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Toyotires® and Robby Gordon Return to the Legendary Dakar® Rally

CYPRESS, CA -- Toyotires® and Robby Gordon are returning to the legendary Dakar® Rally with his new SPEED Textron XX/ Toyotires racer. Competing in the super-competitive Car Division, the team will have three-vehicles including drivers Blade Hildebrand and Cole Potts from the Stadium SUPER Trucks™ series. All of the racers will be equipped with 15-inch, off-the-shelf Toyotires® Open Country M/T® tires.

This year's Dakar will run from January 6 – 17, exclusively in the country of Peru. The challenging 10-day rally will cover 5,000 kilometers (3,107 miles) of demanding off-road terrain with 70-percent of the course in sand.

Toyotires and Robby Gordon first teamed up to race in the Dakar in 2006. Gordon has recorded multiple Dakar stage victories and was the first American to win a stage in the Dakar Rally Car Division with his Toyotires-equipped HUMMER. In 2009, he finished third overall in the Dakar, while being the only two-wheel-drive vehicle to finish in the top-ten. In 2014, Gordon competed for the first time with his SPEED Energy / Toyotires / Gordini racer. He continued to have great success with the Gordini, running it last in the 2016 Dakar.

Sharing the cockpit with Gordon once again is navigator Kellon Walch. A true veteran of the Dakar rally, Walch has navigated for Gordon in three out of his last four Dakars.

"I'm happy to announce that we will be coming back to the Dakar in 2019 with Toyotires. They have been a long-time partner of the Dakar and we've had a ton of success," said Gordon. "We have won 17 Specials (stages) of the Dakar with our vehicles. Whether with Al Attiyah driving, BJ Baldwin, Sheldon Creed or myself; we have had very good success in the past and I am looking forward to showing up with our Textron XX's. We've got these things on Toyotires and I feel that we will be able to compete for the overall. We have a long, tough rally ahead of us, but this year with the rally being in the dunes, I believe that the package we are bringing will be very competitive."

"The Dakar fans have missed Robby for the last three years. His return is already considered as one of the highlights of this upcoming edition," said Xavier Gavory, deputy general manager, in charge of competitors for the Dakar Rally. "The Dakar organization is naturally delighted to welcome back the most famous and talented American driver of its history, especially with a three-car, all-American team. The whole rally world is now looking forward to Robby's performance and bravery."

"We are excited to return to the Dakar with Robby Gordon. This prestigious competition puts our brand on the international stage with one of the fan favorites. Between his new racers and our durable Toyotires

Open Country M/T tires we expect to add to our list of Dakar stage wins, and hopefully bring home the overall victory,” said Stan Chen, senior manager events and sponsorships, Toyo Tire U.S.A. Corp.

Gordon has also had great success in North America on Toyo Open Country® tires, winning the 2006 SCORE Baja 1000; 2012 Best In The Desert series Grand Champion; 2013 SCORE Baja 500; multiple Stadium SUPER Trucks™ championships and numerous other off-road races.

To follow Robby Gordon and the Dakar with daily updates, go to <https://www.dakar.com/en>. To learn more about the Open Country® line of tires for light trucks, SUV’s and outdoor lifestyle vehicles, go to toyotires.com/opencountry.

About Toyo Tires®

Established in 1966, Toyo Tire U.S.A. Corp. represents the innovation, quality, performance, and excellent service that Toyo Tires has delivered worldwide for more than 70 years. The company offers a full line of premium tires for nearly every vehicle including light trucks, SUVs, crossovers, sports cars, luxury cars and hybrids as well as commercial trucks. Many of the tires are built in the United States at their state-of-the-art factory in Georgia. To find the right tire for your vehicle as well as an authorized dealer, visit www.toyotires.com. You can also join the Toyo Tires community on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).

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Media Contact: Jay Jones, TMC PR
949-851-6313, jay.jones@tmcauto.com
Toyo Media Site: <http://media.toyotires.com/>