



WESTBROOK SECOND ON ALMS DEBUT

British Porsche star Richard Westbrook made a dream start to his programme of American Le Mans Series races by taking second place at Lime Rock in Connecticut.

On his first visit to the fast, short circuit two hours' drive from New York, Westbrook led the race in the Farnbacher Loles Porsche 997 GT3-RSR, and felt that he and team-mate Dirk Werner had the potential to claim the team's first win of the 2008 campaign.

"We were the fastest Porsche by a long way in practice and felt we had a really good advantage," said Richard. "We were coping with the new track surface better than anyone else – which was proved in qualifying when Dirk got pole position for us."

Practice had been incident-packed, so the team gambled by fitting a soft compound of tyres for qualifying. ALMS rules state that each car has to start the race on the tyres on which it qualified. With the team expecting many

incidents early on, and for resulting safety-car periods, the softer tyre would give greater speed and not fade as quickly as they would under non-stop racing conditions.

"The tyres were amazing for the first three laps," said Westbrook, who drove the opening stint. "But it was a hundred degrees in the old money, and they were totally gone after that. I led for half an hour, but there was nothing left in the tyres. I just had to do as long a stint as I could, but eventually I was losing two seconds a lap and the team had to bring me in under green-flag conditions and we lost a lap.

"Dirk went out on harder tyres, and of course from that point on, after there'd been no safety car at all in my stint, there were loads!"

Werner brought the car home in second place, beating the team's previous best finish of the year on Westbrook's debut. "It's given us a lot of confidence going into the race at Mid-Ohio this coming weekend. It was a great result were all really proud with second, even

if we felt we had the pace to win. There were a lot of smiles after the race."

