

Honda and MIE Honda HEAT Hold Rally Event Ahead of the NTT JAPAN RUGBY LEAGUE ONE 2024-25 Season

TOKYO, Japan, December 3, 2024 – Honda Motor Co., Ltd. and its rugby team, MIE Honda HEAT, today held a rally event at the Aoyama Welcome Plaza in the Honda Global Head Office in Tokyo, ahead of the NTT Japan Rugby League One 2024-2025 season, which begins on Saturday, December 21, 2024.

At the event, Manabu Ozawa, a Managing Executive Officer of Honda concurrently serving as Executive Advisor of MIE Honda HEAT, introduced the Honda vision for its sports activities – to increase the number of people who take on challenges through sports activities and make the lives of all people more enjoyable. He also announced the MIE Honda HEAT team value – “BIND” All Dreams – which was newly established in the pursuit of the team’s vision to become “the strongest, most respected, most loved” team. The “team value” represents the team’s desire to “take on challenges and chase dreams together with all people involved with MIE Honda HEAT.”

Other key staff members and players on the team who expressed their strong passion and commitment for the upcoming season included Head Coach Kieran Crowley, General Manager Yoshihito Maeda, the new captain Takumi Fujii, and other key players, including Lemeki Lomano Lava, who returned to the team for the first time in four years.



The MIE Honda HEAT was founded in 1961, as the Honda rugby team based in the City of Suzuka, in Mie Prefecture, Japan. Since last season (2023-2024 season), the team has been taking on challenges competing in Division 1, the top division of the Japan Rugby League One. Working toward its goal to become the No. 1 team in Japan in three years' time, the MIE Honda HEAT has been pursuing continuous initiatives to enhance its strength. In the meantime, in September of this year, the team announced its plan to relocate the base of activities to Utsunomiya City, Tochigi Prefecture sometime prior to the start of the 2026-2027 season, in order to offer more people the opportunity to see the team and get involved in its challenges toward its goal.

Based on the company's vision for its sports activities, Honda will continue to support various athletes who take on challenges toward the realization of their own dreams.

■ Comment of Manabu Ozawa, Managing Executive Officer of Honda Motor Co., Ltd.

"Honda sports teams, including the Honda Running Team, have inspired many people this year with their remarkable achievements, expanding their activities from Japan to the world. Our rugby team, getting ready for its second season with the new head coach Kieran Crowley, has built a team structure that reflects the strong will of Coach Crowley to achieve our goal to become the No. 1 team in Japan in three years' time. We are committed to strengthening MIE Honda HEAT as a sports team that represents Honda corporate culture, demonstrating the collective strengths and teamwork of Honda. In two years, the team is relocating the base of its activities to Tochigi Prefecture, and will continue to strive for further growth. MIE Honda HEAT will continue to take on bold challenges and prove the power of believing in "The Power of Dreams" by playing matches that move people's hearts. Thank you in advance for your continued support and cheers in the 2024-25 season."

■ Comment of Kieran Crowley, Head Coach of MIE Honda HEAT

"The 2023-24 season, my first year as head coach, was a very difficult one, with only one win out of 16 games. Based on what I perceived as our challenges throughout the season, I brought in 14 new players during the off-season and also added new coaches. As a result of intense competition for positions within the team and the rigorous training experienced by all players, we have built a team with strong physical capability and the stamina to play 80 minutes at full strength. With a goal to be ranked sixth or above in the league, we will further improve our performance in the 2024-25 season, which will start soon. Please keep your expectations high for the great effort and performance of MIE Honda HEAT!"

MIE Honda HEAT official website:

<https://www.honda-heat.jp/> (Japanese/English)

Honda Sports Activity website:

<https://global.honda.jp/brand/sports/> (Japanese)

JAPAN RUGBY LEAGUE ONE:

<https://league-one.jp/> (Japanese)

<https://league-one.jp/en/> (English)