

2008 Petit Le Mans
Source: Team Race Reports
Photos Courtesy American Le Mans Series



Audi Motorsports Report

With an impressive success at Road Atlanta (U.S. state of Georgia) Audi continued its winning streak at the prestigious 1000-mile race "Petit Le Mans". In front of a record crowd of 113,000 spectators, Dindo Capello, Allan McNish and Emanuele Pirro achieved Audi's ninth consecutive victory. Audi thus remains unbeaten at "Petit Le Mans".

Team Audi Sport North America won at Road Atlanta for a third time in a row with the Audi R10 TDI. After the hat-trick in the Le Mans 24 Hours, Audi thus also achieved a hat-trick with the revolutionary diesel-powered sportscar in the "small brother" of the French Endurance classic. After almost ten hours, the winning Audi R10 TDI beat the second placed Peugeot 908 by 4.512 seconds. Lucas Luhr and Marco Werner completed the Audi triumph with third place.

The winning drive of Dindo Capello, Allan McNish and Emanuele Pirro will go down in the history books as one of the most important Endurance races in the U.S. alongside the Sebring 12 Hours. Allan McNish lost

control of the Audi R10 TDI on cold tires on his way to the starting grid spinning into the wall. It was a huge effort by Team Audi Sport North America to rebuild the badly damaged car in just over an hour.

Allan McNish had to start the race two laps down. Consistently fast lap times, a good strategy and perfect pit-stops allowed the number 1 Audi R10 TDI to come back onto the lead-lap. A tire problem and coolers covered by tire pick-up, however, later cost another lap.

Using the total of eleven caution periods in the best possible way, the team was again able to recover the lost lap. Finally it was decisive that Allan McNish changed the tires once more at the last refueling stop. On the fresher tires he was first able to pass his team-mate Marco Werner. On lap 364 of 394 he then was able to out brake the leading Peugeot. The Peugeot tried to fight back but McNish kept the lead in a 300-kph wheel-to-wheel battle.

McNish crossed the finish line as the winner of one of the most exciting "Petit Le Mans" races with a 4.512-second margin. Marco Werner put pressure on Christian Klien in the Peugeot in the final laps but could not pass him. In the end the number 2 Audi R10 TDI missed second place by just 3.053 seconds.

The lead changed a total of 29 times in the turbulent race. Lucas Luhr and Marco Werner led 135 of 394 laps and were able to open a gap of over half a minute. The caution periods, however, worked against them.

Audi had already clinched the LM P1 Drivers', Manufacturers' and Teams' Championship of the American Le Mans Series prior the "Petit Le Mans" race. The finale will take place at Laguna Seca (U.S. state of California) on 18 October.

Quotes after the race at Road Atlanta

Dr Wolfgang Ullrich (Head of Audi Motorsport): "This year, we have won the Le Mans 24 Hours, the American Le Mans Series, the Le Mans Series and now also 'Petit Le Mans' with the Audi R10 TDI. You can hardly demonstrate 'Vorsprung durch Technik' in a more impressive way. Yet again we showed how good Audi TDI Power is. Peugeot was strong, but we were even stronger. If you start with a two-lap deficit and still win, this is no coincidence. The whole squad did a great job after the accident in the morning. We are proud that we were able to continue our 'Petit Le Mans' winning streak."

Dindo Capello (Audi R10 TDI #1): "In some stints we had really big issues with the car. We just had to forget this and the accident before the race to enjoy the result. It was great racing and a great team effort. Three Petit Le Mans victories in a row for Allan (McNish) and me is a great record. I raced here six times and won five times. What more can I ask? It was a great drive from Allan at the end and a great strategy of the team. And I'm very happy having achieved a second victory together with an Italian after winning with Michele Alboreto in 2000."

Allan McNish (Audi R10 TDI #1): "I'm very proud of everybody within the team. Rebuilding the car after the crash on the warm-up lap into perfect condition for Emanuele (Pirro), Dindo (Capello) and I to drive it back to the front made this race very special. Dindo and I have won here four times together. This has been definitely the hardest victory, but also the sweetest."

Emanuele Pirro (Audi R10 TDI #1): "If you make a thrilling film script you cannot make it so exciting. After a terrible morning it's been a fantastic race, especially thanks to Allan (McNish) who drove a fantastic last stint. We had some good luck and a very good strategy early on to catch back the two laps. We had some concern with the car halfway through the race. But later everything was okay. I cannot be more happy. It's been just fantastic. It's been a pleasure to drive with Dindo (Capello) and Allan."

Lucas Luhr (Audi R10 TDI #2): "Of course an Audi 1-2 victory would have been even better. Unfortunately Marco (Werner) had no chance against Allan (McNish) and the Peugeot on used tires in the end. Allan drove really superbly. I'm happy with my performance. We finished third and had a good car but you need also some luck in such a long race. We did not quite have this today."

Marco Werner (Audi R10 TDI #2): "Of course it's a bit disappointing for me and Lucas (Luhr). We did a good job during the race and have been in the lead for a long time. The caution periods do not always help you. In the end I was on used tires while Allan (McNish) and Peugeot had new tires. I could do nothing against them. But it's great that Audi has won the race. It was a top job from the whole team."

Dave Maraj (Team Director Audi Sport North America): "I'm absolutely delighted. This is an enormous win for Audi, an enormous win for Allan (McNish) and an enormous win for the team. The team fixed the car after the crash in the morning. We were two and a half laps behind and still able to pass the 'unbeatable' Peugeot in the night."

The results at Road Atlanta

- 1 Capello/McNish/Pirro (Audi R10 TDI) 394 laps in 9h 41m 17.825s
- 2 Minassian/Sarrazin/Klien (Peugeot) + 4.512s
- 3 Luhr/Werner (Audi R10 TDI) + 7.565s
- 4 Castroneves/Briscoe (Porsche) + 42.672s
- 5 Dumas/Bernhard (Porsche) + 1m 04.350s
- 6 Maassen/Long/Collard (Porsche) - 2 laps
- 7 Franchitti/Leitzinger/Lally (Porsche) - 3 laps
- 8 de Ferran/Pagenaud/Dixon (Acura/Honda) - 6 laps
- 9 Smith/Dyson (Porsche) - 10 laps
- 10 O'Connell/Magnussen/Fellows (Chevrolet) - 29 laps

Dyson Racing Team Report

Thirty seven cars, 1,000 miles, and 9,893 passes: a guaranteed recipe for race-ending accidents. And today's eleventh running of the Petit Le Mans proved this true with eleven caution periods, including three in the last hour. Through it all, Dyson Racing showcased their endurance fortitude, finishing fourth and sixth in LMP2. The #20 Porsche RS Spyder finished fourth, running the nine hours and forty-two minute race without a single incident followed by the #16 car in sixth place. But for being hit from behind, it too would have had an unimpeded run to the finish.

Summing up the race, Marino Franchitti, driver of the #20 along with Andy Lally and Butch Leitzinger, said that the "car was really great, there was not a mark on it at the end, the pit stops were fantastic and we had good strategy. To successfully finish a race like this with the car in one piece is a good accomplishment."

"The chassis was good all week," confirmed Chris Dyson, driver of the #16 Thetford/Norcold entry with Guy Smith. "We had the measure of almost everybody and with a little more top-end speed, we would have had the complete package. The Michelin tires were absolutely fantastic all week and the durability throughout the double stints was exceptional."

Rob Dyson gave full credit to the crew. "I am very proud of our guys for persevering," he said. "The team really pulled together this week and the atmosphere within the team was the best it has been all year. We are looking forward to ending this year on a strong note at Laguna Seca."

Five manufactures led during the course of the race. There were twenty-nine lead changes among the hundred and one driver field, which included four Indy 500 winners and five former champions from IndyCar or CART. It was a landmark race for the American Le Mans Series and Dyson Racing congratulates the ALMS for such a notable event and the successful inauguration of their Green Challenge.

After eight months of racing, the ALMS season finishes with a westward swing for the final race of the season at Laguna Seca in Monterey, CA on October 18th.

Tafel Racing Team Report

Tafel Racing used its "home town" event, the Petit Le Mans, to place both its American Le Mans Series GT2 entries in the top seven tonight at Road Atlanta. The Cumming, Ga.-based operation finished third with the No. 71 Tafel/Bell Micro Racing Ferrari F430 GTC of Dominik Farnbacher (Ansbach, Germany) and Dirk Müller (a native of Germany living in Monaco). Alex Figge (Denver), Jim Tafel (Alpharetta, Ga.) and Pierre Ehret (Santa Rosa, Calif./Germany) earned seventh in the 11th Annual 1,000 mile event on the 2.54-mile, 12- turn road course sharing the No. 73 Tafel Racing Ferrari F430 GTC. The tenth event of the season, the third endurance race, locked second-place in the 2008 GT2 Driver and Team Championship for the Tafel/Bell Micro Racing Team with one race remaining.

No. 71 Tafel/Bell Micro Racing Ferrari F430 GTC

Drivers: Dominik Farnbacher (Ansbach, Germany), Dirk Müller (a native of Germany now living in Monaco)

The No. 71 Tafel/Bell Micro Ferrari earned its sixth podium finish of the season with a consistent run in today's Petit Le Mans. Müller started the caution- plagued race third and the Bell Micro entry raced as high as second with Farnbacher behind the wheel. However, the No. 71 would fall two laps behind the class leaders when anticipated "wave bys" - a method that the organizers use to have the safety car pace the overall race leader after the safety car's intervention at any point during the race - failed to come disrupting the team's pit strategy. One of the laps would be made-up through strong driving and pit strategy. However, the team would lose another lap on its last stop when it pitted one lap too early. Once down two laps, Technical Director Tony Dowe (Cumming, Ga.) chose to run a fuel conservation race to allow Müller to take the checkered flag with no additional pit stops.

Tonight's third-place adds to the three GT2 class victories the team has scored thus far in 2008 (St. Petersburg, Fla., Long Beach, Calif. and at Lexington, Ohio). Today's podium added to the Petit Le Mans podium finishes for the team, which finished second in 2007 in it's only other start here. Farnbacher grabbed his second consecutive top-three at Road Atlanta having raced for Tafel to second last year. Müller adds a fourth-career podium in the Petit Le Mans in five attempts, including a 1999 GT2 class victory.

No. 73 Tafel Racing Ferrari F430 GTC

Drivers: Alex Figge (Denver, Col.), Jim Tafel (Alpharetta, Ga.), Pierre Ehret (Santa Rosa, Calif./Germany)

Figge, Tafel and Ehret joined together to earn the No. 73 Tafel Racing Ferrari F430 GTC its seventh top ten finish in eight races this season. The successful result was in doubt in the fourth hour when Jim Tafel was pushed wide over the curbing coming onto the fast front straight. He spun backwards across the track making slight rear contact with the inside wall. The impact pushed the bumper into the tires and required a quick removal of the bumper by the team to get the car back on track. From there, the 73 team played their strategy cautiously gaining positions as others fell out of the 1,000 mile event. Despite two additional stops to clean accumulating tire rubber in the left-front brake caliper, Figge, who started the car from 11th position, crossed under the checkered flag 20th overall, seventh in class. It was the second top seven for Ehret in the No. 73 having joined with Tafel to take fourth at the season-opening 12 Hours of Sebring.

Quotes

Tony Dowe, Technical Director: "In the big scheme of things I guess we need to be happy with a third place. But, unfortunately, we didn't get wave bys when others did which cost us two laps. We worked very hard and got one lap back. Then I made a poor call trying to make something out of the last yellow to improve our position and it went against us. After that we decided to cruise. We were nine or ten laps ahead of the next place car so we went to a fuel save map and come home third."

Dominik Farnbacher, Driver, No. 71: "Our race was pretty good. Dirk did a great job. He drove awesome stints. We had bad luck with our pit stops and that is why we lost two laps. After all this bad luck we had this year I think it is time to challenge for the championship next year. At Laguna we will still do our best and of course we will try and win that race."

Dirk Müller, Driver, No. 71: "My congratulations to Porsche, the [Flying] Lizards, Wolf Henzler and Jörg Bergmeister for the championship. I am not very happy with third place. There were many things that went wrong today. We had the car, the combination. Dom did an awesome job. The car was good to win the race but we finished third. For sure I am disappointed."

Alex Figge, Driver, No. 73: "We were still running at the end and that was our goal for the weekend. We ended-up with a top ten and we earned some points towards Jim's Founder Cup championship. I am happy

with it. Our quick lap was good and that was with the car straight off the truck. Dave [Fullerton, engineer] didn't even get a chance do anything because of the mechanical problems we had all weekend. This result speaks to the team. I am just glad to bring it home in only a couple of pieces but still running. It was my first time doing this race and it was a blast. This race is definitely a big deal. I was happy to be driving at the end with the fireworks and everything. That was cool."

Jim Tafel, Driver, No. 73: "We were on the back foot this whole week. I am really glad to see the car finish the race. That was our main goal. I had an incident with the Audi in Turn 12 and I was pretty lucky to get away with just what happened. A top ten finish with seventh in the 73 and a podium for the 71; I am pleased with that."

Tafel Racing will now close the 11-race season at the Monterey Sports Car Challenge season-finale at Raceway Laguna Seca on October 18.

Ginetta-Zytek Team Report

Ginetta-Zytek brought its new 4.5-litre engined LMP1 contender to the USA this week to demonstrate its undoubted pace. At the 1,000-mile Petit Le Mans race it proved not only its speed, particular in the early stages when Danny Watts headed the field of top endurance racers but also its reliability. In a race of attrition it was one of the few LMP1 survivors, having experienced no significant technical issues.

Changes to endurance racing regulations recently announced by Le Mans organiser, L'Automobile Club de l'Ouest will have no significant effect on the specification of the LMP1 Ginetta-Zytek. Therefore, this positive performance indicates that the 07S should prove to be one of the strongest contenders in 2009. Changes to its aerodynamics following some intensive wind tunnel work will further enhance the car that has showed so well at Road Atlanta.

Various problems that arose for the team during the Petit Le Mans race meant that the second half of the race failed to live up to the promise of the first. A significant amount of time was spent behind the wall as accident damage was repaired. Although Danny and Olivier Pla pulled the car back up to fourth in the LMP1 class and 14th overall, it was a scant reward for their tremendous efforts in the opening laps.

"The car showed well very early on. It was very comfortable maintaining its pace at the head of the field," observes Zytek Engineering managing director Trevor Foster. "However, following an incident with a GT car, after which we lost touch with the leaders, it became simply a matter of running to the end of the race. Our main target had become putting mileage on the new 4.5-litre engine."

Trevor pays tribute to the three organisations that gelled brilliantly during the week, entrant Team LNT, his engineers from Zytek Engineering and US Indy Car operation, Conquest Racing that helped run the car during its foray to the USA.



Porsche Motorsports Race Report

PENSKE RACING, FLYING LIZARD MOTORSPORTS CLINCH 2008 AMERICAN LE MANS SERIES CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR PORSCHE; RS SPYDERS SWEEP LMP2 PODIUM AT PETIT LE MANS

Bernhard/Dumas Wrap up LMP2 Drivers title; Bergmeister/Henzler win GT2 crown

The Porsche RS Spyder/Acura prototype pilots battle in LMP2 and the rivalry between the Porsche 911 GT3 RSR and the Ferrari 430 drivers in GT2 – a season-long affair – ended happily for the German sports car manufacturer as Penske Racing and Flying Lizard Motorsports drivers took their Porsches to year-end American Le Mans Series championships at the 11th running of Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta.

The Penske Racing Porsche RS Spyder driven by Timo Bernhard (Germany) and Romain Dumas (France) wrapped up their second straight LMP2 drivers championship by finishing second in the 1000-mile event. They finished behind teammates Ryan Briscoe (Australia) and Helio Castroneves (Brazil), who drove their Penske Porsche RS Spyder to the LMP2 victory, and finished fourth overall. Completing the sweep of the LMP2 podium was the third Penske Porsche RS Spyder, driven by Patrick Long (USA), Sascha Maassen (Germany) and Emmanuel Collard (France). In fact, Porsche RS Spyderys took five of the top six places in LMP2 with Butch Leitzinger/Andy Lally (both USA) and Marino Franchitti (Scotland) fourth in their Dyson Racing Porsche, and Guy Smith (England)/Chris Dyson (USA) Dyson Racing Porsche sixth.

In GT2, the year-long battle between the Flying Lizard Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 RSR of Joerg Bergmeister/Wolf Henzler (both Germany) and the Tafel Racing Ferrari 430 of Dirk Mueller/Dominik Farnbacher (also both Germany) ended in favor of the Lizards at Petit Le Mans. Bergmeister and Henzler, along with help from fellow Porsche factory driver Marc Lieb (Germany), finished second in class, three laps ahead of the Ferrari, to earn Flying Lizards their first ALMS title. The Porsche drivers now have 181 points, while the Ferrari pair have scored 150. The final event at Laguna Seca in Monterey has 25 points available to win.

Both Penske Racing and Flying Lizard Motorsports clinched their respective class team championships as well, while Porsche is in the drivers seat for both manufacturers titles. Earlier in the weekend, Porsche won its second straight SCCA SPEED World Challenge title as Randy Pobst (USA) drove his K-PAX/3R Racing Team Porsche 911 GT3 Cup earned a repeat championship. Porsche had clinched the manufacturer's championship the week before over Cadillac, Corvette, Viper, and Aston Martin. "This championship was even more special than last year because Acura provided such stiff competition," said Bernhard, who has won drivers titles in both LMP2 and GT2 with Porsche.

"Acura came to the series this year with the full resources of the Honda factory, and pressed us to the limit, but Penske Racing and Porsche Motorsport responded with improved performance, a new direct injection 3.4-liter V8 engine, perfect car preparation and strategy, and teamwork that makes a champion," said Bernhard. Briscoe and Castroneves, who are Penske Racing's regular IndyCar drivers, piloted a third RS spyder this weekend to help Porsche in its battle against Acura, and the move paid off as the duo won the LMP2 class.

Castroneves, a two-time winner of the Indianapolis 500, said, while he and Ryan were "visitors" to the RS Spyder team this weekend, they felt like major contributors to the effort. "Remember, I drove the RS Spyder in 2006, and have tested it several times, and Ryan was a regular on the team last year, so we fit right in. The race against the Acuras was tough, but our car was well-prepared and we were able to maintain a lead until the Andretti/Kanaan/Montagny Acura crashed late in the event, assuring us the win," he said.

While Joerg Bergmeister (Grand-Am DP champion, multi-time ALMS GT2 champion, and Porsche Supercup titleholder) and Wolf Henzler (multi-time Porsche Supercup champion) are used to winning races and championships, they agreed that this one was special. "This Flying Lizard team really works hard, and we are proud to help them earn their first championship. Preparing three cars is a difficult task, but everyone from all three crews contributed to this season's successes. And we wanted to give special thanks to Porsche Motorsport for their work over the winter that resulted in a greatly-improved race car that helped us beat the Ferraris," said Bergmeister. "With the team have to rebuild both the #44 and #46 cars at the track overnight after practice crashes, they still spent the time and expertise to prepare our #45 Porsche so we could run perfectly for a ten-hour event. I've never been on a team with such dedication," said Henzler.

Other Porsche GT2 results included the Lonnie Pechnik/Seth Neiman/Darren Law Flying Lizard Porsche (sixth); the Patrick Pilet/Johannes van Overbeek Flying Lizard Porsche (eighth after a late-race crash); the Marc Basseng/Nick Pastorelli/Francesco Pastorelli Vici Porsche (10th – also after a crash); and the Dirk

Werner/Bryce Miller/Joerg Hardt Farnbacher Loles Racing Porsche (14th after a broken wheel hub). Complete results and points are available at www.americanlemans.com

Farnbacher-Loles Racing Report

Submitted By Sylvia Proudfoot

Farnbacher Loles Racing enjoyed a strong five-hour run in the Petit Le Mans race on Saturday evening, but didn't see the checkered flag. The team's three drivers all led the American Le Mans Series GT2 class during the early hours of the 10-hour event, but a hit from a prototype car eventually took the No. 87 Porsche 911 GT3 RSR out of the race.

Dirk Werner of Kissenbrück, Germany, started from second on the GT2 grid and took the class lead after 75 minutes. Bryce Miller of Summit, N.J., and Jörg Hardt of Bonn, Germany, followed, both holding the lead.

Just before the four-hour mark, Hardt was hit by a prototype car, forcing an early pitstop and dropping him back to third. He quickly regained second, but was back in pit lane less than an hour later with a flat left-front tire. Werner took over, returning to the track sixth in class, three laps behind the GT2 leader.

He regained two positions, despite a recurring left-front tire problem that indicated the car's alignment or suspension were damaged by the prototype hit. Hardt drove the final stint for the team. He was running fifth in class when the left-rear wheel hub broke, taking him out of the race.

Jörg Hardt: "I'm really unhappy. The first problem was when I drove, the contact with the LMP [Le Mans prototype]. Second, with the flat tire, I was also in the car. And the third and last time was also me, so I'm not the luckiest man on the team. On the last one, I went into turn one and when I started to brake, the left rear broke. In the middle of the corner, it snapped. I can't find the right words for this. At the beginning of the race, we were leading or in second place, then it went [bad]."

Bryce Miller: "It's really an unfortunate result because the team worked so hard. They put so many hours in this week and I think everyone is just emotionally exhausted at the moment. Everything was going so well in the beginning – it showed that the car was capable of a podium, if not a win. It is difficult for everyone involved because we know the car was capable of a really good result."

Dirk Werner: "In the beginning, the race went very well for us and all of us led the race for most of our stints. Then a prototype hit our car. Obviously, the car got hurt too much and we had to end our race before we got to the finish. It's very sad – the car was good for a win today. Again, the team didn't get the payoff it deserved for a lot of work and putting together a very good car. I think all bad luck has an end, so hopefully at the next race, it will happen."

ACURA Motorsports Race Report

Submitted By Tom Blattler

Acura's battle for the 2008 American Le Mans Series LMP2 class titles in the Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta ended Saturday in a mass of crash damage after the 1,000-mile endurance classic.

Ready to challenge the three-car assault of Roger Penske's Porsches, the four Acura teams prepared for a flat-out 10-hour challenge on the tight 2.54-mile, 12-turn road circuit northeast of Atlanta.

However, at the conclusion, Gil de Ferran, Scott Dixon and Simon Pagenaud brought home the only Acura to finish when the No. 66 Panasonic ELS de Ferran Motorsports Acura ARX-01b prototype placed fifth in the LMP2 division at the checkered flag.

A series of incidents eliminated the No. 9 Patrón Highcroft Acura ARX-01b of Scott Sharp, David Brabham and Dario Franchitti in the first hour; the No. 15 Lowe's Fernandez Acura ARX-01b of Adrian Fernandez, Luis Diaz and Michel Jourdain Jr. at the halfway point; and Acura's strongest effort, the No. 26 XM Satellite Radio Andretti Green Acura ARX-01b of Franck Montagny, Tony Kanaan and Marco Andretti, in the final hour of competition. After an impressive 1-2-3 finish last month at Detroit, Acura's chance for the LMP2 manufacturers' title took a major hit Saturday. Acura had entered the Petit Le Mans with a four-point lead, but now, with the final round set for Laguna Seca on Oct. 18, Acura trails Porsche by eight points. The Penske Porsche of Ryan Briscoe and Helio Castroneves captured the Saturday's prestigious ALMS event.

The XM Acura, with Montagny, the Detroit winner, at the controls, looked to be in a position to win the LMP2 class. However, Georges Forgeois spun his Lola entering Turn 12, causing a massive crash that took out Montagny and Patrick Pilet. Montagny had charged from fourth to second and led briefly before his final pit stop.

The day started poorly for the Patrón Highcroft team, battling for the team point title, when Sharp's Acura hit the inside wall in Turn 11. The damage was too extensive to continue.

The Lowe's Acura ran consistently in the top five for six hours, but Diaz's mount was hit by a lapped GT car in Turn 3. The collision knocked the Lowe's car into the retaining wall and its rear suspension was damaged.

The de Ferran contingent battled through some loose body work, ignition problems and an early spin to finish its first 10-hour event. The Indianapolis-based team entered the ALMS campaign at mid-season in Utah. De Ferran ran the first three hours and 20 minutes, his longest driving stint since his winning the Indy 500 in 2003. The two-time CART champion fought an ill-handling car in the first two hours before handing the Acura over to the current Indy 500 and IndyCar Series champion Dixon. Dixon drove over three hours, as did Pagenaud, to score Acura's top-five finish.

ACURA QUOTES:

FRANCK MONTAGNY (#26 XM Satellite Radio Acura ARX-01b): "One car spun to the right, another spun to the left, I tried to go between the two to avoid contact but a piece of debris hit my car and that was it. It broke the front suspension and there was nothing for me to do. It is just unfortunate because we had a chance to be there challenging for the LMP2 win at the end. The XM Radio Acura crew did a great job all weekend. They worked hard yesterday to repair the car for qualifying after the morning incident and gave Tony [Kanaan], Marco [Andretti] and me a great car for the race."

TONY KANAAN (#26 XM Satellite Radio Acura ARX-01b): "It is not easy out there. The hours in the gym are paying off here. I had a lot of fun out there, but it is a tough race. When we started the race, I thought to myself, 'is this 20-lap race or a 10-hour race?' It was a good battle with the Porsches. They are a little bit quicker in the straights, but we are better in the corners. Right now, we have to take advantage in traffic and use our strategy for the end. I think we have something for them later. The Porsches have to change tires every stop and we don't. So we'll make up time on our stops."

MARCO ANDRETTI (#26 XM Satellite Radio Acura ARX-01b): "It was unfortunate. The XM Radio Acura was really good. We definitely had the best strategist behind us to put us in a really great position at the end. We had the car to win. It's a bummer."

DAVID BRABHAM (#9 Patrón Highcroft Racing Acura ARX-01b): "It's a real shame to end the race this way after the guys did such a tremendous job to repair the car and get it back into such good shape. Scott was doing great and everything was looking promising. Naturally everyone is gutted, but now we will just focus on repairing the car and coming back stronger to hopefully win at Laguna Seca in the final race of the season."

SCOTT SHARP (#9 Patrón Highcroft Racing Acura ARX-01b): "The Patrón Highcroft Acura was running great. I was taking it easy and trying to get through the traffic but making good progress. I got through Turn 10A and then got on the throttle. It's not a tough corner, but the car started to go into a lazy spin then it began to slide and I couldn't help but hit the inside wall. It was like something broke or a tire went down, it was a very odd feeling and very strange. It is a tough day for our Patrón Highcroft team. They worked so hard to get the car back together on Thursday after an early crash and now this incident."

DARIO FRANCHITTI (#9 Patrón Highcroft Racing Acura ARX-01b): "It is too bad that our race ended so early. I was looking forward to driving the Patrón Highcroft Acura so much. It was great to be back in the American Le Mans Series. It would have been fun to race against my brother, [Porsche driver] Marino, for the first time. But we didn't get the chance for that today."

SIMON PAGENAUD (#66 Panasonic ELS Surround Acura ARX-01b): "It was fun to drive with Scott [Dixon]. He brought a lot to the team. I enjoyed racing at night. Our last set of tires were very good and the car was working well. I had a couple of close calls. In one of them, I just missed one of the crashes. I had stuff in my helmet. I actually thought I blew a tire when I drove through a lot of debris. But, overall, this was a good race for the whole team. It was our first endurance race and we learned a lot from it. It was a good learning experience for Sebring and next year."

GIL de FERRAN (#66 Panasonic ELS Surround Acura ARX-01b): "We had a very difficult first stint. We had two issues. We started the race with not quite enough downforce and the car was very, very difficult to

drive early in the race. We also sustained some damage, which really affected the balance a lot. I had a lot of oversteer on the car and eventually that caused me to spin. We lost two laps on that incident which is unfortunate. We repaired the car, changed the back end, fixed the damage, and put some more downforce on the car and it was handling pretty well after that. It was not looking too bad. It's a shame that we lost a couple of laps."

SCOTT DIXON (#66 Panasonic ELS Surround Acura ARX-01b): "It was a blast for me. I had a great time with the team and Gil and Simon. The Acura is a tremendous car to drive. I hope they will have me back again, maybe Sebring. I have won at Indy and Daytona [24 Hours], so I would like to win at Sebring, too. Not many people have won all three. We had a little trouble with the ignition in the pits. But after that, the car ran great. I want to thank Gil for the chance to race with the de Ferran team. It was a fun time."

ADRIAN FERNANDEZ (#15 Lowe's Fernandez Acura ARX-01b): "The incident that Luis [Diaz] had with the backmarker was unfortunate. Traffic has been very, very difficult. We were hoping that the car would be its best at night because the three of us were really struggling to stay on top of the car and we barely managed to stay on the lead lap. This track has caught out a lot of people and caused a lot of damage. It is not an easy place. I have always said that dealing with traffic is the hardest part about racing in this series. Once in awhile, it will bite you and it bit us today. It has been a tough year for us and we have to come on top of it for next year because there is just one more race."

LUIS DIAZ (#15 Lowe's Fernandez Acura ARX-01b): "It was a very bad day for me. I feel bad for all of the guys that worked hard to give us a competitive car today. I got together with a Ferrari. I made passes there before and nothing happened and it seemed to be very bad timing this time. I feel bad and I hope we have a better race in Laguna."

MICHEL JOURDAIN JR. (#15 Lowe's Fernandez Acura ARX-01b): "The incident was unfortunate and it could have happened to any of us. This is the toughest track I have ever driven in my life for traffic. On my stint, I was a little bit too conservative at the beginning in traffic and I lost some time. From there, I felt like I was staying with those guys but then I started losing them. I wish we could have had the first win but we didn't have the speed today like Adrian said and that makes it even harder in traffic. I really hope that the team does well in a couple of weeks in Laguna. For sure, I feel like I am much better prepared for Sebring next year after running this race."

