

Toyota Deutschland GmbH 50420 Köln

Monday 20 April 2009

Panasonic Toyota Racing Bahrain Grand Prix - Preview

Date: Sunday 26 April, 2pm CET

Round: 4 of 17

Venue: Bahrain International Circuit

Distance: 5.412km (57 laps)

Lap record: 1min 30.252 (2004)

History: The first Bahrain Grand Prix was held in 2004 at the Bahrain International Circuit, which has held the race every year since. In 2006, Bahrain had the honour of being the first race of the season.

Panasonic Toyota Racing returns to action swiftly after the Chinese Grand Prix with a trip to the Middle East for the Bahrain Grand Prix on the Bahrain International Circuit at Sakhir. The team benefits from extensive recent experience of the track with the TF109, having spent two weeks testing there in February, completing 3,847km over 711 laps. Toyota has scored points in every race so far this season, with Timo Glock claiming a fighting seventh place in China on a day when Jarno Trulli was eliminated after being hit from behind by a rival. This weekend the team will again use the super soft and medium compound Bridgestone Potenza tyres, having previously used these in both China and Australia. Toyota has a strong record in Bahrain and already has experience of the podium there following Jarno's second place in 2005. More recently, Jarno finished sixth there last year while Timo was ninth after a late gearbox issue denied him points.

Jarno Trulli (Car 9): "I am looking forward to racing in Bahrain after the tests we had there over the winter. Bahrain was the first chance I had to really test the TF109 in dry conditions and I knew immediately we had a competitive package, which has proved to be the case now the season has started. In testing the car was strong in Bahrain so I have a good feeling for this weekend and I think we can be competitive. Weather and track conditions change from winter testing to the race weekend but it should still help us a bit to have set-up information

from the new car at this track, and we have quite a bit of experience now with these two compounds of tyre. I will push as hard as I can, as always, and I know everyone in the team is really motivated so I hope for a smooth and successful weekend."

Timo Glock (Car 10): "The Bahrain Grand Prix is good fun and the track is unique. For car set-up you have to compromise between straightline speed and grip in the slower corners, which is quite a tricky balance to achieve. One issue we face particularly in Bahrain is the wind, which comes in across the desert and can change direction from lap to lap. This can make the car a bit unstable if it blows in the wrong direction but we know what to expect so we can be prepared. Last year I was pretty unlucky in Bahrain because I had to back off with a small technical issue when I was sure I would score my first points for the team. But this season has started in a much better way compared to 2008 and I am confident I can continue to show that good performance."

Pascal Vasselon, Senior General Manager Chassis: "We achieved a huge amount of laps in Bahrain during testing and this was very useful in terms of developing the TF109. It should also be useful for this weekend because we have some experience of set-up and slick tyres at this track with the new cars, so we should hit the ground running on Friday. We tested both tyre compounds when we were in Bahrain in February and they performed well in representative temperature conditions so we're not expecting any major problems in that area. Otherwise, Bahrain is quite tough on the brakes; we expect it to be harder on them than any other race this season."

Passion to Lead This year, as part of a global Toyota campaign, the TF109s will feature messages used by local Toyota distributors to thank them for their continuing support of Panasonic Toyota Racing. This weekend, 'Passion to Lead' is inspired by Toyota in Bahrain. The message can be seen on the rear wing end plates and the driver's head protection of the TF109.