Toyota Builds a Drift Demo Corolla Hatchback

October 30, 2018

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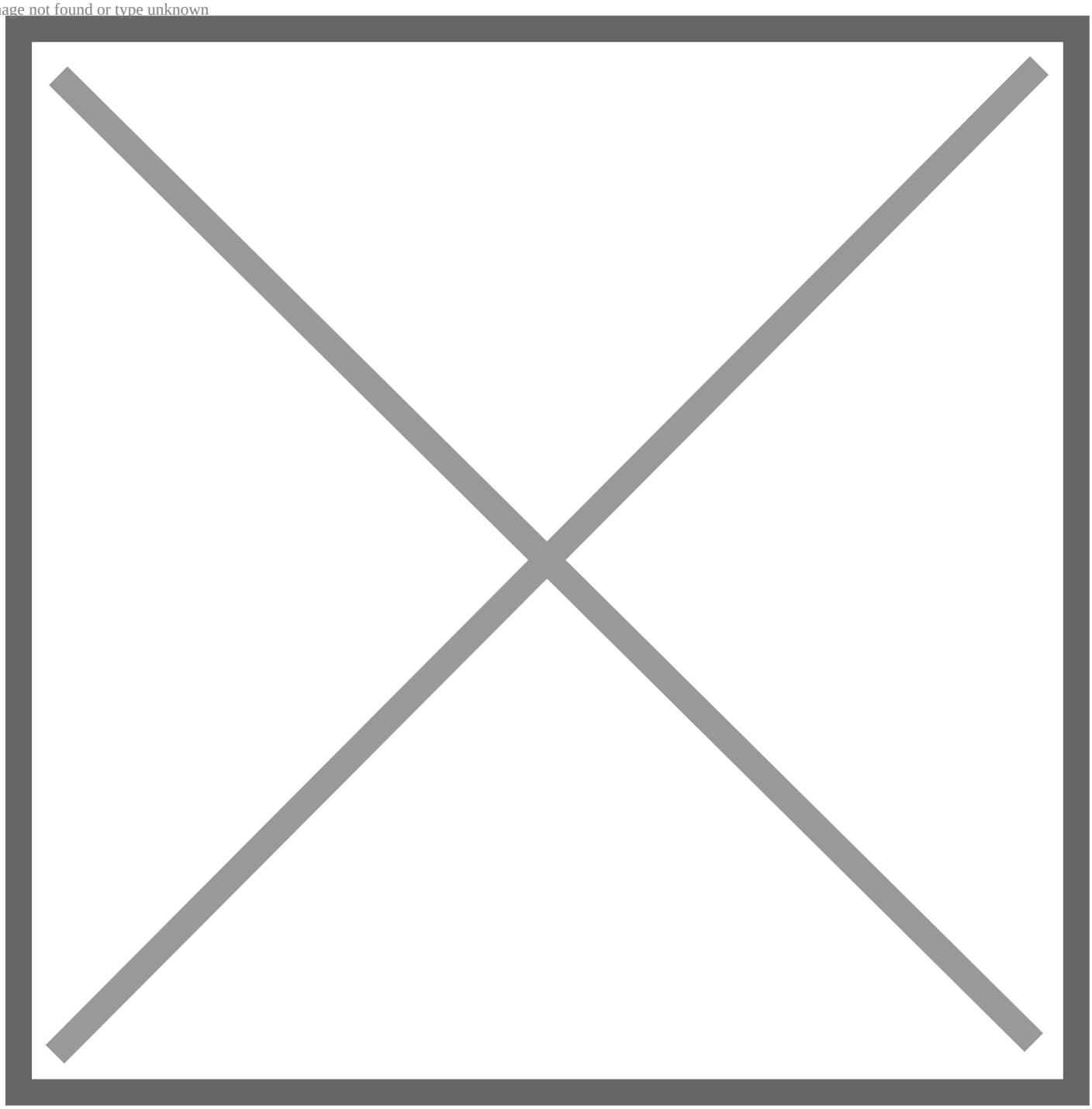

2018 SEMA Toyota Corolla Hatchback Papadakis Fact Sheet

PLANO, Texas, Oct. 30, 2018 — Appearing at Toyota's **2018 Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) Show** display, the Drift Demo 2019 Corolla Hatchback pushes the new car's limits by adapting it to one of today's hottest motorsport venues.

"The all-new 2019 Corolla Hatchback is one of the most dynamic, most technically advanced Corollas in the platform's more than 50 years of production," said Ed Laukes, group vice president – Toyota Division Marketing. "What better way to showcase its performance potential than prepping it for all-out racing competition?"

For the build, Toyota Racing Development (TRD) teamed with a notable name in the sport compact and drift competition scenes—Papadakis Racing.

The greatest challenge in adapting the new Corolla Hatchback to Formula Drift was converting it from front- to rear-wheel drive. The team began by removing every piece of interior and exterior trim, and every mechanical component to leave an essentially bare chassis.

"There's nothing easy about making a front-wheel-drive car into rear-wheel-drive," said team manager Stephen Papadakis. "We had to modify the rear subframe to accept the differential. We had to cut the middle of the car apart to build a tunnel for the transmission and driveshaft. We designed and machined all the billet suspension components."

The Drift Corolla Hatchback's turbocharged, nitrous oxide-assisted 2AR-FE four-cylinder engine pushes 850 horsepower at full song. A set of Stoptech brakes helps the driver modulate speed while Motegi Racing wheels and Nexen N'Fera SUR4 tires keep it planted on the pavement.

To top the build off, the car's custom quarter panels, fender flares, and side skirts were designed in-house at Papadakis Racing, then hand-molded in carbon fiber by the race experts at TRD.

"Formula Drift is unlike any of the other racing series we've had exposure to," said TRD engineer Chris Woodward. "There's a competitive component to it, obviously, but there's also a style component that's just as important."

This isn't Papadakis Racing's first time competing with a high-performance Corolla—the team campaigned a previous-gen Corolla iM in the 2017 season. The 2019 Drift Corolla Hatchback made its world debut this past April in Long Beach, Calif., where it drifted to a win in its first outing.

"It's the stuff dreams are made of," said team driver Fredric Aasbo. "You build something in the off-season, work out the kinks at the first race, and it pays off with a win."

Aasbo and the Drift Corolla Hatchback placed second on the Formula Drift Pro leaderboard for the 2018 season.

The Drift Demo Corolla Hatchback—along with other Toyota specialty vehicles—can be found in the Toyota display booth (#24800) in Central Hall and on the Patio Annex of the Las Vegas Convention Center, October 30 – November 2, 2018.