



Toyota Celebrates Race and Rally Wins Around the World

18 February 2019

Toyota claimed top-level sporting victories on both sides of the world at the weekend with Ott Tänak dominating Rally Sweden in a Yaris WRC in the World Rally Championship and Camry driver Denny Hamlin leading home a 1-2-3 result for Joe Gibbs Racing in NASCAR's famous Daytona 500 in Florida.

Rally Sweden

Ott Tänak and co-driver Martin Järveoja put in a dominant performance to give Toyota Gazoo Racing World Rally Team their first win of the 2019 FIA WRC season. The result also moves the young Estonian into the lead in the drivers' championship standings.

It was a fine end to a challenging event for the team, with the Yaris WRC drivers having to contend with melting snow and ice. Tänak ended Friday, the first full day of action, within two seconds of the rally lead and then capitalised on his better road position on Saturday to open up an advantage of nearly a minute. On Sunday, he took care through the opening two stages and was then fastest on the Power Stage by 3.5 seconds to claim five bonus points.

Kris Meeke clinched sixth position overall in his second rally with the team, having increased his margin over his closest rival during the final day. His points have helped the team to claim a one-point lead in the manufacturers' championship. Jari-Matti Latvala, competing under restart rules following an off on Friday, claimed a stage win in the day's opening test. Marcus Grönholm also completed his comeback rally in a privately-entered Yaris WRC.

Team Principal Tommi Mäkinen said: "It is brilliant to get a win here in the second round of the season and to be leading both championships. Ott dominated the whole weekend, showing everyone how to drive in the difficult conditions. He is really strong at the moment. When I look at him right now, I see myself over 20 years ago when I was focusing on winning the title. Of course, it was a more difficult weekend for Kris and for Jari-Matti, but they too have shown the speed of our car, and its reliability."

The team will next be competing in very different conditions, dealing with the challenges of high altitudes and soaring temperatures on Rally Mexico, taking place from 7 to 10 March.

PROVISIONAL FINAL CLASSIFICATION, RALLY SWEDEN

1 Ott Tänak/Martin Järveoja (Toyota Yaris WRC) 2h47m30.0s

2 Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (Citroën C3 WRC) +53.7s

3 Thierry Neuville/Nicolas Gilsoul (Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC) +56.7s

4 Andreas Mikkelsen/Anders Jaeger-Amland (Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC) +1m05.4s

5 Elfyn Evans/Scott Martin (Ford Fiesta WRC) +1m08.2s

6 Kris Meeke/Seb Marshall (Toyota Yaris WRC) +1m38.8s

7 Sebastien Loeb/Daniel Elena (Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC) +1m49.7s

8 Pontus Tidemand/Ola Floene (Ford Fiesta WRC) +3m37.7s

9 Ole Christian Veiby/Jonas Andersson (Volkswagen Polo R5) +6m34.0s

10 Janne Tuohino/Mikko Markkula (Ford Fiesta WRC) +8m21.4s

21 Jari-Matti Latvala/Miikka Anttila (Toyota Yaris WRC) +14m44.4s

Daytona 500

The Toyota Camry – returning to the UK this year as an all-new road-going model – took top honours in an incident-packed Daytona 500 on Sunday, the first round of the 2019 NASCAR Cup Series.

Denny Hamlin led home team-mates Kyle Busch and Erik Jones in an emotional one-two-three finish for Joe Gibbs Racing. After crossing the line, Hamlin dedicated his victory to the memory of JD Gibbs, who founded the team with his father and recently died from a degenerative illness.

The three Camry racers survived the multiple accidents and red-flag incidents which occurred during the race at Daytona Beach in Florida, including a 21-car pile-up 10 laps from the chequered flag.

The weekend's NASCAR action also saw the Toyota Supra make its racing debut in the Xfinity series at the Daytona International Speedway. Brandon Jones finished third in Saturday afternoon's race, with Christopher Bell also making the top-10 in sixth. Jeffrey Earnhardt led a career-best 29 laps out of the 120 in the race in his first NXS race in a Toyota.

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