



Crawley → Brussels

Together with many teammates.

The team went from Gatwick to France via the Eurotunnel, arriving in the city of Rouen in the evening. Laurent, a European member from France, said, “Normandy is one of the most beautiful places in France. I love this place,” as he gazed out of the car’s window. The roads connect cities and towns together, and every road had cars taking people and goods where they needed to go. Only a few days of

the team’s summer European leg, with its myriad daily discoveries, remained.

The team headed south from Rouen to the town of La Santinelle. Ito-san of TME-Japan felt from his European drive experience that “*The roads and cars are designed to keep traffic flowing smoothly.*” He continued, “*If you don’t quickly get in and out of a roundabout, you stop the flow of traffic. European cars generally have good accelerator, brake, and steering response. But I also think that the driving feel of Toyotas is headed in the right direction with TNGA*”

(Toyota New Global Architecture) . Ito normally works on a project with PSA (Groupe PSA) , so the 5 Continents Drive with European members may not be that out of the ordinary for him. When asked this question, however, he shook his head. “*I’ve gotten to know a lot of my colleagues. And I’ve met TME and TMC members involved in the same project . I get the feeling that everyone is encouraging and pushing each other for the project’s success.*” Ito is normally quiet, but the passion with which he talked about the future left an impression.

The past and the future.

Tanaka-san of the Advanced Technical Skills Institute was riding in a Yaris HV driven by Laurent Luniewski of TMMF on the way to Spa in the Belgian province of Liège. Tanaka asks Laurent about his work, family, and experiences. As they listened to and learned about each other, the mood in the car softened. After a while, Tanaka pointed out something about how Laurent was gripping the steering wheel. He was open to hearing Tanaka's suggestion, and it seemed like his driving became smoother. Later I asked Tanaka why he gave Laurent a steering tip. *"The car felt a little unsteady. The car gives us feedback on its handling, so I wanted to check whether the unsteadiness was a problem with the driver or with the car's basic performance. I gave him advice because it was something that was easily fixed. It's an occupational hazard,"* he said with a



laugh. This is Tanaka's fourth time on the 5 Continents Drive following legs in Australia, North and Latin America. *"The 5 Continents Drive creates a lot of time for people from various divisions to share their true thoughts and feelings about cars. This is so valuable."* One thing that bothered Tanaka on this European leg was the dealer evaluations. *"In the past, our aftercare service has always been praised wherever I go, but this time I didn't hear it praised once."* When questioned if this was a bad thing,

Tanaka disagreed. *"We've been asked repeatedly to make better cars and cars with more power. It's a fact that our cars sell because we offer good service. But we're engineers, so to me it feels like this is encouragement to make better cars. The C-HR received good evaluations, and it feels like we've gotten closer to European cars. But we have to do more. ...We're closer now."* So what else? Was this the heart of the matter or what? Pursuit of this answer will continue on the African and Asian legs.





members gained a lot from this experience. I hope they use what they've learned back at their jobs." Soon after Team 2's drive began, Morikawa said of the team, *"It could be better."* But seeing them performing their final task of car maintenance, with each team member working at their job and anyone who was free readily pitching in to lend a hand, he says they made a good team after all. Each one of them will take back the knowledge and experience that they have gained to their workplace for the purpose of making better cars. Roads build people. What should these people do? Team 3 winter drive will take up the torch several weeks from now.

Reporter ○ Hideki Inoue



What should people do?

Team 2 arrived at TME's headquarters in Brussels. There was a ceremony, with many TME employees celebrating the completion of their drive. Stefan Van Kesteren from TME, who led Team 2 for the second half of the drive, was pleased that all of the team members safely completed the leg. *"I joined*

Team 2 mid-way. We deepened our friendships every day on the drive as well as over lunch and dinner. We were a good team who respected each other as individuals," he commented. Captain Morikawa said, *"As one of my duties, I hoped that everyone would participate and leave here safely feeling good. I think the EU members as well as the TMC*

Distance: 1,141km
 Duration: October.16-
 October.19,2017
 Days: 4days
 Vehicles: Yaris HV,C-HR HV,GT86,
 Proace, Prius PHV