

NÜRBURGRING PODIUM FOR TOYOTA GAZOO RACING

Sunday 16 July 2017

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing took its first-ever podium in the 6 Hours of Nürburgring on a challenging day for the team in the fourth round of the 2017 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC).

The Nürburgring, just 90km from the team's Cologne base, has traditionally been a difficult venue for TOYOTA and that proved to be the case again.

Nevertheless, the pole position-winning #7 TS050 HYBRID of Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and José María López earned the team's first Nürburgring podium with third place after leading the early stages and setting the fastest lap of the race.

The #8 car of Sébastien Buemi, Anthony Davidson and Kazuki Nakajima suffered early technical trouble and finished fourth on a day when Porsche #2 won the race.

The race began in the worst way for car #8, when a fuel pump problem prevented Sébastien taking the start normally. After a very slow formation lap, he was forced to pit to fit a new fuel pump, losing eight minutes and five laps.

While Kamui led the opening stages in the #7 from pole, Sébastien began the #8 car's fight back. The battle for the lead was enthralling, with Kamui keeping the two Porsches behind during the first hour before handing over to José María at the first pit stops.

After 80 minutes of fierce racing, the #7 dropped to third place but José fought back and kept the pressure on. At the start of his second stint, with two hours completed, he was within two seconds of the race leader.

However, as the race wore on, a change of aerodynamic performance negatively affected both cars. The cause of this will be subject to post-race analysis of the bodywork.

With little realistic prospect of a change of positions, unless misfortune would strike Porsche, the two TS050 HYBRIDS focused on completing a clean race to secure the valuable World Championship points.

Kamui took the chequered flag for the #7 car in third, earning the team's fourth podium of the season, 1min 4.768secs behind the winner. After a fighting drive back to fourth, Kazuki finished the race for the #8 car five laps down.

That result means TOYOTA stays in the fight for the manufacturers' World Championship, 39.5 points behind Porsche. The #8 crew lead the challenge in the drivers' standings and are now 30 points away from the leaders.

Today's race marked the end of the European leg of the WEC season, with the teams heading to North America next for races in Mexico City (3 September) and Austin (September 16), prior to the final three races of 2017 which take place in Asia.

Toshio Sato, Team President: "Nürburgring has again been a challenging race for us. We showed good one-lap speed and we enjoyed the close fight with Porsche in the first, but the car balance changed during the race and this means we lost some performance. Today's race was really a damage limitation exercise in terms of the World Championship. We believe we will be stronger during the rest of the season when the circuits should better suit our TS050 HYBRID. We have minimised the loss to Porsche and now we look ahead to the flyaway races when the target will be to close the gap and fight for the World Championship."

DENSO

Mobil 1

ZENT

AW
AISIN AW

JTEKT

AISIN

NIPPON STEEL &
SUMITOMO METAL

RAYS

ADVICS

HAYASHI TELEMPU

MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC

ETICS

TOYOTA INDUSTRIES CORPORATION

AICHI STEEL

TOYOTA AUTO BODY

TOYOTA TSUSHO

TOYOTA BOSHOKU

トヨタ東日本

TOYODA GOSEI

HINO

DAIHATSU

TOKAI RIKAI

ぼたの康郷

NPR
NIPPON PISTON RING CO. LTD.

TAMACHI

FURUKAWA ELECTRIC GROUP

MAEDA
SHIHLUBOVICH / CANON

FINE SINTER

airweave

MICHELIN

TS050 HYBRID #7 (Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi, José María López)
Race: 3rd, 204 laps, 6 pit stops. Grid: 1st. Fastest lap: 1min 40.633secs

Mike Conway (TS050 HYBRID #7): "It's always good to be on the podium but we're not really happy today. There are some positives to take from the weekend; qualifying was good for us and we showed strong speed early in the race. But we dropped off as the aero balance changed. Porsche was very strong today so congratulations to them. I am looking forward to the next races when I am sure it will be better for us."

Kamui Kobayashi (TS050 HYBRID #7): "At the beginning of the race it looked okay. We had good pace during my first stint; we were leading and setting strong lap times. Then later in the race the balance wasn't right and we couldn't fight. To be honest, we expected a hard race here after Friday practice and that's how it turned out. But we got a reasonable amount of points so we will try to improve for Mexico."

José María López (TS050 HYBRID #7): "Even though it was a difficult race, we finished on the podium and that's the first time for me in WEC. We were surprised on Saturday to get pole position after a great job from the team but we expected a hard fight today. In my second stint it was really hard with the tyres. For sure we wanted more so we will keep working to come back stronger in the next races."

TS050 HYBRID #8 (Sébastien Buemi, Anthony Davidson, Kazuki Nakajima)
Race: 4th, 199 laps, 6 pit stops. Grid: 4th. Fastest lap: 1min 41.771secs

Sébastien Buemi (TS050 HYBRID #8): "Clearly that was a disappointing race for us. We couldn't fight at the front due to the problem at the start; all we could do was keep going and get as many points as possible for the championship. Now we need to move on and focus on the next races where we expect to be more competitive."

Anthony Davidson (TS050 HYBRID #8): "That was not the race we wanted today. The problem at the start was really disappointing because we had a car that was equal to the #7. It's a pity we never had a chance to fight for the podium but at least we got back up to fourth. For the rest of the year we should be in the hunt for victories and we will continue to focus on the World Championship."

Kazuki Nakajima (TS050 HYBRID #8): "It was a difficult race for us. To start like that with a problem on the formation lap gave us no chance. Speed-wise we showed some potential but there were a few issues. We are fourth and we didn't lose too many points in terms of the championship considering the problem; let's stay positive."

6 Hours of Nürburgring results:

1st	#2 Porsche (Bernhard/Bamber/Hartley)	204 laps
2nd	#1 Porsche (Jani/Lotterer/Tandy)	+1.606secs
3rd	#7 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing	+1min 4.786secs
4th	#8 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing	+5 laps
5th	#38 Jackie Chan ((Tung/Jarvis/Laurent)	+13 laps
6th	#31 Rebellion (Canal/Senna/Albuquerque)	+14 laps

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 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 13 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 World Rally Championship engine for TOYOTA's return to the category in 2017, as well as its engineering services business and customer motorsport activities.

Media contact: Alastair Moffitt, Marketing & Communications Manager:
alastair.moffitt@toyota-motorsport.com