

## SECOND ROW FRUSTRATION FOR TOYOTA GAZOO RACING

Friday 15 September 2017

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing will start the 6 Hours of Circuit of the Americas from the second row after an extremely frustrating qualifying session for the sixth round of the 2017 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC).

Sébastien Buemi, Stéphane Sarrazin and Kazuki Nakajima, in the #8 TS050 HYBRID, were the lead TOYOTA in third place, with a gap of 1.659secs to the pole position #1 Porsche.

Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and José María López will start from fourth in the #7 car, with the team determined to deliver a more competitive performance in Saturday's six-hour race.

On a sunny day, with air temperatures of 33°C, Kamui and Sébastien were at the wheel of their respective cars at the start of the 20-minute qualifying, aiming to challenge for TOYOTA's fourth pole of the season.

After both cars waited in the pits at the beginning to ensure a clear track and favourable conditions, the Porsches had already set the target time and unfortunately neither TS050 HYBRID could challenge.

Kamui earned provisional third place with his one and only lap while Sébastien completed two timed efforts, improving on his second run despite losing time when he ran wide in turn 11.

In the closing minutes, Mike took over the #7 but his flying lap was badly compromised by traffic in the final sector, with no time for another attempt. Kazuki completed the job for the #8 with a clean lap, with both cars using one set of tyres for the whole session.

The team will now work hard to prepare a strategy for the race, when high temperatures are expected to provide a tough challenge particularly for tyre performance, with 2017 regulations forcing teams to use the same set of rubber for two stints.

### TS050 HYBRID #7 (Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi, José María López)

Free practice 3: 4th (1min 48.086secs), 28 laps

Qualifying: 4th (1min 47.098secs average)

**Mike Conway (TS050 HYBRID #7):** "I am really annoyed because I lost a huge amount of time due to an LMP2 car. He came out of the pits just as I was starting my lap. He was just driving around without looking what is around him, although I was flashing him all the way down the back straight and all the way through the middle sector."

**Kamui Kobayashi (TS050 HYBRID #7):** "My lap was actually pretty good, maybe I was a couple of tenths off the maximum, but it was not enough to challenge for the front row. I did my best and I think we are in better shape for the race than today so we will fight hard tomorrow to score a lot of points."

### TS050 HYBRID #8 (Sébastien Buemi, Stéphane Sarrazin, Kazuki Nakajima)

Free practice 3: 1st (1min 45.712secs), 29 laps

Qualifying: 3rd (1min 46.400secs average)

**Sébastien Buemi (TS050 HYBRID #8):** "I'm sorry for Kazuki and the team because I made a mistake in turn 11. I locked the front tyres and went straight, so lost lap time. We were expecting to be behind the Porsches but not by that much. But we will push hard tomorrow; six hours is a long race and we never give up."

**Kazuki Nakajima (TS050 HYBRID #8):** "It is difficult to judge my lap because I took over from Sébastien with the same tyres. The car felt quite nice to drive and I enjoyed pushing in qualifying, but the result isn't what we wanted. In final practice our long-run pace looked okay so I hope that is a good sign for the race."

**Free practice 3 results:**

<b>1st</b>	<b>#8 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>	<b>1min 45.712secs</b>	<b>29 laps</b>
2nd	#2 Porsche (Bernhard/Bamber/Hartley)	+1.753secs	29 laps
3rd	#1 Porsche (Jani/Lotterer/Tandy)	+2.262secs	25 laps
<b>4th</b>	<b>#7 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>	<b>+2.374secs</b>	<b>28 laps</b>
5th	#28 TDS Racing (Perrodo/Vaxiviere/Collard)	+7.829secs	25 laps
6th	#37 Jackie Chan (Cheng/Brundle/Gommendy)	+7.870secs	25 laps

**Qualifying results:**

1st	#1 Porsche (Jani/Lotterer/Tandy)	1min 44.741secs
2nd	#2 Porsche (Bernhard/Bamber/Hartley)	+0.253secs
<b>3rd</b>	<b>#8 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>	<b>+1.659secs</b>
<b>4th</b>	<b>#7 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>	<b>+2.357secs</b>
5th	#36 Alpine (Lapierre/Menezes/Negrao)	+9.238secs
6th	#13 Rebellion (Beche/Heinemeier Hansson/Piquet)	+9.534secs

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**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 19 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 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 13 pole positions and won 13 races, finishing on the podium a total of 36 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.

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