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Formula One star Michael Schumacher Visits Bridgestone Corporation Headquarters

Michael Schumacher, MERCEDES GP PETRONAS Formula One team driver and seven times World Champion, landed in Japan yesterday (6 October, 2010) ahead of this weekend's Grand Prix of Japan and paid Bridgestone the great honour of heading straight from the airport to the company's headquarters in Tokyo.

Five of Schumacher's seven world championship titles have been taken on Bridgestone's Potenza Formula One tyres and so his arrival at the global headquarters of Formula One's Official Tyre Supplier was met with huge excitement by the company's employees.

Schumacher started his visit with an audience with Mr. Shoshi Arakawa, the Corporation's Chairman of the Board, CEO and President. They were also joined by Vice President and Senior Officer Member of the Board Mr. Mikio Masunaga, Director of Bridgestone Motorsport Hiroshi Yasukawa, Director of Motorsport Tyre Development Hirohide Hamashima and General Manager Motorsport Division Naotaka Horio. Mr Arakawa warmly welcomed Schumacher to Tokyo and they spoke at length about Bridgestone's time in Formula One, the many on track battles the driver and Bridgestone had experienced together over the years and also how Schumacher was looking forward to spending time in Japan again.

Next on the schedule was a Talk Show for the headquarter employees where the star driver answered questions alongside Hamashima about how, facilitated by Bridgestone, he got a drive in F3000 before then swiftly graduating to Formula One. He then went on to talk about Bridgestone's strengths and the company's support for the MAKE CARS GREEN and THINK BEFORE YOU DRIVE campaigns. Hamashima meanwhile told the eager audience all about Michael Schumacher's attention for detail when it came to getting the best out of tyre performance and how he had missed many a good restaurant reservation over the years as a result of his long discussions with the driver at the circuit!

To the delight of the audience Schumacher concluded the Talk Show by selecting five lucky employees to come up on stage and receive an autographed Bridgestone cap.

Schumacher then made a brief pitstop at one of Bridgestone's flagship Cockpit tyre dealership stores where he was greeted by a select crowd of Bridgestone customers and dealers. Schumacher was given a tour of the store and the products on display by the store manager before he answered questions for the guests and took part in a group photo.

Michael Schumacher's visit was of special significance to Bridgestone as the company is celebrating 14 years of success in Formula One as its time as Official Tyre Supplier draws to a close. Also to mark the occasion the company will have a special stage within the Suzuka Circuit vending zone this weekend for Formula One fans where a host of special guests, including Formula One drivers and Bridgestone motorsport staff will take to the stage. A special display of Bridgestone's heritage in Formula One and its tyres will also be present for race fans to enjoy.

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Photography

Photos from yesterday's event are available for downloading for media use only from the Bridgestone Motorsport Media Website.