



Toyota scores a dramatic one-two in the Tourist Trophy

Sebastien Buemi, driving a Toyota TS 040 Hybrid, won a thrilling Tourist Trophy race at Silverstone on Sunday 20 April in the opening round of the FIA World Endurance Championship. Buemi, co-driving with Anthony Davidson and Nicolas Lapierre battled ever worsening conditions to clinch victory behind a safety car and with the red flag waving.

Rain in the first hour of the race saw the 27-car field thrown into disorder, with teams gambling to either stay on slicks or move to intermediate tyres as the clouds moved over the circuit. Still, the Toyota one-two, Audi three-four positions remained during the first stage with another formidable name close behind; Porsche. The endurance racing giant has made a return to the LMP 1 Class for the 2014 season, fielding two 919 Hybrids. During the ensuing dry period, Toyota never really lost the lead, though the Audis took themselves out of the running when first Lucas Di Grassi crashed at Woodcote, then Benoit Treluyer came off at Copse. Only one Porsche prototype remained in the race (Timo Bernhard, Mark Weber, Brendon Hartley), coming in third behind the Toyotas.

'It was really freaky in the end,' said Buemi commenting on the final downpour that brought the race to a close 26 minutes early. 'It was the best decision to stop the race.' Davidson added; 'It's been an amazing weekend. First we had a difficult qualifying because of a capacitor breaking. But we brought it back in the race. In the difficult conditions, the team was just sublime. They made all the right calls, and the drivers did a fantastic job. We really showed our class today'.

After a break of two decades, 2012 saw the formation of the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC). The Championship revives the historic thread of the World Championships which were, at their peak from the 1950s to the 1980s, every bit as popular, powerful and entertaining as Formula One. Today, the FIA WEC offers a multitude of opportunities to engineers, teams, manufacturers and drivers to compete in a high profile and prestigious calendar of events, based around the showcase of the sport worldwide – the 24 Hours of Le Mans. Much of the prestige of the Tourist Trophy is embodied in its relevance. Even in 1905 the emphasis was not purely on speed but also on fuel economy, making it an enormous challenge on all fronts to the teams and drivers taking part and it remains so to this day.

Presenting the Tourist Trophy to the drivers, Ben Cussons, Chairman of the Royal Automobile Club Motoring Committee, said: 'Just like the early pioneers of racing when the Tourist Trophy was first awarded, the Toyota team proved it could master both the car and the conditions to take an impressive win. They are worthy winners'.

The Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy was first awarded in 1905. The winner of that race was John Napier driving an 18hp Arrol-Johnston in a race over four laps of a fearsome 52-mile open road loop around the Isle of Man. His average speed was 34mph. At Silverstone on Sunday, the winning Toyota averaged 202.6mph.

Notes to Editors:

About The Royal Automobile Club

The Royal Automobile Club was founded in 1897 and its distinguished history mirrors that of motoring itself. In 1907, the Club was awarded its Royal title by King Edward VII, sealing the Club's status as Britain's oldest and most influential motoring organisation.

The Club's early years were focused on promoting the motor car and its place in society, which developed into motoring events such as the 1000 Mile Trial, first held in 1900. In 1905, the Club held the first Tourist Trophy, which remains the oldest continuously competed for motor sports event. The Club promoted the first pre-war and post-war Grands Prix at Brooklands in 1926 and Silverstone in 1948 respectively, whilst continuing to campaign for the rights of the motorist, including introducing the first driving licences.

Today, the Club continues to develop and support automobilism through representation on the Motor Sport Association (MSA), Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and RAC Foundation, while continuing to promote its own motoring events, such as the free-to-attend Regent Street Motor Show and the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run.

The Royal Automobile Club also awards a series of historic trophies and medals celebrating motoring achievements. These include the Segrave Trophy, the Tourist Trophy, the Simms Medal, the Dewar Trophy and the Torrens Trophy.

A Royal Automobile Club Event



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