

# NEWS RELEASE

# YOKOHAMA

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## Yokohama Rubber to Supply Tires with Special Specifications to Ukyo Katayama and Takuma Aoki for the 2009 Dakar Rally

Tokyo - The Yokohama Rubber Co., Ltd., today announced that it will support Mr. Ukyo Katayama and Mr. Takuma Aoki in their respective efforts in the 2009 Dakar rally to be held in South America from January 3 through 18, 2009. Yokohama Rubber will provide tires specially developed for the 2009 Dakar, which offer running performance improved through the use of a new material called "Orange Oil," also employed in Yokohama Rubber's new generation ECO tire, the "DNA Earth-1."

As part of its group effort to tackle environmental issues - "ecoMOTION" - Yokohama Rubber has supported Mr. Katayama in the Dakar since 2007. An advocate of environmental awareness through motor sports, Mr. Katayama participates in the Dakar with a car using bio-diesel fuel refined from used *tempura* (deep fry) oil. In 2007, in the world's first such attempt with a 100% bio fuel car, he finished 68<sup>th</sup> overall and 19<sup>th</sup> in his class. This time, Yokohama Rubber will supply Mr. Katayama with GEOLANDAR A/T-S tires with specifications for the 2009 Dakar, able to perform exceptionally under a variety of conditions.

This will be the first participation in the Dakar for Mr. Aoki, a former motorcycle racer. He was paralyzed from the waist down in an accident during a test run, but has made an inspiring comeback as a racer of four-wheel-drive vehicles. In the FIA Asia Cross Country Rally this year, he won his class in only his second attempt. Yokohama Rubber will supply Mr. Aoki with GEOLANDAR M/T+ tires with 2009 Dakar specifications and improved off-road performance.

The Dakar, the world's leading rally, marks its 31<sup>st</sup> year this year. Last year, scheduled in Africa, it was canceled for the first time due to a deteriorating security situation. This year, the rally will be staged in Argentina and Chile and cover a distance of 9,000 kilometers. It is expected to be a very tough race, crossing the Andes Mountains at an elevation of 4,700 meters, the Atacama Desert in Chile, and more.



Mr. Ukyo Katayama (right) and Mr. Masahiro Terada,  
co-driver, in front of their Toyota Land Cruiser



Mr. Takuma Aoki and his Isuzu D-MAX

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