

TOYOTA GAZOO RACING: LE MANS UPDATE 4

Sunday 18 June 2017

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing suffered an agonising night at the 85th Le Mans 24 Hours which saw two of its TS050 HYBRID cars retire from the race within 30 minutes of each other.

The race-leading #7 of Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and Stéphane Sarrazin suffered a clutch problem towards the end of the 10th hour. Kamui and the team tried valiantly to bring it back to the pits but he eventually had to park the car at the exit of the Porsche Curves and retire.

In a cruel further twist, just 15 minutes after that disappointment, the #9 TS050 HYBRID of Nicolas Lapierre, Yuji Kunimoto and José María López was hit by an LMP2 competitor at the first corner, causing damage to the rear left of the car.

Nicolas continued as far as possible but the car was unable to reach the pits and at 1.30am he stopped the car for good. The impact badly damaged the rear of the car and prevented it moving further.

Investigations are ongoing into the precise damage to both cars and will be concluded when the cars are returned after the race.

That leaves the #8 TS050 HYBRID of Sébastien Buemi, Anthony Davidson and Kazuki Nakajima as the sole TOYOTA in the race, although that is 29 laps behind after over an hour in the pits to replace the front motor and battery.

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing expresses its regret and sadness at the unacceptable conclusion to a race which started with high hopes of a first-ever victory at Le Mans.

Kamui Kobayashi: "It is so disappointing. The car was running very well and we were just taking things steady, building a gap at the front. Then after the safety car, I just had no power. I tried to come back to the pits but it wasn't possible. I feel so sad for everyone in the team who has worked so hard for this race and produced such a quick car."

Nicolas Lapierre: "I can't believe it. The LMP2 car was directly behind me at the end of the start-finish straight and I had the normal fuel cut. I guess he was surprised; he hit me from behind and that was it. It's so frustrating for all of us in the team."

A German translation of this press release is available on www.RacingByTMG.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 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



RAISING THE EXCITEMENT TOYOTA HYBRID

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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