



**TOYOTA HYBRID**

Thursday 3 May 2018  
Toyota Motor Corporation  
GAZOO Racing Company

## SOLID SPA START FOR TOYOTA GAZOO RACING

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing made a constructive start as it targets a fourth consecutive FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) victory and a perfect start to the 2018-19 season in the Total 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps.

Having won the final three races of last season, the team returned to competitive action today for the first time since last November, with two 90-minute free practice sessions at a sunny, dry Spa-Francorchamps.

The #7 TS050 HYBRID of Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and José María López set the fastest time of the day, 1min 56.172secs thanks to a best lap from Mike. That was 0.643secs quicker than Kazuki Nakajima's quickest time in the #8 car he shares with fellow 2017 Spa winner Sébastien Buemi and newcomer Fernando Alonso.

The final standings today indicate only the best single laps, but overall performance from the LMP1 competitors suggests Saturday's race will be a close affair and TOYOTA is preparing itself for a challenge when the biggest-ever LMP1 grid for a WEC six-hour race goes into battle.

In WEC's new era the TS050 HYBRIDS are the only hybrid electric LMP1 cars, taking on the challenge of eight competitors, who all race with traditional petrol engines which are granted 49% more fuel energy per lap, 37.5% more fuel flow and 45kg lower minimum weight.

TOYOTA competes in WEC as part of its commitment to making ever-better road cars and has embraced this unprecedented challenge of powertrain efficiency, with today's practice sessions offering the first indication of relative performance.

For the first time in WEC history, Spa hosts the opening round of the season, giving teams only one event to prepare for the Le Mans 24 Hours. As a result, TOYOTA GAZOO Racing is competing with low-downforce TS050 HYBRIDS in the same specification as they will compete at La Sarthe in June.

So today's two 90-minute practice sessions were an important preparation not only for the 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps, but also the annual highlight of Le Mans which meant the team wasted no time fine-tuning aerodynamic and mechanical set-ups, as well as analysing three specifications of Michelin tyres.

TOYOTA has completed more than 25,000km of pre-season testing, but drove today at Spa for the first time in almost a year, having last taken part in a pre-Le Mans shakedown in late May 2017. Therefore every lap was important to prepare for the race and both cars ran reliably, completing a combined total of 133 laps, 931km despite two red flag periods in second practice.

The focus now will be on optimising the cars for tomorrow's 25-minute qualifying session, prior to which there is a one-hour final practice.

**Mike Conway (TS050 HYBRID #7):** "It's good to be back at one of the best tracks in the world; the car really feels alive around here. It went well today and we saw a good improvement from first practice in terms of track and car evolution. The car felt quite good but we can still improve so we will be hard at work on a few things to be in the best possible shape for the rest of the weekend."

**Kamui Kobayashi (TS050 HYBRID #7):** "It's nice to get the season started, especially at a great track like Spa. We had a typical practice day; we tested a few things and made some improvements to the balance. We know our car very well but there are always things to improve so we will be working to find more performance before the race. It's a positive start and I'm looking forward to continuing that."

**José María López (TS050 HYBRID #7):** "We have been waiting a long time for the start of the season so it's very nice to be back at a race event. It was my first experience of this car at Spa and I really enjoyed it. We made a big improvement during the day after working on correlating what we've done in testing with the specifics of this track. I feel happy and comfortable with the car so I'm looking forward to the race."

**Sébastien Buemi (TS050 HYBRID #8):** "I enjoyed it today, especially the good weather here in Spa. We know how precious that is. I liked being back in the car after a long winter break and it was the first time in an official session with Fernando. It went well and we worked productively on the car to get the most out of it. We have good data so we will see what we can do tomorrow. Overall it's been a really positive day."

**Kazuki Nakajima (TS050 HYBRID #8):** "It went pretty well today. There are still some improvements we can make on the balance but the car is fun to drive and I enjoyed the day. I didn't do so many laps but that's part of endurance. I feel like I want to drive more which is a good sign. I'm ready to fight for the start of the new season and I'm excited. Let's see the competitive level compared to the others tomorrow."

**Fernando Alonso (TS050 HYBRID #8):** "It's been a good, positive day in the car. We had a very productive two sessions testing various things and the car feels much better now compared to first practice so we are ready for tomorrow. We improved the balance during the day and we feel more comfortable now. The car feels really

good here at Spa; out of the corners, especially after Eau Rouge when the boost comes in, the acceleration is great. We have good consistency with the tyres so I enjoyed a lot and hopefully I will enjoy tomorrow as well.”

**Free practice 1 results:**

<b>1st</b>	<b>#8 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>	<b>1min 58.392secs</b>	<b>35 laps</b>
<b>2nd</b>	<b>#7 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>	<b>+0.237secs</b>	<b>36 laps</b>
3rd	#3 Rebellion (Beche/Laurent/Menezes)	+0.457secs	32 laps
4th	#10 Dragonspeed (Hedman/Hanley/Fittipaldi)	+0.929secs	30 laps
5th	#1 Rebellion (Jani/Lotterer/Senna)	+1.289secs	24 laps
6th	#4 ByKolles (Webb/Kraihamer/Dilmann)	+1.740secs	18 laps

**Free practice 2 results:**

<b>1st</b>	<b>#7 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>	<b>1min 56.172secs</b>	<b>29 laps</b>
<b>2nd</b>	<b>#8 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing</b>	<b>+0.643secs</b>	<b>33 laps</b>
3rd	#10 Dragonspeed (Hedman/Hanley/Fittipaldi)	+2.663secs	24 laps
4th	#3 Rebellion (Beche/Laurent/Menezes)	+2.839secs	30 laps
5th	#1 Rebellion (Jani/Lotterer/Senna)	+3.408secs	24 laps
6th	#17 SMP (Sarrazin/Orudhzev/Isaakyan)	+3.863secs	23 laps

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