First Step of Revival.

Resumption of S102 Test

On Monday, Dome restarted the development of S102.
Back in 2008, Dome invested large amount of budget towards the development of S102. But the error which was caused by one of the supplier lead to the delay of the major components, Dome had to approach Le Mans race with insufficient preparation.
After Dome raced Le Mans without rehearsal, they were planning a full-scale development of the S102. However, “Lehman shock” caused the stagnation of the economy, effected them as well and they had to place the development of S102 in cold storage.
In fact, the S102 had been derelict for 2 years. At last they are able to place their hands on a full-scale development.

Even without basic development, S102 performed greatly at the race of 2008 Le Mans. This experience informed Dome that S102’s potential is very high. Simultaneously Dome also found some serious issues which they could not dodge with basic setup.
Especially pitching and traction control are the most critical issues.
The S102 weight distribution was tried to put on the front as much as possible to maximize the use of front tire to gain more speed during the turn-in. However, if they pursue more down force on the front, this will cause more pitching which brought the bad effect in the corning.
Securing the traction has been their important task upon development due to the frontward weight distribution. Dome had postponed their development of the original traction control system and had to rely on the primary traction control system which was managed by JUDD engine's ECU for the race of 2008 due to the lack of the time for the development.

Upon taking a restart of the chassis development, Dome has determined to solve various development theme that they have left behind since the race of 2008.
The content and the theme are more towards simple research and development rather than challenging the race of 2011 Le Mans. Dome appears to be enjoying this development.
In 2009, ACO changed several regulations. For example, introducing the 1.6m wing is one of them. Before the basic development, changing here and there will leave the problem point suspenseful. As for now, they will be gathering data with the 2008 model and use them as their blue print for development.
Therefore, S102 has been installed in the 2008 spec 630 horsepower model engine instead of the 2010 spec 680 horsepower one.
The only change regarding the new regulation to fit the semi-elliptical skid block which was to be obligated in 2009.
The semi-elliptical skid block is now to be mandatory by ACO since Peugeot and ORECA flew in 2008. If the car span, and the air hits this semi-elliptical skid block, that will correspond to the rapid change of aerodynamics. With safety in mind, Dome has added the semi-elliptical skid block.

Since the S102 has been dormant for 2 years now, the testing this time was mostly to check the chassis system. Dome run S102 in the sports driving session at Fuji Speedway. The volcano eruption in Iceland caused the shipment from Michelin Tires to be delayed. Without the tires at hand, Dome might have forced to suspend the testing till they received the shipment.
Test drive was done by Seiji Ara, who is the most experienced with the LMP car and drove the 2009 aero-package where the 1.6m rear wing was added as well.

Dome carried 4 test sessions on Monday. There were no functional problem during these test sessions and the recent goals of this test drive were accomplished quickly. Then, they started adjusting road clearance and others to advance setup.

Although Dome used the sports driving session when the other slower cars like “Yaris” were running, they concentrated to setup the chassis only to run the clear corner sections. From the mid of the session, they tried to different spring rate The direction of their setup was to be correct and the car was reacted to gain more tractions. Although the packaging is not yet ready for any serious “time attack” at this moment, the first testing ended with the gain of basic possibility.

One of Dome significant assignments, the development of traction control system, will be enhanced soon to throw the ball with their own system.
Because the first tests were taken place during the sport driving session with other cars running, they did not apply extreme setup where it will lose balance suddenly. Therefore, they tested the chassis with some high road clearance. Meaning, the improvement for the pitching was not to be available. Their next test session will be taking place with exclusive possession of the track. They should be able to apply testing and adjustments with lower road clearance for sharp breakings and turnings at corners with higher speed. As Dome development/improvement takes further steps, they will be installing the 1.6m rear wing from the 2009 regulation. Afterwards, the 2010 spec 680 horsepower motor will be installed and foreseeing the 2011 Le Mans series.

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