



## Hitotsuyama Racing

Press release - 2012. 0515 - 005

# Race Report

**Super GT 2012 Series**

Round-2 / Fuji International Speedway

## Severe Result of Finishing the 500km Race Out of Points

Hitotsuyama Racing had both cars brought to finish at the Super GT Round 2 held at Fuji Speedway on May 3 – 4th.





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## May 3rd, Official Practice / Qualifying Sessions

### #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS Frank Yu / Hideki Noda / Kenji Kobayashi

This race is held as an annual event in "Golden Week" and a lot of spectators come visit this race every year. The race distance for this race is 500km, longer than the usual race, and Kenji Kobayashi joined #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS as the third driver. He is the driver who participated in GT Asia series with Audi R8 LMS from Hitotsuyama Racing last year.

Also for the first driver, Frank Yu from Hong Kong took the place of Michael Kim who was the driver of the Round 1. Frank Yu also participated in GT Asia series with Audi R8 LMS from Hitotsuyama Racing last year, and he has a lot of experience of driving Audi R8 LMS at various GT races other than that. Therefore, he is said to be one of the drivers who know Audi R8 LMS well. Frank Yu and Michael Kim will take turns race by race to drive #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS.

In the morning official practice session, even though 3 drivers should perform the program smoothly, there were crashes and spins of the rival machines one after another due to the continuous rain from the previous day. The session was red-flagged many times, and #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS finished the official practice session 22nd without being allowed to have enough driving. The weather did not change in the official qualifying session held in the afternoon either. Each machine entered the track in order to go for the super lap. Noda was responsible for Q1 with #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS. Noda judged that intermediate tires would match the track condition better when he completed one timed lap and came back to the pit in order to change the wet tires to intermediate. However, Lamborghini had the trouble of oil leak during our pit-in, and a large amount of oil was spilt over the track. After this oil leak trouble of Lamborghini, no machines could achieve the better lap times, and it appeared that the machines which conducted the time attack just after the start of the qualifying dominated in the top slots. #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS had the disappointing result of finishing the qualifying in the 18th position in the class without having a chance for the time attack.

### #21 ZENT Audi R8 LMS Akihiro Tsuzuki / Cyndie Alleman / Yukinori Taniguchi

#21 ZENT Audi R8 LMS finished 9th at the first round of Okayama and now aim for the higher position in this race. Hitotsuyama Racing welcomed Yukinori Taniguchi, who fought WTCC full season last year, as their third driver to support Tsuzuki and Cyndie. In the morning official practice session, we proceeded with the setting program with Tsuzuki as the main driver, but strong rain and repeated red flag situation made us unable to have enough time for the setting and sink to the lower position. Tsuzuki marked the 12th lap time in the class, but we had to face the official qualifying session in the afternoon leaving us a number of challenges in the difficult condition.

Tsuzuki, who was in charge of Q1, went into the track checking the condition of rain. However, at the time of the time attack, a large amount of oil was spilt over the track as mentioned before, and Tsuzuki could not achieve the better lap time at all. In the first qualifying session, while some machines that had time attack while the track was clean marked the lap time of 1' 52"s, Tsuzuki, who lost the timing for the time attack, recorded 2' 00"s, with a big difference from them, and had the unexpected result of finishing the qualifying in the 20th position in the class.

P1 #11 GAINER DIXCEL R8 LMS Tetsuya Tanaka / Katsuyuki Hiranaka

P2 #43 ARTA Garaiya Shinichi Takagi / Kosuke Matsuura

P3 #15 ART TASTE PORSCHE Tim Bergmeister / Takeshi Tsuchiya / Jörg Bergmeister

**P18 #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS Frank Yu / Hideki Noda / Kenji Kobayashi**

**P20 #21 ZENT Audi R8 LMS Akihiro Tsuzuki / Cyndie Alleman / Yukinori Taniguchi**



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## May 4th, Race Day

### #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS Frank Yu / Hideki Noda / Kenji Kobayashi

The rain until the previous day stopped and nearly 60,000 spectators visited the event on the race day. We were sure that we would have the race in dry condition, but light rain started on the starting grids all of a sudden. Each team was wondering which tire to choose on the grids until the last minute, but almost all teams put the dry tires on for the start to bet on the recovery of the weather. Due to this difficult weather, the race was started with the safety car, but the rain got heavier suddenly during the safety car run to the contrary of the anticipation of many teams. While many a majority of teams had their cars come back to pits to change tires to the wet tires, Noda of #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS, who was sunk in the lower qualifiers, took a gamble and stayed on track with the dry tires. The race was started when the safety car left the track. However, the rain didn't get weak soon, which forced Noda of #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS to have the severe development of the race and was overtaken by the rivals who changed the tires to the wet tires one after another. After that, the weather got better and the track started drying up, and then Noda went up his pace. He was once ranked in 21st but made way up to 12th position, and handed the steering wheel to Frank.

This was Frank's debut race of Super GT. There were some scenes where he went down his pace while racing with GT500 cars, but he gradually achieved the better lap time while taking care of the tires. However, when the race was approaching in the middle, Tim Bergmeister of #15 ART TASTE PORSCHE had a single crash on the straight. He crashed into the guardrail at high speed and wrecked the machine. Safety car was brought in the track and the officials carried out the rescue of Tim.

After 6 laps of the safety car run, the race was resumed. Frank renewed his personal best again after that and had the total of 34 laps. He completed his part without any mistakes in his debut race, and the contents of the race was good enough to put him one step closer to his dream of "participating in Super GT full season from the next season". He made his way up to 15th from the position 18th at the time of pit-out, and then entrusted the last stint to Kobayashi.

Kobayashi, who has been participating in the racing activities mainly in Porsche Carrera Cup so far, had difficulty with the machine characteristics of R8 until the official practice session, but made the laps with the stable lap times in the race which made us forget his slump so far. He firmly controlled the machine even in the rain which started again when the race distance was less than 10 laps, and brought #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS to finish the 500km race in the 16th position.

### #21 ZENT Audi R8 LMS Akihiro Tsuzuki / Cyndie Alleman / Yukinori Taniguchi

It was our ace driver Akihiro Tsuzuki who took charge of the start with #21 ZENT Audi R8 LMS. Tsuzuki changed the strategy from the one taken by #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS and changed the tires to the wet tires during the safety car run. The position was down to 22nd when the race was resumed after the safety car left the track, but Tsuzuki, who specializes in the wet condition, went up to 4th position in only about 10 laps to enliven the team. #21 ZENT Audi R8 LMS dared the irregular pit work because the track surface started drying up after that. On the 16th lap, we changed the tires to the dry tires, refueled, had the driver change to the third driver Taniguchi, and then sent the car back to the track. Like Frank, this was the Super GT debut race for Taniguchi, but he was carried off and had a spin by the still-not-dry track surface at the last corner on the out lap. It took too much time for the return and dropped the position to 21st. After returning to the race, he recorded the stable lap times, went up 2 positions and handed over the car to Cyndie in 19th position. Having finished 9th at the first round Okayama, Cyndie has been enthusiastic and determined to advance to the better position than that at this race. It was a difficult situation, with the position being 20th, at the time of entering the track, but she gradually went up the positions with her natural tenacity and stability. She drove the total of 38 laps, went up to 15th, and entrusted the last stint to Tsuzuki again. This is the position which is difficult for us to be ranked for the points, but Tsuzuki continued to drive at the pace to update his best lap time and focused on the work to accumulate data by continuously informing the team of the feeling of the machine and the tires at the same time. In the end, he caught up with #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS and finished the race in the 15th position.

P1 #0 GSR Hatsune Miku BMW Nobuteru Taniguchi / Tatsuya Kataoka

P2 #2 Evangelion RT Shogoki Apple Shiden Kazuho Takahashi / Hiroki Katoh

P3 #66 triple a vantage GT3 Hiroki Yoshimoto / Kazuki Hoshino

**P15 #21 ZENT Audi R8 LMS Akihiro Tsuzuki / Cyndie Alleman / Yukinori Taniguchi**

**P16 #20 Racerbook Audi R8 LMS Frank Yu / Hideki Noda / Kenji Kobayashi**

Hitotsuyama Racing had the aim to acquire the points with both cars at this event but had disappointing results of both cars finishing the race out of points due to the difficult weather condition. We will go for the next round in Sepang to be able to achieve this goal.

Thank you very much for your continued support.