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Toyota Motor Corporation
GAZOO Racing Company

TOYOTA GAZOO RACING TO FIELD FOUR NEW HILUX AT 2021 DAKAR RALLY

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing will be entering four crews in the 2021 Dakar Rally, scheduled to start on January 3 in the Saudi Arabian city of Jeddah. The works team will consist of Nasser Al-Attiyah and navigator Mathieu Baumel; Giniel de Villiers and navigator Alex Haro; rookie Henk Lategan and navigator Brett Cummings; and Shameer Variawa and navigator Dennis Murphy.



The team, which has competed at the Dakar since 2012, will field a mix of highly experienced specialists, together with relative newcomers to the rally-raid world for 2021. This will give TOYOTA GAZOO Racing a strong attacking force in the form of Nasser and Mathieu; as well as Giniel and Alex, while building depth and experience in the form of Henk and Brett, as well as Shameer and Dennis. Since its first Dakar Rally entry, the team recorded best overall results of 3rd (2012), 2nd (2013), 4th (2014), 2nd (2015), 3rd (2016), 5th (2017), 2nd (2018), 1st (2019) and 2nd (2020).

As in 2020, the team will be spear-headed by 2019 winners Nasser and Mathieu, who finished second in the 2020 edition of the Dakar Rally. During a truncated 2020, they secured victory in the Rally of Andalucía and Nasser will be aiming to add to his tally of three Dakar wins. Giniel and navigator Alex will be hoping to build on their 2019 victory in the Rally of Morocco, which Giniel has won three times.

South Africans Henk and Brett will be joining the squad for 2021. While this will be Henk's first Dakar Rally, he recently secured the highly competitive South African Cross-Country Series (SACCS) title for a second consecutive time and will be aiming to learn as much as possible from his first visit to the Dakar. Navigator

Brett has competed in the gruelling race twice before in the motorcycle category, recording a second place in what was then known as the Malle Moto category for unsupported motorcycle racers in the 2014 edition of the race.

Finally, Shameer and Dennis, also from South Africa, will complete the four-car team. Shameer, who has won local championships in South Africa in the past, has taken part in the Dakar Rally before, but this will be his first outing with TOYOTA GAZOO Racing. Navigator Dennis has worked at the race in a technical capacity for the team in the past and is a multiple South African national champion navigator, but this will be his first time navigating in the Dakar Rally.



The team will compete in the latest version of the Toyota Hilux, built and developed at the team's HQ near the iconic Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit in Johannesburg, South Africa. The current car is based on the race-proven Hilux that was introduced in 2018, and features a mid-mounted engine, independent rear suspension and all-wheel drive. The car has seen significant refinements over the years, and its results on the Dakar Rally serves as proof of the reliability and toughness associated with the Hilux. Its first outing saw the team achieve a second and third place in 2018, followed by an overall victory in 2019 and second place in 2020.

The car has seen substantial development thanks to the team competing locally in the SACCS. This allowed TOYOTA GAZOO Racing Dakar Team Principal, Glyn Hall, to refine the car on an ongoing basis, while getting valuable feedback from both Ginie and Henk in race conditions. For 2021, the overall layout and geometry of the car remains unchanged, but refinements to the suspension and the naturally aspirated V8 engine have ensured that the latest version of the Hilux is as competitive and reliable as ever.

One major change to the 2021 race Toyota Hilux is in the exterior design, which now reflects the latest version of the production Toyota Hilux. The new 2020 Hilux combines a striking new front design, the addition of a powerful 2.8 litre powertrain and improvements to both its on- and off-road performance with greater comfort,

upgraded equipment and an expanded model range. The front of the new 2020 Hilux has been completely redesigned with a bold, powerfully three-dimensional new grille and front bumper treatment which significantly increases the pick-up's road presence and strong stature, whilst reinforcing its tough, robust, go-anywhere credentials.



The new DOHC ⁽¹⁾, 16 valve, 2755 cc diesel engine generates 150 kW/ 204 DIN hp at 3400 rpm and, with automatic transmission, 500 Nm of torque between 1600 and 2800 rpm. Maximum torque for manual transmission versions is 420 Nm between 1400 and 3400 rpm.

The 4x4 Hilux's already peerless off-road credentials have been further enhanced by the addition of a new electronic function (that can be activated in 2WD mode) replicating the effect of a mechanical limited-slip differential for improved traction on low grip surfaces in 2-wheel drive mode (available on 4WD models only); the lowering of engine speed at idle from 850 to 680 rpm and a tuned accelerator response for greater driver control; an updated VSC system; dedicated Variable Flow Control (VFC) map for appropriate steering effort, and a new tyre angle monitor.

Further reinforcing its go-anywhere credentials, the Hilux boasts class-leading minimum running ground clearance of 310 mm on Double-cabs, all-important approach and departure angles of 29 and 26 degrees respectively, and the ability to wade to a depth of 700 mm.



The 2021 edition of the Dakar Rally will again take place solely in Saudi Arabia, with crews setting off from the city of Jeddah on January 3. The 2021 route will traverse similar terrain to that encountered on the 2020 edition, but the organisers have promised all-new sections that ensure a competitive race. The traditional rest day will take place on January 9 in the city of Ha'il, before the route loops back to Jeddah for the finish on January 15. The 2021 route is also expected to feature two looped stages which start and end at the same place, as well as the traditional Marathon Stage which competitors will have to complete without an overnight return for service in the bivouac.

A new digital roadbook will be introduced for the 2021 edition, with the route only made available right before the start of each stage. This approach was trialled for select stages at the 2020 Dakar Rally but will become the norm. This new format not only adds an extra level of unpredictability but also makes the entire process easier to administer and control by race officials.

Glyn Hall, Team Principal: “We are very excited about the 2021 edition of the Dakar Rally, especially given the circumstances with the COVID-19 pandemic, which has reigned in a lot of motorsport during the course of this year. As things stand, the race is set to go ahead early in the New Year, and we are overjoyed to be entering four proudly South African-built and developed Toyota Hilux in the race.”

Nasser Al-Attiyah: “I am so happy to be back at the Dakar, driving the Toyota Hilux again. We won with that car in 2019, and finished second in 2020. Now it is time to go back to Saudi and challenge for victory again.”

Giniel de Villiers: “The Dakar is always a tough race, and last year proved that Saudi Arabia lived up to the toughness of the Dakar. We’re looking forward to taking on the race again in January, and we are ready for another tough challenge in the dunes and tracks of Saudi. The Hilux feels better than ever, and I’m confident that we have the right car for the upcoming race.”

Henk Lategan: “Racing in the Dakar has been a dream for me. Even after winning two championships in South Africa, taking on the world’s toughest race is a daunting prospect. I’m just glad I have Brett with me, who has competed twice at the Dakar already. Having competed in local cross-country rallies in South Africa, I’m very familiar with the Hilux, which helps a lot, too.”

Shameer Variawa: “My previous experience at Dakar left me wanting more from the race. Now, as part of a works team, I’m looking forward to taking on the race again, and I’ll be aiming to learn as much as possible. With that said, I’m also looking to record some good results, and will try to find a balance between speed and strategy early on.”



Left to right: Nasser Al-Attiyah and Mathieu Baumel

Nasser Al-Attiyah (Qatar), Driver

Career Highlights:

- Dakar Rally Winner (2011, 2015, 2019)
- FIA World Cup for Cross Country Rallies Winner (2008, 2015, 2016, 2017)

Mathieu Baumel (France), Navigator

Career Highlights:

- Dakar Rally Winner (2015, 2019)
- FIA World Cup for Cross Country Rallies Winner (2015, 2016, 2017)



Left to right: Giniel de Villiers and Alex Haro

Giniel de Villiers (South Africa), Driver

Career Highlights:

- Dakar Rally Winner (2009)
- Rally of Morocco Winner (2003, 2006, 2007, 2019)

Alex Haro (Spain), Navigator

Career Highlights:

- Dakar Rally 2nd (2019)



Left to right: Henk Lategan and Brett Cummings

Henk Lategan (South Africa), Driver

Career Highlights:

- South African Cross-Country Champion (2019, 2020)

Brett Cummings (South Africa), Navigator

Career Highlights:

- South African Cross-Country Navigator Champion (2019, 2020)
- 2nd in Malle Moto, Dakar 2014



Left to right: Shameer Variawa and Dennis Murphy

Shameer Variawa (South Africa), Driver

Career Highlights:

- South African Off-Road Champion (2000)

Dennis Murphy (South Africa), Navigator

Career Highlights:

- South African Cross-Country Navigator Champion (2013, 2014, 2015, 2018)



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(1) Product information may differ in each region

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