

QUALIFYING DAMPENER FOR TOYOTA GAZOO RACING

Saturday 23 July 2016

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing will start the 6 Hours of Nürburgring from the third row after a disappointing qualifying session in wet conditions for the fourth round of the 2016 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC).

Intermittent rain throughout the day created changing track conditions and a challenge for the teams, both in terms of tyre choice and track conditions.

The #6 TS050 HYBRID of Stéphane Sarrazin, Mike Conway and Kamui Kobayashi was the lead TOYOTA in fifth place, one ahead of Anthony Davidson, Sébastien Buemi and Kazuki Nakajima in the #5.

Light rain just before the green flag meant Sébastien and Kamui started on the hybrid intermediate tyre, but a dry line soon emerged and both cars headed for the pits after just one flying lap for a set of dry specification Michelins.

Anthony and Stéphane took over and improved the lap times by around two seconds before Sébastien and Kamui returned to their respective cars.

With the WEC grid decided on the average of each driver's fastest lap, Sébastien and Kamui needed some dry running to improve on the laps they achieved with hybrid intermediate tyres.

Both did improve significantly but the rain returned on their flying laps and gradually grew in intensity, meaning neither could improve their car's grid position for the race, in which TOYOTA expects to be much more competitive.

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

Free practice 3: 2nd (1min 41.293secs), 28 laps

Qualifying: 6th (1min 40.748secs average)

Anthony Davidson: "It was a difficult qualifying in mixed conditions. The car was difficult to drive. I only had one lap and got traffic, but we were too far from the competition for that to have made any big difference. The race is what counts and we are comfortable with our race pace."

Sébastien Buemi: "That was a very strange qualifying due to the weather. Obviously we had to compromise our qualifying performance in terms of set-up and tyres because we are focusing on the race. That explains some of the gap but it's still a bit disappointing."

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

Free practice 3: 6th (1min 42.309secs), 30 laps

Qualifying: 5th (1min 40.639secs average)

Stéphane Sarrazin: "The track conditions were very tricky. I went out on slicks and it was still a bit damp so I couldn't push to the maximum. We knew it would be difficult for us in qualifying; on race pace we are in the game but not on one lap. We have targeted the race and we have good balance so I'm optimistic."

Kamui Kobayashi: "It was not easy in those conditions but we know qualifying is not a strong point for us. We have focused on the race set-up so the third row was all we could do today. I think the race should be a different story and we expect to be stronger. We will see."

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Free practice 3 results:

1st	#1 Porsche (Bernhard/Webber/Hartley)	1min 41.002secs	24 laps
2nd	#5 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing	+0.291secs	28 laps
3rd	#8 Audi (di Grassi/Duval/Jarvis)	+0.540secs	29 laps
4th	#7 Audi (Fässler/Lotterer)	+0.997secs	29 laps
5th	#2 Porsche (Dumas/Jani/Lieb)	+1.237secs	24 laps
6th	#6 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing	+1.307secs	30 laps

Qualifying results:

1st	#7 Audi (Fässler/Lotterer)	1min 39.444secs
2nd	#8 Audi (di Grassi/Duval/Jarvis)	+0.266secs
3rd	#1 Porsche (Bernhard/Webber/Hartley)	+0.417secs
4th	#2 Porsche (Dumas/Jani/Lieb)	+0.449secs
5th	#6 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing	+1.195secs
6th	#5 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing	+1.304secs

A German translation of this press release is available on www.toyotahybridracing.com. High-resolution copyright-free photos are available for editorial use at 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 26 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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