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Toyota Motor Corporation

GAZOO Racing Company

**HOME RACE BECKONS FOR TOYOTA GAZOO RACING**

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing heads to Japan this weekend determined to deliver a result to celebrate for its home fans in the 6 Hours of Fuji, the fourth round of the 2018-19 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC).

The team has won its home event five times from six attempts since its return to endurance racing in 2012 and, following disappointment at Silverstone in August, it is highly motivated to earn its third one-two victory at Fuji Speedway and extend its World Championship advantage.

A large crowd is expected for Le Mans winners TOYOTA at Fuji Speedway, which sits on the foothills of Mount Fuji and just a few kilometres away from Higashi-Fuji Technical Centre where the 1,000PS hybrid electric powertrain is developed and built.

In front of its home fans and many TOYOTA colleagues, the team aims to extend its lead in the teams’ World Championship, which was reduced to just three points over Rebellion Racing by a post-race stewards’ decision to disqualify both TS050 HYBRIDs following the one-two win at Silverstone.

Sébastien Buemi, Kazuki Nakajima and Fernando Alonso in the #8 TS050 HYBRID continue to lead the drivers’ World Championship, by a reduced margin of just two points from the #3 Rebellion crew, and they are looking for their third win of the season to extend that gap.

The #7 TS050 HYBRID line-up of Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and José María López competed very strongly at Silverstone and will challenge for their first victory of the season at Fuji, the scene of Mike and Kamui’s most recent win, in October 2016.

Just like at Silverstone, both crews will use the high-downforce-specification TS050 HYBRID next weekend, with action beginning on Friday 12 October with two 90-minute practice sessions. Saturday 13 October will see another 60-minute practice session and a short qualifying of 20 minutes. The six-hour race begins at midday local time on Sunday 14 October.

**Hisatake Murata, Team President:** “What happened after the Silverstone race is now in the past and we have spent the last few weeks fully focused on Fuji, where we very much want to deliver a strong result for our fans and colleagues who will be there to support us. It is our first time for the team to visit Japan since our Le Mans victory so it will be a special weekend for us and we are pushing hard for this race. After Le Mans, Fuji is our most important race and there can be no doubt about the target; another one-two victory.”

**Mike Conway (TS050 HYBRID #7):** “I like Fuji a lot and I know all the drivers do as well. Japan is a great country and, of course, this weekend’s event is the home race for TOYOTA GAZOO Racing so it is something special for all of us. You can feel that there is a special spirit in the team when we come to Fuji; I always look forward to it. Our #7 car won here in 2016; I hope we can be strong again and bring home the winner’s trophy.”

**Kamui Kobayashi** **(TS050 HYBRID #7):** “I can’t wait to get to our home race. It will be great to show our exciting TS050 HYBRID to the Japanese fans. Fuji was always a good venue for us. We know the track very well and have been extremely successful here over the years. Our team has won five out of six WEC races here and for me the 2016 home victory was a really memorable moment. For 2018, our most important target is a one-two on TOYOTA’s home race.”

**José María López (TS050 HYBRID #7):** “For our team, Fuji is the most important race after Le Mans and we know that the TOYOTA family is coming to the track to support us. Happily, we have always done well at our home race. Last year, we have achieved a 1-2 and we hope that we can do the same again; but of course I would prefer that this time car #7 is on top. We have had so many pole positions over the last two years so now we really want to turn this into a win.”

**Sébastien Buemi (TS050 HYBRID #8):** “It’s been a long time since Silverstone so I am ready for this weekend’s race. Fuji has been a great circuit for TOYOTA over the years; our car always seems to go well there which is great considering it’s the home race for our team. I also really enjoy meeting our Japanese fans because they are so enthusiastic and welcoming; this makes the Fuji weekend particularly special for us. We will be pushing hard to give them a result to celebrate.”

**Kazuki Nakajima (TS050 HYBRID #8):** “I really enjoy racing in Japan and particularly at Fuji Speedway which is one of my favourite circuits. It’s a challenging lay-out, particularly for endurance racing when we have to fight our way through the traffic; you can win or lose a lot of time there. It is my home race but more importantly the home race for TOYOTA so we always have a lot of support from the fans. We have had so much success in the past at Fuji so I hope we can again take the top step of the podium.”

**Fernando Alonso (TS050 HYBRID #8):** “I am looking forward to my first race for TOYOTA at Fuji; it’s the home race for the team so it is an important weekend and we are all fully motivated. I know Fuji from Formula 1 and I have happy memories from the track as I won the Japanese Grand Prix there in 2008. So I know what it’s like to stand in the middle of the podium there and I hope we can do so again this weekend as it will be important for both World Championships.”

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