. 71 Alex Job Porsche, keeping it ahead of the No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR; Rockenfeller was beginning to show the signs of strain. "It's difficult to keep the concentration up after so many hours in the car," he said. "I've had 1.5 hours of sleep. But now we don't do any double stints anymore. It's single stints from here on in."
- When asked if their co-driver and team owner Leo Hindery, a talented gentleman racer would return to the car, Rockenfeller said if the car had a strong enough cushion over the No. 90, "Maybe he'll do the finish."
- **13:00**
- The 1-2 battle in the GT2 class continued under hot conditions. Co-driver of the No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR and 2004 Le Mans GT2 class winner Patrick Long showed his exhaustion and expressed some frustration at their inability to run down the No. 71 Alex Job Porsche.
- "Running double-stints from the beginning has really taken its toll," he said. "We've been conserving fuel and preserving our gearbox, and hope we have something for the end. So far the (Alex Job) strategy really seems to be paying off."
- "I'm not thinking about next year," said Aston Martin's David Richards when asked about next year's plans. "Right now, I'm not thinking beyond 4pm today!" His full focus was on chasing down the Corvette.
- "Last time I looked, we were 45 seconds behind the (No. 64) Corvette and were closing at five seconds a lap."
- Fresh from a pit stop and five minutes before 13:00 hrs, the No. 58 Aston pressed hard to chase down the Corvette leaders. So hard, in fact, that Peter Kox ran the red-trimmed 58 Aston into and through the gravel runoffs at the Mulsanne corner.
- LMP1
No. 3 Champion Audi, Kristensen
No. 16 Pescarolo Judd, Boullion
No. 2 Champion Audi, McNish
- LMP2

- No. 37 Belmondo Courage Ford, Andre
- No. 25 RML Lola MG, Erdos
- No. 36 Belmondo Courage Ford, Gosselin
- GT1
 - No. 64 Corvette C6-R, Magnussen
 - No. 59 Aston Martin DBR9, Brabham
 - No. 58 Aston Martin DBR9, Kox
- GT2
 - No. 71 Alex Job Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Lieb
 - No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Bernhardt
 - No. 80 Flying Lizard Porsche 911 GT3 RSR, Pechnik
- **13:20**
- From the sweltering pits, No. 9 Team Jota-Zytek Engineering Zytek driver John Stack said, "I have immense respect for anyone who's completed this race before."
- Commenting on stubborn difficulties with the No. 30 Kruse Motorsport Courage Judd Ian Mitchell said, "The paddle shift isn't working, we have to use the manual shift. We've been having problems all race."
- From the No. 59 Aston Martin DBR9 pits, Brabham reported total exhaustion. His driving suit was soaking wet and he suffered a cramp in his right leg. "The temperature is incredible; the next few hours are going to be hard. It's now going to be a test for the drivers rather than for the cars. "It's a bit more than 30 degrees in the cockpit. My right leg just seized up so we had to come in." He feels like jumping in an ice cold swimming pool, but he'll have to wait because he'll be going out again."
- Meanwhile Corvette Program Manager Doug Fehan is keeping his cool eating ice cream. No. 64 Corvette driver Oliver Gavin was saying, "Looks like it's going down to the wire. We'll look to see what the boys next door at ProDrive have up their sleeves." According to Gavin, the Corvette team doesn't use cool suits, but in spite of that the Corvette drivers do not seem to be feeling the heat as much as some of their competitors.
- Checking in with No. 18 Rollcentre Dallara Judd driver Vanina Ickx completing her stint, it seems the power steering issues have never been resolved. "It was rather hard this morning, tough on the arms because of the power steering. The important thing is for the car to keep going and cross the finish line." The No 18 car dallied in the pits to receive a replacement part that a mechanic spotted was missing.
- **13:40**
- Kristensen is staying in the leading No. 3 Champion Audi after a pit stop of less than a minute. Will the six-time winner try to go the whole way?
- Boullion is picking up the pace again in the No. 16 Pescarolo Judd, running a

lap of 3:38.4. He is reeling in the leader by about four seconds a lap, but is there enough time from one lap down?

- No. 2 Champion Audi's Pirro: "We have to watch this battle for leadership. If everything runs Ok, Pescarolo has no chance. We were very unlucky with suspension, but if we finish third, I'm happy. We're all really exhausted with this heat."
- Max Papis waits in the cockpit of the leading No. 63 Corvette C6-R while they change the brake discs.
- Flying Lizard principal/driver Neiman said, "Lonnie (Pechnik) has been running strong all day, the whole race, in fact. He's shouldering a big burden. Everyone who's sitting here knows how hot it's been. Oh, I know we're in a fierce battle. We were pleasantly surprised to be invited to Le Mans and so far so good."
- The No. 18 Rollcentre Dallara Judd is still having work done on that front left wheel and has now fallen to 17th.
- Running only eight seconds behind Kurosawa in the No. 9 Team Jota-Zytek Engineering Zytek , Magnussen brought the No. 64 Corvette C6-R in for Gavin to take over.
- Half way through the hour, the gap between leader Kristensen in the No. 3 Champion Audi and Boullion in the No. 16 Pescarolo Judd was only 3 minutes and 30 seconds. And still coming down.
- Aston suffered another puncture or blowout. This time it was the No. 58 car before the first chicane on the Mulsanne straight. Then the tyre came off, but the car was able to make it around to the pits.
- J. Bergmeister of the No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche running second in GT2 said, "The No. 71 Alex Job Porsche is running really well. They're a bit faster than us, so I can't see how we can win class if nothing goes wrong for them."
- As of 13:39, of the 14 starters in GT2, eight of them Porsche 911, only eight are left. Seven of them were Porsches. The only Porsche retirement was No. 91 T2M Motorsport Porsche 911 GT3 RS , which crashed.
- **14:00**
- At the top of the 22nd hour things were heating up – both inside the cars and out.
- Meanwhile, the 16 Pescarolo in 2nd place gained three seconds on the leader No. 3 Champion Audi, closing the gap to 3 minutes, 20 seconds, and lapped the number 4 Audi again. Boullion had to halt his charge for fuel, windscreen wiper and airduct cleaning (and a drink of water for the driver!) but was off and running again in less than a minute.
- Another gap rapidly closing was that between the No. 59 Aston and the car it was chasing, the No. 64 Corvette, which was lapped again by Boullion's 2nd

place Pescarolo. The No. 59 Aston was 58 seconds behind the leading No. 64 Corvette when it made its next pit stop. Sarrazin remained at the helm.

- At the end of the 22nd hour, the standings were as follows:
- **LMP1**
 - No. 3 Champion Audi – Kristensen
 - No. 16 Pescarolo Judd – Boullion
 - No. 2 Champion Audi – McNish
- **LMP2**
 - No. 37 Belmondo Courage Ford – Sutherland
 - No. 25 RML Lola MG – Sutherland
 - No. 36 Belmondo Courage Ford – Ojje
- **GT1**
 - No. 64 Corvette C6-R –
 - No. 59 Aston Martin DBR9 – Sarrazin
 - No. 58 Aston Martin DBR9 – Enge
- **GT2**
 - No. 71 Alex Job Porsche 911 GT3 RSR – Rockenfeller
 - No. 90 White Lightning Racing Porsche 911 GT3 RSR – Bergmeister
 - No. 80 Flying Lizard Porsche 911 GT3 RSR – van Overbeek

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