Toyota Gazoo Racing Driver and Team Principal, Kamui Kobayashi, to Make NASCAR Debut at Indianapolis Road Course for 23XI Racing

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LE MANS, France (June 7, 2023) – Toyota and 23XI Racing announced today that famed Toyota Gazoo Racing driver and WEC (World Endurance Championship) team principal, Kamui Kobayashi will make his NASCAR debut in the No. 67 Toyota Genuine Parts Camry TRD at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Road Course on August 13.

“NASCAR is something different in the culture of motorsports compared to Japan and Europe – as a driver, it’s the American dream,” said Kamui Kobayashi, Toyota Gazoo Racing driver and WEC team principal. “I was lucky to be able to race in IMSA the last couple of years. It’s a different form of racing, but I think the racing technology is at a high level. I really appreciate this opportunity from TRD, U.S.A. and of course Toyota Motor North America and Toyota Gazoo Racing. Toyota has been racing in NASCAR for a long time, but I don’t think any other Japanese driver has raced a Toyota in the Cup Series. I’m very proud of this opportunity.”

Kobayashi started his racing career karting in Japan and after winning several titles, he won a scholarship to join Toyota’s Young Drivers program and made the transition into single seater race cars. This portion of his career also started in Japan and later into Europe, which led to being hired as Toyota’s Formula 1 driver. In 2008, Toyota signed Kobayashi as their third driver resulting in his debut during the 2009 season at the Brazilian GP. Kobayashi was active until 2014 in the highest level of racing in the world, Formula 1. Following his Formula 1 career, Kobayashi returned to Japan where he switched to the Supra Formula Series, a class he still actively competes in today. Kobayashi also competed as part of the IMSA Series for the Lexus Racing program in 2022 at the Canadian Tire Motorsports Park when he filled in for the injured Jack Hawksworth. Kobayashi is now a driver and team principal with the Toyota Gazoo Racing Team in the World Endurance Championship (WEC).

“It’s truly an honor to have Kamui want to participate in our NASCAR Cup Series program, and we’re thrilled that we could work with our partners at 23XI Racing to give him a competitive Camry TRD for the Indianapolis Motor Speedway road course event,” said David Wilson, president of TRD, U.S.A. (Toyota Racing Development). “Kamui shares the passion for motorsports that all of us at Toyota and TRD, U.S.A. live every day so it will be exciting to show him our NASCAR program with him behind the wheel of one of our TRD Camrys.”

Toyota began competing in the NASCAR Cup Series in 2007 and since that first event, have gone on to accumulate 174 victories across 13 seasons. In addition, Toyota drivers have earned three driver championships – Kyle Busch (2015, 2019) and Martin Truex Jr. (2017). Toyota has also claimed three manufacturer championships (2016, 2017 and 2019). In 2023, Toyota drivers have won four races with four different drivers. Those victories have allowed four Toyota drivers to secure their positions in this year’s championship Playoffs, including 23XI Racing driver Tyler Reddick.

We are thrilled to support Kamui in his first NASCAR Cup Series start as we field another competitive Toyota for the race in Indianapolis,” said Steve Lauletta, president of 23XI Racing. “This race will also serve as a great opportunity for our team to compete with and learn from a highly accomplished driver. Earlier in the season the No. 67 team did a great job preparing and executing at the Daytona 500 and we look forward to the same with

Kamui. We are also excited to introduce Kamui's many international fans to 23XI and our sport."

The NASCAR Cup Series will compete at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Road Course on Sunday, August 13 at 2:30 PM ET.