



TOYOTA HYBRID

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Toyota Motor Corporation
GAZOO Racing Company

TOYOTA GAZOO RACING FLAT-OUT FOR SPA WEEKEND

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing makes the short trip across the Belgian border next week for the penultimate round of the 2018-2019 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC), the Total 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps, targeting a title triumph.

The team, based just 120km away in Cologne, Germany, leads the World Championship by 53 points and will secure the title with one race remaining by scoring 12 points at Spa, or if nearest challengers Rebellion Racing fail to finish on the podium.

The 2018-2019 season began at Spa back in May 2018 and since then TOYOTA GAZOO Racing has earned five one-two victories from six races, the latest being in the 1000 Miles of Sebring in March.

While the teams' World Championship is close to a conclusion, the drivers' title battle remains very much open with two races and 65 points available. Following their Sebring victory, Sébastien Buemi, Kazuki Nakajima and Fernando Alonso in the #8 TS050 HYBRID hold the upper hand, leading the standings by 15 points from the #7 crew of Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and José María López.

The 7.004km Spa circuit is the second longest on the WEC calendar and is considered one of two home tracks for TOYOTA GAZOO Racing, behind Fuji Speedway in Japan. A large contingent of employees and their families from Cologne will attend the race to lend their support on what could be an historic day for the team.

The team recently completed a 4,000km test at Paul Ricard with the low-downforce-specification TS050 HYBRID in preparation for next week's race at Spa, as well as the Le Mans 24 Hours in June, during which all drivers participated.

Action in Spa begins on Thursday with two 90-minute practice sessions while the grid will be decided during qualifying on Friday afternoon. A 35-car grid will line-up for Saturday's race, which begins at 1.30pm local time.

Hisatake Murata, Team President: "We are getting close to the end of the 2018-2019 season and Spa could be a significant event for TOYOTA GAZOO Racing. We are close to one of our big targets of the

season; winning the teams' World Championship. However, we do not under-estimate the challenge of our opponents or the Spa circuit, so we have put in a big effort to prepare and I know everyone is pushing hard to win the World Championship with a result to remember in front of our fans, friends and colleagues. Motorsport is about more than the driver and car; many people are working extremely hard as one team to succeed and not all can join us regularly at the track so it will be nice to have many colleagues cheering us on in Spa. I hope we will, as usual in Spa, see lots of passionate fans in the grandstands and the paddock; I am sure it will be another exciting race for them to enjoy."

Mike Conway (TS050 HYBRID #7): "Spa is one of my favourite races so I am looking forward to getting back. We have been unlucky there a few times when we had the chance to win but it hasn't worked out. We had a really quick car at Spa last year but started one lap down due to the penalty; we still came through and nearly won. So we need to pick up from there and we will be in good shape. I'd love to win at Spa and that will be my target next week."

Kamui Kobayashi (TS050 HYBRID #7): "I like Spa; it is a long, high-speed circuit which is quite familiar to me after WEC and Formula 1. It's a really nice circuit to drive and of course you have Eau Rouge; this is a very challenging corner in a GT3 car but in our TS050 HYBRID it is flat out. There is always something different at Spa and it's always a challenge every lap. Qualifying is particularly interesting there to get everything right, but when you do it is very rewarding."

José María López (TS050 HYBRID #7): "Spa is always a great place to visit and it's where our season began a year ago. It's an amazing track on which to drive our TS050 HYBRID so I am really looking forward to it. We are now in the closing stages of the championship; we achieved strong results for the team so far and we hope to achieve this again in Spa. On our side of the garage, the #7 car, we want to bounce back from Sebring and strengthen our World Championship fight."

Sébastien Buemi (TS050 HYBRID #8): "It feels a bit strange to go to Spa late in the season because it was usually one of the first races. Of course I have good memories from Spa because I won there a few times before so I am looking forward to a strong weekend and a good fight with the other car. Above all it is going to be important to get used to the low-downforce package that we will use in Le Mans. Race performance and the win is important but we really want to be ready for Le Mans."

Kazuki Nakajima (TS050 HYBRID #8): "I actually have some bad memories of Spa so unlike most drivers, it's not one of my favourite tracks. It is challenging there and it's nice to go back. But it does feel a little bit weird because normally Spa is one of the first races of the season, but now we are nearly at the end. That means it is an important race for the World Championship so we will do our best with the same targets as usual; earn a one-two for TOYOTA."

Fernando Alonso (TS050 HYBRID #8): “I have great memories of Spa as I made my TOYOTA debut in WEC there a year ago. We won the race that day and it is obviously our target again. Spa is another important step for us in the World Championship battle, with only two races remaining in the season, and it is also another big step towards Le Mans. So the team has worked really hard to be prepared and I know everyone will work really hard to execute another perfect race.”

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