

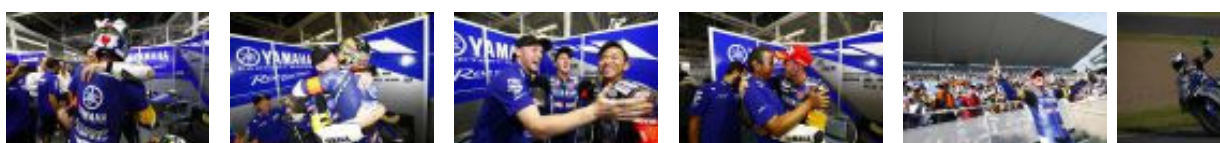


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Yamaha Factory Racing Strikes with Sensational Record Suzuka Pole



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Suzuka (Japan), 25th July 2015

Round 2 of the 2015 FIM Endurance World Championship
The 38th "Coca-Cola Zero" Suzuka 8 Hours Endurance Road Race

Saturday – 8H Top10 Trial

The **Yamaha Factory Racing Team** blew away the competition today with a stunning 2'06.000 on the **YZF-R1** around the 5807m long Suzuka Circuit to claim a superb pole position for the 38th "Café Zero" Suzuka 8 Hours Endurance Road Race.

Hot and sweaty weather and a slippery track set the scene for the third day of action at the legendary Suzuka 8 Hours endurance race weekend. Riders **Katsuyuki Nakasuga**, **Pol Espargaró** and **Bradley Smith** were competitive during the morning Free Practice session, setting the second fastest time with a 2'08.000. They didn't take any risks as the real challenge was yet to come.

The chosen riders for the pole position shoot-out **Nakasuga** and **Espargaró** stunned the Suzuka crowd with their performance in the afternoon's 8H Top10 Trial. During this session two riders per team are allowed to ride one full lap each around the technically challenging Suzuka Circuit to fight for pole position.

Espargaró was the first **YFRT** rider to hit the clear track and set a hot lap. The Spaniard pushed to the absolute limit, using all his MotoGP experience to set a stunning **2'06.000** lap for provisional pole, which was 1.697s faster than anyone so far.

Then it was local **Yamaha** hero **Nakasuga**'s turn to step aboard the **YZF-R1**. The experienced Japanese rider rode smoothly and aggressively through the twisty section, taking full advantage of the performance of **Yamaha**'s class leading Superbike to finish with an impressive lap just 0.059s off his teammate.

As none of the competitors were able to drop under the 2'06.2 mark, **Espargaró**'s incredible lap becomes the **new Endurance fastest lap at Suzuka**, more than six-tenths of a second faster than the previous Endurance Pole Record.

Today's results see the **Yamaha Factory Racing Team** on pole position for tomorrow's race, which starts at 11:30AM, local time.

Suzuka 8 Hours Endurance Road Race – 8H Top10 Trial – Results

1st YAMAHA FACTORY RACING TEAM - Yamaha - 2'06.000

2nd TeamGREEN - Kawasaki - 2'06.287

3rd MuSASHi RT HARC-PRO - Honda - 2'06.335

4th YOSHIMURA SUZUKI Shell ADVANCE - Suzuki - 2'06.516

5th Team KAGAYAMA - Suzuki - 2'07.990

6th F.C.C. TSR Honda - Honda - 2'08.076

7th TOHO Racing with MORIWAKI - Honda - 2'08.382

8th EVA RT TEST TYPE-01 TRICK STAR - Kawasaki - 2'08.950

9th Honda DREAM RT SAKURAI HONDA - Honda - 2'09.409

10th MotoMap SUPPLY - Suzuki - 2'11.019

To view today's 8H Top10 Trial Results click [HERE](#).

The extended high-res imagery from today's 8H Top10 Trial is available [HERE](#).

QUOTES



Katsuyuki Nakasuga

"I'm really happy, but at the same time I wish my lap time had been faster. I'm very happy for my [Espargarò], he did so well, but I wished I could have gone faster too, but I did my best. I'm not sad Pol was faster than me, I tried to beat his time but I couldn't and that was unfortunate for me, but this result for tomorrow and we are all going to try to do our best. I learned a lot today and I will use the experience gained today, and perhaps tomorrow, in the Japan Championship, which I race in."



Pol Espargarò

"I feel very happy, because this was a challenge for me and I did not expect this result. We did just with Bradley and Nakasuga in the preseason on the dry and we didn't ride a lot on this track. Bradley was fast this weekend, his pace was very similar and the same with Nakasuga, he was also very fast. Tomorrow I have the big show and it will be difficult, because anything can happen, but we are confident. When I set my lap time I was a bit surprised because I never tested the softer rear tyre during the tests or this weekend. I never rode in Superpole before with only one lap. Here today we had just one shot and in your mind you are always checking the lap and thinking of where you could improve something. Maybe I could have improved in the last sector, because I relaxed a little bit and was wary of making a mistake in the chicane. When I said 'come on!', because it would be difficult for someone to beat it, but when I saw the lap of Nakasuga-san I was a bit scared, he was also very fast, but I was lucky that I was fast in T1 and this was a chance, but Nakasuga was very strong in T4 and I was worried again. I'm happy because I did a good time, but Nakasuga was also under the record and Bradley showed good potential over the whole weekend. His pace is really similar and this is more important than the pole."



Bradley Smith

"First of all a big congratulations to my teammate, at the end of the day our team management made a call with who they chose for the Superpole, both guys were riding extremely fast. I'm happy to be starting the race from first position tomorrow for the team, but it's a bit different to do one lap compared to more laps in tomorrow's race. I hope we get a good night sleep, calm down from the excitement and be ready to start again tomorrow."



Wataru Yoshikawa Team Manager

"Pol and [Katsuyuki] Nakasuga were able to run super lap times on it in the 2'06 range, and we also had to use the race machine, so we are satisfied with today's results. However, the important thing is tomorrow. We are competing as a Yamaha Factory Team and our goal is to finish the race with a maximum of 218 laps using the EWC machine. If we can run that many laps, we believe we can win. To do this, I am going to stress again in our final meeting that we want the riders to run cautiously, keeping margins of space between themselves and the other [slower] machines they will encounter."