16th June, 2014

**Keiko IHARA finished the “24 Hours of Le Mans” as the first Asian women**

**by finishing in the 9th place of the class**

Keiko IHARA, who is participating in the European Le Mans Series (ELMS) and the World Endurance Championship (WEC) as a sole woman, participated in the 24 Hours of Le Mans in the Sarthe Circuit, France. She brought her Morgan Judd racer to the chequered flag in the 9th position of the LMP2 class.

IHARA, together with team mates, Ricky Taylor (U.S.A.) and Pierre Ragues (France), qualified their race car, run by the Larbre Competition team, on the 16th grid in the Class. They experienced an un-expected trouble where bodywork of the car was broken due to tyre puncture. Hard work by the mechanics, however managed to put the car back to the race track after a brief pit stop to repair.

The two youngsters were often at the wheel when tough battle was expected while experienced IHARA showed her smooth driving under the tricky conditions on the wet truck surface. Such strategic operation of the team helped the car to finish the 24-hour race in the 9th position.

IHARA commented as follows:

“I enjoyed a lot to drive the Sarthe Circuit since I could not drive in the race last 2 years. And I am very happy to finish the race in the 9th position thanks to the Larbre competition team work of all members. I want to say big thank you to everyone who supported me including team members, sponsors and fans.”

IHARA has been appointed as a spokesperson of the “i Series” (electric vehicles) by BMW Japan this year. She continues her activities to promote safe driving and environmental protection.

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