

ADVAN RACING TIRE INFORMATION

4TH ROUND, 2009 SUPER GT CHAMPIONSHIP

June 21, 2009

SUPER GT INTERNATIONAL SERIES in MALAYSIA



Super GT Championship is one of the motor racing series that YOKOHAMA RUBBER CO., LTD. aggressively supports through its ADVAN brand. The Series is a Japanese counterpart to the FIA International GT Championship and has been known for its competitiveness and a unique fly-away round traditionally organized in Sepang, Malaysia. YOKOHAMA continues its partnership with ADVAN Kondo Racing participating in the GT500 class with Joao Paulo de Oliveira and Seiji Ara, who have been spurring partners for three consecutive years. Driving HIS ADVAN Kondo GT-R, the pair now leads the Driver's Championship and Kondo Racing is spearheading the Team's Championship efforts.

In the 3rd round held in Fuji Speedway, HIS ADVAN Kondo GT-R, despite carrying a severe weight burden as much as 46kg, managed to proceed to Super Lap session. They performed wisely at the beginning of the race when there was a mishap immediately after the start. The ADVAN-equipped GT-R skillfully jumped to 2nd from the 8th grid and led the race on Lap 8. It finished the race 4th fastest but their superb performance was emphasized when you realized that the top-three cars were not handicapped. The extraordinary run by KONDO Racing was a synergetic result of team's intelligent strategy, drivers' perfect maneuvers and ADVAN rubber's consistency.

KONDO Racing will fly to Malaysia as the point leader. Though expectations are high for the team's third consecutive win at Sepang, in realistic terms, it might be difficult to achieve the success since the team will have to cope with a strong challenge from a competitor with a heavier car. The revised regulation for the 2009 Championship does not allow teams to



reduce the weight handicap by intentionally finishing low. The challenge is, therefore, to gain the best possible result under a difficult environment.

YOKOHAMA has worked tirelessly to allow the team to cope with the 62kg weight handicap by developing a new ADVAN Racing tire with a different structure. The rubber company has not gone too far, though. The development target always remains unchanged; the tire should maintain uniform road contact and feature appropriate resistance against longitudinal force input. In other words, it does not make sense to make the tire rigid just in order to withstand the weight increase. Excessive side-wall rigidity may cause frequent under-steer and instability at rear end under heavy braking.



It was confirmed during the combined tire test in Suzuka Circuit on the 21st and 22nd of May that the newly-developed rubber ensures a better balance with the car. YOKOHAMA is fully committed to supporting the team to achieve good results to at least maintain the current classification.

Looking at the situation in the GT300 class, Team Daishin ADVAN Ferrari finished 2nd in the class. M7 Mutiara Motor Amemiya SGC7 completed the 400km long-distance race without changing tires to finish 3rd. In so doing, the team has not missed the podium finish in the 2009 season. The fine result sheds light again on the ADVAN Racing tire's unique superiority that offers high-level stability against dramatic changes in temperature and surface conditions.

Another good run are likely for the ADVAN partner cars of M7 Mutiara Motor Amemiya SCG7, Weds Sport IS350 and S road MOLA Z. The absolute favorite is, however, I.M Jihan Co., Ltd. Apple Shiden because it is ironically free from the weight handicap due to the problematic performances in the previous two events. In addition, Jim Gainer ADVAN F430 has performed well in Sepang. The GT300 class competition will surely be centered on these two favorites plus the ADVAN-equipped cars.



ADVAN Racing Tire Information for Sepang, fourth round in 2009 Super GT Championship

		GT500	GT300
Dry Slick	Structure	1type	1type
	Compound	2type (MS, MH)	2type (MS, MH)
	Dimensions	Fr 330/710R18, Rr 330/710R17	280/710R18, 280/680R18, 280/650R18, 250/650R18
Grooved Wet	Structure	1type	1type
	Compound	2type (MS, MH)	2type (S, M)
	Dimensions	Fr 330/710R18, Rr 330/710R17	280/710R18, 280/680R18, 280/650R18, 250/650R18



ADVAN Racing 2009 Super GT Championship Mid-Season Review

In the GT500 class, HIS ADVAN Kondo won the season opener in his GT-R. The team currently leads the Championship. The GT300 class has so far been dominated by the top championship-teams. ADVAN-supported squads are more than ready to energize their sense of challenge.

ADVAN Racing began the 2009 season superbly by winning the opening race held in Okayama International Circuit with Joao Paulo De Oliveira / Seiji Ara driving HIS ADVAN Kondo GT-R. It was the first win in four years for the team on Japanese soil after its victory in Okayama in the opening round of 2005. Nevertheless, Sepang International Circuit in Malaysia has been so kind to the team that it won the sole fly-away events for two consecutive seasons.

Concerning the 2009 GT500 class, ADVAN Racing supports two teams of HIS Kondo Racing and Team Nova that entrusts Aston Martin Akasaka DBR9 to Akihiro Tsuzuki and Takeshi Tsuchiya. The latter is participating in the Super GT Championship sporadically as a preparatory, toe-tipping measure before his serious entry in the Asian Le Mans Series in November. As a result, ADVAN only offers regular support to Kondo Racing for the 2009 season, which gives the team sheer advantage of a more focused support but, at the same time, no data transfer is possible with other teams, which obviously is a disadvantage. Most of the paddock observers thought the team would have encountered difficulties not only on the season opener but throughout the season.

Sooner than later, their prediction was proven wrong; the ADVAN-supported GT-R clinched the 3rd grid in the qualifying session. At the start of the race, under wet conditions and led by the Safety

Car, Oliveira thrust his car through the pack to lead the race when the SC period was over. The 2009-spec. rain compound, which YOKOHAMA RUBBER aggressively developed and improved in winter, made a significant contribution to the success of the Brazilian driver, especially when he consistently made the right decisions when the situation changed such as the severity and unpredictability of the rain. Oliveira completed 51 laps out of 82 before the pit stop and switched to Ara. The two drivers never let competitors lead the race until the chequered flag including the pit stop period.

The 2nd round was held in Suzuka Circuit with the major refurbishment completed in April. In addition to the complete renewal of the paddock and grandstand, the East Course track has also been resurfaced. The West Course, on the other hand, remains unchanged, creating a mixed surface situation that poses a difficult challenge to the competitors. ADVAN Kondo Racing had a small problem in the qualifying session to start the event on the 12th grid. During the race, however, consistency allowed them to improve four positions to finish 8th overall.

The 3rd round was organized in Fuji Speedway. The overall distance of the race was shortened to 400km from the previous 500km. In addition, the revised racing regulations called for two mandatory pit stops and driver switches, causing another uncertainty to the race strategy. However, ADVAN Kondo Racing remained flexible and responded perfectly to the situation. The ADVAN-sponsored GT-R intentionally reduced the fuel load at the start and managed through a mishap to jump to 2nd from the 8th grid. By leading the field temporarily, the Brazilian-Japanese pair finished 4th overall thanks to the synergy between the team's strategy as well as tire advantage.



ADVAN Kondo Racing was at the top of the Championship standing by the end of the 3rd round. The margin is minimal: currently at one point but, considering the chemistry between Kondo and the Sepang racetrack, we can expect the team to increase their advantage over the competition.

Aston Martin Akasaka DBR9 has been struggling; finishing as low as 14th overall in the 1st and 3rd rounds mainly because of the handicap resulting from the LM-GT1 technical regulations that do not allow drastic modifications to the car. Nevertheless, their constant finishes allowed them to collect considerable technical track data.

As for the GT300 class where ADVAN users are dominant, the competitiveness of the field has increased due to a major driver exodus from the GT500. In reality, Jim Gainer ADVAN F430 secured the pole position in the opening race with newly-recruited Katsuyuki Hiranaka, who partners with Tetsuya Tanaka. Racing Project Bandoh Weds Sport IS250 won the race on Sunday. The team began servicing for Tatsuya Kataoka in the 2009 season.

In the 2nd round, M7 Mutiara Motors Amemiya SGC7 finished 2nd through successfully minimizing the loss of the pit stop by choosing a non-tire-change strategy. Team Nishizawa MOLA S Road MOLA Z of Kazuki Hoshino and Masataka Yanagida reached the goal 3rd fastest after overcoming the shortcomings caused by switching the ADVAN squad before the 2009 season.

The former champion team succeeded in mastering the new tire in just two races. The highlight of the 3rd round was the qualifying performance of Team Daishin ADVAN Ferrari built in accordance with the LM-GT2 regulation. Takayuki Aoki / Tomonobu Fujii clinched the front row. The overwhelming straight-line speed helped them finish 2nd in the race. In the same event held in Fuji, M7 Mutiara Motors Amemiya SGC7 repeated the success in the 2nd round by employing a superb strategy that eliminated the tire change during the pit stop. It finished 3rd, which was the third podium finish in as many races. Currently, Taniguchi and Co. are classified 2nd overall in the GT300 Team's Championship standing with a four-point deficit to the leader and, followed by Team Nishizawa, Team Daishin and Jim Gainer. Let's wait a while and see how they will perform on the Malaysian racetrack!

