



For Immediate Release

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Mazda Team Joest Tests Endurance at Daytona

- Both No. 55 and No. 77 Mazda RT24-P's show speed but retire before finish of Rolex 24 at Daytona -

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (January 28, 2018) – The Mazda RT24-Ps demonstrated a major leap forward in competitiveness at Daytona International Speedway, but unfortunately both cars retired before the finish of this weekend's Rolex 24 at Daytona, the first round of the 2018 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship.

The heavily-revised Mazda RT24-P's showed their increased speed throughout the week at Daytona. Rene Rast led the first practice in the No. 77 Castrol/ModSpace Mazda RT24-P that he shared with Tristan Nunez and Oliver Jarvis, while Jonathan Bomarito qualified in ninth position in the Prototype class in the No. 55 Mazda RT24-P that he shared with Harry Tincknell and Spencer Pigot. Underlining the progress made by Mazda Team Joest, Bomarito's qualifying time was 3.3-seconds faster than the best qualifying time of the RT24-P in 2017.

Both Mazda Team Joest cars moved forward into the top-ten of the field by the race's second hour, but then a variety of issues including multiple tire punctures and electrical issues slowed their progress. The crew responded by resolving every issue, and the drivers responded by running a competitive race pace through the day and into the night – and through a brief rainstorm that fell in the race's sixth hour.

However, just before 8:00 AM an exhaust failure caused the retirement of the No. 55 Mazda RT24-P, driven at the time by Bomarito. Shortly after that the team elected to retire the No. 77 Castrol/ModSpace Mazda RT24-P, driven at the time by Nunez, after repeated electrical issues led to the failure of the car's power steering.



The next round of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship will be the 12 Hours of Sebring on March 17.

Quotes

John Doonan

“If you roll the clock back, qualifying last year at a 1:39.9 and this year at a 1:36.6 – it’s monumental. And kicking off the week by being quickest in the first practice was a huge uplift to the guys. It was only practice, but we made a statement – we are here, we are serious – it was a big deal. And we entered the race knowing that we could run with the other Prototypes, so those were all positive. Clearly, there were some challenges, but I want to walk out of here and take all the positives, and the things that were challenging, and take that momentum to solve the problems so we can show up at Sebring and be more competitive.”

No. 55 Mazda RT24-P DPi

Jonathan Bomarito

“There were definitely some highlights for us at the Rolex 24 at Daytona. Our pace was very competitive in the wet and the dry. In the wet, I was able to go through the field and pass the overall leader which is very promising for our car. We get to take many things that we learned from this race, good and bad, to further the program for the future. This was the first race for Mazda Team Joest, really our first endurance test, and they are so smart and thorough that a lot of these little issues will be fixed the next time that we come to the track.”

Spencer Pigot

“We can definitely take some positives away from here. The way that the team responded to adversity was encouraging, our pit stops were really good, and the pace was encouraging. We were able to fight with the other Prototype cars for position, which was a nice change. The transformation of the team has been really impressive since we were in Daytona last year, and that has everyone encouraged and excited to get back to racing soon.”



Harry Tincknell

“We qualified nearly three-and-a-half seconds quicker than last year, and we had the pace of the leaders throughout the race. In some ways we expected a 24-hour test, so I’m really happy with how much progress we have made in a relatively short period of time. We had a few gremlins on the way that were fixed quickly, and the team knows what it needs to do to strengthen the car in the future. I was really happy with the fact that we had the pace that we did because I don’t think Daytona will be the Mazda’s strongest circuit. It was very positive and I’m confident we will win races and get podiums in this car.”

No. 77 Castrol/ModSpace Mazda RT24-P DPi

Oliver Jarvis

“It would be easy to dwell on the negatives instead of focus on the positives – and that is that we’ve got a quick race car. It was only a year ago that the cars were miles off the pace, and in a very short amount of time, the Mazda Team Joest guys have made a huge amount of progress. Having the troubles here in our first race means we are going to learn from them and it’s only going to make us stronger moving forward. And moving forward, we can go out and win races.”

Tristan Nunez

“The biggest positive from this race, with how hard it was on everyone, was the fact that we got a ton of logged data and miles on the package. I think it will benefit us going forward. The amount of progress we have made in the last twelve months has been night and day. Working with Mazda Team Joest has been great, especially with what’s gone on behind the scenes – the way everyone gets along, becoming more familiar with the car, and expanding relationships with everyone who is a part of the program.”

Rene Rast

“Obviously, we suffered some issues but, in a way, it is positive because we can learn from them. From when I drove the car for the first time, which was last year, we have made a big step forward



in improving the car. From last year to this year we were over three seconds quicker in qualifying pace and race pace. Obviously, this isn't very easy, but the team is still very motivated and then everybody is giving their best just to push things forward and I think for Sebring we will already have a better car."

Mazda Motorsports

Mazda Motorsports boasts the most comprehensive auto racing development ladder system of any auto manufacturer in the world. The Mazda Road to 24 (#MRT24) program offers a number of scholarships to advance drivers up the sports car racing ladder, beginning with the Global MX-5 Cup series and culminating with the Mazda Prototype team. The Mazda Road to Indy (#MRTI) is a similar program that includes Mazda-powered categories of USF2000, Pro Mazda and Indy Lights. In grassroots road racing, more Mazdas are road raced on any given weekend in North America than any other manufacturer. Follow all of the latest news at MazdaMotorsports.com, @MazdaRacing on Twitter, and MazdaMotorsports on Instagram and Facebook.

Mazda North American Operations

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