

## SOLID START FOR TOYOTA GAZOO RACING

Friday 14 July 2017

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing made a solid start to practice for the 6 Hours of Nürburgring, the fourth round of the 2017 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC).

With two wins from three races this season, TOYOTA is battling for the manufacturers' World Championship, 24.5 points behind Porsche with a total of 264 points to fight for from the remaining six races.

Drivers' World Championship challengers Sébastien Buemi, Anthony Davidson and Kazuki Nakajima, who are second in the standings in the #8 TS050 HYBRID, set the third fastest time from today's two practice sessions at the Nürburgring, 1.110secs off the quickest.

Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and José María López took their #7 TS050 HYBRID to fourth fastest on a day when race preparation was the priority over one-lap performance.

This week, the team has reverted to its high-downforce car, which won the opening races of the season at Silverstone and Spa. It generates increased grip in corners at the expense of top speed, making it better suited to the twisty Nürburgring lay-out.

With two races and extensive testing already completed using this specification, the team has plenty of experience with it and spent today's two practice sessions optimising the set-up for the specific demands of the 5.137km Nürburgring Grand Prix track.

In contrast to TOYOTA, rivals Porsche are running their high-downforce car for the first time in an official session, so interest was high to compare relative performance when practice began in bright sunshine at lunchtime in temperatures of around 18°C.

First practice suggested that Sunday's race could be a closely-fought affair, with just 0.367secs separating all four hybrid LMP1 cars. However, second practice saw the gap increase as the two TS050 HYBRIDs continued with set-up and tyre evaluation.

Despite light rain in the second half of the session, both cars completed their programmes focusing on race performance for a total of 138 laps, 708km following a smooth day of testing.

The Nürburgring has generated few positive memories for TOYOTA GAZOO Racing since the Eifel track joined the WEC calendar in 2015, with a best result of fifth. The team will continue to work hard to get the best out of the TS050 HYBRID for Sunday's race.

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

Free practice 1: 4th (1min 41.979secs), 32 laps

Free practice 2: 4th (1min 41.656secs), 36 laps

**Mike Conway (TS050 HYBRID #7):** "In session one it looked fairly close between us and Porsche but in the second session they looked a bit quicker so we need to improve some areas. We need to find a bit of lap time. We will look through the data and make changes overnight. The target is to have a competitive race set-up."

**Kamui Kobayashi (TS050 HYBRID #7):** "It's great to be back at the track because I enjoy driving this car. Obviously it wasn't amazing today because there wasn't a lot of grip. We will see how it goes tomorrow when hopefully the track evolution will help. We will try to put everything together and get the set-up right for the race."

**José María López (TS050 HYBRID #7):** "I am happy to be back in the car with Mike and Kamui. I like this track and I really enjoyed driving this car here. We made

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SUMITOMO METAL

**RAYS**

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improvements through the day but we need to continue to work hard on the set-up. The competition is strong and it will be hard but we will keep pushing."

**TS050 HYBRID #8** (Sébastien Buemi, Anthony Davidson, Kazuki Nakajima)

Free practice 1: 2nd (1min 41.816secs), 32 laps

Free practice 2: 3rd (1min 39.773secs), 38 laps

**Sébastien Buemi (TS050 HYBRID #8):** "The first session looked promising but later in the afternoon we were lacking a bit. We will work hard to find more pace for the race. We know that Nürburgring is not one of our best tracks but we are pushing to get as many points as possible; the race is long and we still believe in our chances."

**Anthony Davidson (TS050 HYBRID #8):** "It was a difficult day because we were fighting the balance of the car. But we did our best and all drivers got a good amount of time in the car; I'm feeling well prepared but we still have work to do. We will work on the set-up tonight and aim to come back stronger."

**Kazuki Nakajima (TS050 HYBRID #8):** "It has been quite difficult today with the car balance and the track conditions, which were not great. But it was exciting to jump in the car again after Le Mans and I was interested to see how we compare with Porsche. They looked strong today but our target is the race and points for the championship."

**Free practice 1 results:**

|     |   |                   |                |
|-----|---|-------------------|----------------|
| 1st | #2 Porsche (Bernhard/Bamber/Hartley)    | 1min 41.612secs   | 32 laps        |
| 2nd | <b>#8 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>           | <b>+0.204secs</b> | <b>32 laps</b> |
| 3rd | #1 Porsche (Jani/Lotterer/Tandy)        | +0.284secs        | 29 laps        |
| 4th | <b>#7 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>           | <b>+0.367secs</b> | <b>32 laps</b> |
| 5th | #31 Rebellion (Canal/Senna/Albuquerque) | +6.105secs        | 26 laps        |
| 6th | #26 G-Drive (Rusinov/Thiriet/Hanley)    | +6.767secs        | 32 laps        |

**Free practice 2 results:**

|     |   |                   |                |
|-----|---|-------------------|----------------|
| 1st | #1 Porsche (Jani/Lotterer/Tandy)                | 1min 38.663secs   | 39 laps        |
| 2nd | #2 Porsche (Bernhard/Bamber/Hartley)            | +0.966secs        | 40 laps        |
| 3rd | <b>#8 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>                   | <b>+1.110secs</b> | <b>38 laps</b> |
| 4th | <b>#7 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>                   | <b>+2.993secs</b> | <b>36 laps</b> |
| 5th | #26 G-Drive (Rusinov/Thiriet/Hanley)            | +8.525secs        | 36 laps        |
| 6th | #13 Rebellion (Beche/Heinemeier Hansson/Derani) | +8.747secs        | 28 laps        |

A German translation of this press release is available on [www.RacingByTMG.com](http://www.RacingByTMG.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 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 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 12 pole positions and won 13 races, finishing on the podium a total of 34 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

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# RAISING THE EXCITEMENT TOYOTA HYBRID

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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