

TOYOTA GAZOO RACING NETS NÜRBURGRING POLE

Saturday 15 July 2017

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing will start the 6 Hours of Nürburgring from pole position after an impressive performance in qualifying for the fourth round of the 2017 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC).

Kamui Kobayashi and José María López took top spot by 0.154secs from the #2 Porsche for a third pole position in four races for the #7 TS050 HYBRID they share with Mike Conway.

Anthony Davidson and Kazuki Nakajima suffered misfortune on their way to fourth place in the #8 TS050 HYBRID while team-mate Sébastien Buemi watched from the garage.

The Nürburgring has not been a happy hunting ground for TOYOTA, with fifth place its best result in the Eifel, but a strong qualifying raises hopes of a best-ever result.

José María took part in his first WEC qualifying and immediately put the #7 in first place while Kazuki did well to avoid a swerving LMP2 car on his opening lap. That incident, which saw the LMP2 driver called to the stewards for dangerous driving, ruined Kazuki's first flying lap and compromised the qualifying session for the #8.

Kamui, who set a record-beating pole time at Le Mans last month, completed the job for the #7 with another quick time, beating the 2016 pole position average by 1.326secs, while Anthony encountered traffic at the beginning of his lap and took fourth.

The point earned for pole reduces TOYOTA's gap to Porsche to 23.5 points while the #8 crew stay 17 behind the Porsche #2 line-up in the drivers' standings. The target for Sunday's race remains to fight for victory and move closer to the lead of both championships.

TS050 HYBRID #7 (Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi, José María López)

Free practice 3: 1st (1min 38.969secs), 26 laps

Qualifying: 1st (1min 38.118secs average)

Kamui Kobayashi (TS050 HYBRID #7): "We will enjoy this moment; qualifying is only a small part of the weekend but it's nice to be on pole and earn another point for the team. We made continuous improvements during practice after we struggled a bit on Friday. José did a really good lap today and everyone did a great job; this is the result of our team work. Now our focus is on the race."

José María López (TS050 HYBRID #7): "We needed to catch up a bit after Friday so everyone pushed really hard to improve the set-up and be competitive in qualifying. In final practice we saw the potential and the team did really well to put it together, including a fantastic lap from Kamui. I'm really happy with my first WEC qualifying and pole position so now I can't wait for the race."

TS050 HYBRID #8 (Sébastien Buemi, Anthony Davidson, Kazuki Nakajima)

Free practice 3: 2nd (1min 39.396secs), 29 laps

Qualifying: 4th (1min 38.703secs average)

Anthony Davidson (TS050 HYBRID #8): "It was a frustrating qualifying; I wish I could turn back time because the car felt really good but unfortunately going into turn one an LMP2 came out of the pits and blocked me. I couldn't do anything about that. Maybe my lap wasn't good enough for pole but it would have been quicker. I think we have a good race car for tomorrow so I'm looking forward to it."

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 RIKA

ぼんの楽郷

NPR
NIPPON PISTON RING CO. LTD.

TAMACHI

FURUKAWA ELECTRIC GROUP

MAEDA
MILK-MANUFACTURE / COOKING

FINE SINTER

airweave

MICHELIN

Kazuki Nakajima (TS050 HYBRID #8): "It was obviously a difficult qualifying but I am happy that I could keep the car in one piece; it could have been a big crash due to the incident with the LMP2. The sister car did a great job and was really quick so congratulations to them. It shows our car is quite strong here so I hope we can be competitive in the race and score good points for the championship."

Free practice 3 results:

1st	#7 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing	1min 38.969secs	26 laps
2nd	#8 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing	+0.427secs	29 laps
3rd	#2 Porsche (Bernhard/Bamber/Hartley)	+1.666secs	32 laps
4th	#1 Porsche (Jani/Lotterer/Tandy)	+1.798secs	27 laps
5th	#31 Rebellion (Canal/Senna/Albuquerque)	+7.048secs	27 laps
6th	#35 Alpine (Ragues/Negrao/Panciatici)	+7.252secs	27 laps

Qualifying results:

1st	#7 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing	1min 38.118secs
2nd	#2 Porsche (Bernhard/Bamber/Hartley)	+0.154secs
3rd	#1 Porsche (Jani/Lotterer/Tandy)	+0.160secs
4th	#8 TOYOTA GAZOO Racing	+0.585secs
5th	#26 G-Drive (Rusinov/Thiriet/Hanley)	+6.883secs
6th	#38 Jackie Chan (Tung/Jarvis/Laurent)	+7.079secs

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 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 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

DENSO

Mobil 1

ZENT

AW
AISIN AW

JTEKT

AISIN

NIPPON STEEL & SUMITOMO METAL

RAYS

ADVICS

HAYASHI TELEMU

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

ぼねの東郷

NPR
NIPPON PISTON RING CO. LTD.

TAMACHI

FURUKAWA ELECTRIC GROUP

MAEDA
SHI-EI / SHIBUYA / GARDEN

FINE SINTER

airweave

MICHELIN