

**HOME TRIP FOR TOYOTA GAZOO RACING**

Monday 10 October 2016

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing competes on home ground this weekend when the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) makes its annual trip to Japan for the 6 Hours of Fuji.

The seventh round of the 2016 season is held at the TOYOTA-owned Fuji Speedway, located just a few kilometres from the Higashi-Fuji Technical Centre, where the 1,000hp TOYOTA HYBRID System - Racing is developed and built.

TOYOTA approaches its home race in positive mood following another podium finish and close fight for victory in the last race, at the Circuit of the Americas in Austin, Texas.

Stéphane Sarrazin, Mike Conway and Kamui Kobayashi in the #6 TS050 HYBRID were part of a three-way fight for victory that day, and will be looking to reclaim second place in the drivers' World Championship at Fuji.

Anthony Davidson, Sébastien Buemi and Kazuki Nakajima have endured an unfortunate season so far, but travel to Fuji aiming to challenge for victory in their #5 TS050 HYBRID.

TOYOTA has a very strong record on home ground, having won three consecutive races at Fuji Speedway from 2012-2014 making it the team's most successful circuit on the WEC calendar. After podium finishes in four of the six races so far this season, a return to winning ways in Japan is top of the agenda this weekend.

Although the current WEC series has raced at Fuji since 2012, the circuit is legendary in sportscar circles, having held the first 1000km of Fuji in 1967. Iconic TOYOTA cars, such as the 2000GT and TOYOTA 7, proved their performance by winning on the famed circuit close to Mount Fuji.

Fuji Speedway itself, located around 110km from central Tokyo, has evolved significantly since its opening in 1965, when a banked oval-style section began at the first corner and made up half of the track length until a redesign in the mid-1970s.

Nowadays, the circuit's most striking characteristic is the long main straight which, at 1,475m, is the second longest on the WEC calendar after the Mulsanne Straight at Le Mans. Combined with a particularly tight and twisty final sector of the lap, this gives engineers and drivers a challenge to find the best compromise on car set-up.

Preparations for the race will begin on Friday with two 90-minute practice sessions, while the grid order is determined on Saturday with a short qualifying. The race will be held entirely in daylight, beginning at 11am local time.

**Toshio Sato, Team President:** "As our home event, Fuji Speedway is one of the highlights of our season. It is wonderful to see the enthusiasm of the Japanese fans and we are very proud to see so many supporting TOYOTA. We have been able to show the increased competitiveness of the TS050 HYBRID's ultra-high-downforce aerodynamic package in Mexico and Austin so we are looking forward to being in another close fight in Fuji. In Fuji, we have the extra support of our colleagues from Higashi-Fuji who work so hard all year to provide an efficient powertrain. So as the TOYOTA GAZOO Racing team, we are more motivated than ever to fight and deliver another strong performance."

**Anthony Davidson (TS050 HYBRID #5):** "I'm really looking forward to Fuji. It's a track I like a lot and it's special because it's TOYOTA's home race. I'm sure a lot of Japanese fans will come to watch the race and support us as usual; that makes us feel welcome and motivates us to give them a strong performance. I hope we will finally have a bit more luck with car #5; I would really enjoy being back on the podium, especially in Fuji in front of our home crowd."

**Sébastien Buemi (TS050 HYBRID #5):** "It's great to race again in Fuji. It's our home race and it's a track where the team has won three out of four times; hopefully we'll have a good opportunity to fight for the win again. I think we will be able to show a good performance and I hope we will have better luck. I'm looking forward to experiencing the great atmosphere with all the TOYOTA employees and fans."

**Kazuki Nakajima (TS050 HYBRID #5):** "It's always nice to go back to our home track. There will be a lot of fans as usual and the atmosphere is always fantastic. We will be giving everything to compete again and, considering the championship situation, we have nothing to lose. We will be racing as hard as possible and will do our best to get back on the podium for the Japanese fans."

**Stéphane Sarrazin (TS050 HYBRID #6):** "We have had two strong races in North America with the #6 car, especially being so close to the win in Austin. So the target for Fuji is clear; we want to perform strongly again and fight for the win. We always go to Fuji wanting to win because it's our home race and we get so much support there. The track should be even more suited to our car than Austin so I am optimistic."

**Mike Conway (TS050 HYBRID #6):** "Fuji is one of my favourite races because the fans are so special; racing in Japan as a TOYOTA driver is a great experience. I'm feeling positive about this weekend because we have made big progress since Nürburgring and I think Fuji could be another step again. I've enjoyed being on the podium in the last two races so I want to be back there again on Sunday."

**Kamui Kobayashi (TS050 HYBRID #6):** "This will be my first race in Japan as a TOYOTA works driver so it should be a nice experience. I've already raced at Fuji Speedway once this season in Super Formula; it will be interesting to experience for the first time in an LMP1 car. We are going there with good motivation because we are very close to the others. Of course as it is our home race we want a strong result."

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 and including the 2016 edition, TOYOTA cars have raced in 18 Le Mans 24 Hours races, achieving a best result of second place on five occasions (1992, 1994, 1999, 2013 and 2016). 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



# RAISING THE EXCITEMENT TOYOTA HYBRID

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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