

**TOYOTA GAZOO RACING SET QUALIFYING PACE AT HOME**

Saturday 15 October 2016

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing recorded the fastest lap in qualifying at the 6 Hours of Fuji on the way to third and fourth on the grid for the seventh round of the 2016 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC).

Anthony Davidson, Sébastien Buemi and Kazuki Nakajima in the #5 will be the lead TS050 HYBRID on the grid for Sunday's race after recording an average time just 0.169secs away from the pole position-winning #8 Audi.

The #6 TS050 HYBRID set the fastest lap of the whole session but, with grid positions decided by the average of two drivers' fastest laps, Stéphane Sarrazin, Mike Conway and Kamui Kobayashi will start alongside the sister car on row two.

In what turned out to be TOYOTA's strongest qualifying of the season so far, Kazuki in the #5 and Stéphane in the #6 were at the wheel for the start. Both recorded two flying laps to put their cars in contention for pole position.

Sébastien and Kamui took their turn, putting on new Michelin tyres in the process as the fight for top spot intensified at the team's home circuit.

Kamui set the fastest lap of the session with his only flying lap before handing over again to Stéphane. With track conditions improving, the team hoped to improve that car's average time and earn pole.

It was not to be for either TS050 HYBRID, with Sébastien's two flying laps falling just short of the best average while Stéphane did not improve his best time. Nevertheless, TOYOTA's best qualifying since Le Mans gives reason to be optimistic for a strong performance in the race.

**TS050 HYBRID #5** (Anthony Davidson, Sébastien Buemi, Kazuki Nakajima)

Free practice 3: 1st (1min 24.078secs). 33 laps

Qualifying: 3rd (1min 23.739secs average)

**Sébastien Buemi:** "That was the best qualifying of the season for us; we have never been so close to pole position with this car so I am really happy. We are within two tenths of pole which shows the progress we made. Now hopefully we can have a really competitive race tomorrow."

**Kazuki Nakajima:** "It was a surprisingly exciting qualifying for us and it is the first time for a while that we could really fight for pole position. It was fun and I am happy with the result, which is more than we expected. We still want to improve the set-up for the race when I hope we can reward the Japanese fans for their great support."

**TS050 HYBRID #6** (Stéphane Sarrazin, Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi)

Free practice 3: 4th (1min 24.895secs). 33 laps

Qualifying: 4th (1min 23.781secs average)

**Stéphane Sarrazin:** "It was nice to be competitive. I made a mistake on my last flying lap; I pushed a bit too much. I was really quick in the first sector and improving the lap time but unfortunately I didn't finish the lap properly. We are happy with fourth when we are so close to pole. Let's see what we can do in the race."

**Kamui Kobayashi:** "This morning we were struggling a bit with the set-up but the team did a great job to get the best time in qualifying. Unfortunately it was not quite

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enough for pole position but I think fourth is okay because usually we are stronger in the race, which is of course the most important part of the weekend.”

**Free practice 3 results:**

<b>1st</b>	<b>#5 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>	<b>1min 24.078secs</b>	<b>33 laps</b>
2nd	#8 Audi (di Grassi/Duval/Jarvis)	+0.422secs	34 laps
3rd	#2 Porsche (Dumas/Jani/Lieb)	+0.480secs	27 laps
<b>4th</b>	<b>#6 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>	<b>+0.817secs</b>	<b>33 laps</b>
5th	#7 Audi (Fässler/Lotterer/Tréluyer)	+1.235secs	37 laps
6th	#1 Porsche (Bernhard/Webber/Hartley)	+1.545secs	30 laps

**Qualifying results:**

1st	#8 Audi (di Grassi/Duval/Jarvis)	1min 23.570secs
2nd	#1 Porsche (Bernhard/Webber/Hartley)	+0.025secs
<b>3rd</b>	<b>#5 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>	<b>+0.169secs</b>
<b>4th</b>	<b>#6 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>	<b>+0.211secs</b>
5th	#7 Audi (Fässler/Lotterer/Tréluyer)	+0.286secs
6th	#2 Porsche (Dumas/Jani/Lieb)	+0.564secs

A German translation of this press release is available on [www.toyotahybridracing.com](http://www.toyotahybridracing.com). High-resolution copyright-free photos are available for editorial use at [www.toyota-motorsport-photos.com](http://www.toyota-motorsport-photos.com).

**About TOYOTA GAZOO Racing in the World Endurance Championship:**

TOYOTA first competed in the World Endurance Championship (WEC) in 1983, marking the start of a long period of participation in endurance racing. Since 1985, TOYOTA cars have raced in 18 Le Mans 24 Hours races, achieving a best result of second place on five occasions. TOYOTA entered the revived WEC in 2012, combining the expertise from TOYOTA Higashi-Fuji Technical Centre, where the hybrid powertrain is developed, with TOYOTA Motorsport GmbH's support and facilities for chassis development. The multi-national team is based in Cologne, Germany and includes engineers from TOYOTA's motorsport and hybrid department, who deliver technology and know-how back into road car development. Since 2012, TOYOTA has earned 10 pole positions and won 10 races, finishing on the podium a total of 28 times. In 2014, the team won the drivers' and manufacturers' World Championships with the TS040 HYBRID while a year later TOYOTA celebrated 30 years since its first Le Mans entry. TOYOTA Motorsport GmbH combines its role in the WEC project with its other activities, such as the supply of a World Rally Championship engine for TOYOTA's return to the category in 2017, as well as its engineering services business and customer motorsport activities.

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