



DOCOMO TEAM DANDELION RACING

Team Release

Race Report

2019/5/19 Rd-2 Autopolis

Weather: rain/cloudy Temperature: 20°C, 20cars

Audience: 2,450/18th (Sat.) 3,700/19th (Sun.) 6,150 total

Qualifying

Rd2 Qualifying at AUTOPOLIS, which had been postponed to Sunday morning due to the heavy rain and the strong wind, was held as 40-min time trial.

The weather was as bad as yesterday, or rather worse. Considering the risks of red flag interruption, the two cars of DOCOMO TEAM DANDELION RACING went on-track as soon as QF started, and tried to attack after warming tires carefully. However, Yamamoto went off the course because of the wet surface during the warm-up lap. His car was damaged and stopped, and caused a red flag condition.

After his car was removed, QF was restarted. After that, the red flag came out three times because of the cars out of the course. Fukuzumi could attack at efficient timing in such a difficult situation, and recorded the third best time to get a good position for the race in the afternoon. Yamamoto's start would be tough from 17th grid.

Race

AUTOPOLIS was hit by heavy rain the whole weekend. Somehow, it stopped before the race, and the start was in dry condition.

Fukuzumi who started from 3rd place kept his position firmly and finished the opening lap. On the other hand, Yamamoto from 17th place came into the pits on Lap1 to change to soft tires, aiming for the top in a strategy for driving through 53 laps with good fuel efficiency and tire management.

On the next lap, when the safety car came in to remove a car which span and stopped on track, most of the drivers including Fukuzumi decided to change tires. The race was restarted after 8 laps. At this point, excluding the drivers who had not made their pit stops yet, Yamamoto was in third position and Fukuzumi was in fifth. They pushed aggressively and overtook competitors to shorten the time difference between drivers without pit stops.

Sekiguchi in the lead finally made a pit stop on Lap41. Yamamoto raised his position up to 2nd, however, he could not come in front of Sekiguchi who had



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more than 40-sec margin before his pit stop. Yamamoto finished in 2nd position and topped the drivers' standings, as a result of jumping up from 17th grid.

Fukuzumi showed remarkable push many times and finished in 5th to get precious points.

DOCOMO TEAM DANDELION RACING came out on top in the teams' standings.

#1: Naoki Yamamoto Position 2nd (1st among HONDA users)

Rd2 became one-day event because of the bad weather.

I broke my car in QF, and I thank my team for the wonderful job to place my car in starting grid. We chose an extraordinary strategy in the race because I started from 17th grid. This strategy and the competitive car made me jump up a lot.

I took the second place consecutively, and now I top the drivers' standings, which is a very good situation considering the whole season. I haven't won yet, so I will gird myself for win and the title.

#5: Nirei Fukuzumi Position 5th (3rd among HONDA users)

It was my first drive at this circuit and I thought learning the course was the most important thing. However, because of the bad weather, there was so little chance to drive that I had to deal with QF through trial and error. Red flag interruption was predicted in very bad condition, and I am glad that I could record the third best lap with good timing.

The race was rough but at a good pace. Although I managed to overtake at AUTOPOLIS where is hard to do, I was frustrated that I could not catch the car ahead when fighting for 4th position in the end of the race.

I am glad to bring points home and contribute to my team's standings.

I will cultivate my mind for next Sugo round.