

Dear D1GP USA Fans,

This is D1GP USA's Official Statement regarding the events that transpired at the Chicago D1 Grand Prix event.

In the case of Driver conduct at the event there were several instances that involved Team Orange. We feel these instances were boiling over from the Anaheim event whereas Forrest Wang beat Tanaka and fought a hard battle against Kumakubo that resulted ultimately in a Kumakubo victory Wang. In Chicago Wang and Tanaka were paired up again with Kumakubo once again waiting in the wings.

I am sure as anticipated as this battle was for the crowd it was maybe more anticipated by the drivers. There was a lot of pride on the line. After Wang and Tanaka's first tandem battle there was a slight advantage given to Wang. The drivers reversed positions and Forrest got a huge lead from the start with Tanaka letting off the gas about 50 feet after the start. Wang realized this mid course and also ceased. There was some confusion in the tower as to what had happened. We consulted with the race starter who said that both cars started at the same time. We went to the replay however the replay would only give us the seconds after the actual start. Team Orange called foul as they did not feel they received the proper signal from the starter. After much debate it was determined that there would be a re-start of the original tandem battle as both drivers ceased.

This is where the confusion comes in. Apparently Team Orange did not know that we called a re-start and believed we had called for a OMT. Possibly this was a language barrier issue. We are not sure. After the re-started run, it was a clear victory for Wang, but Tanaka went back to the starting line expecting to run again. Team Orange was informed of the Wang victory and this is where the infractions begin.

One of our pit workers was standing in front of Tanaka's car with his arm out and hand up signaling to him to not move forward trying to get Tanaka to turn around and go back to his pit position. It was about this time Tanaka was informed of the Wang victory. Believing that the original call the run earlier was for a OMT, Tanaka and Team Orange then went berserk. Tanaka then pressed his car against the course workers leg and proceeded to continually rev his engine. Team Orange's mechanic then slapped the course workers arm (he had up signaling Tanaka to not move forward) in an attempt to get him to put his arm down. This slap of the course workers arm was repeated no less than 3 times before the race starter told his course worker to get out of the way. At this time Tanaka hit the gas and performed a wheel spin (burnout) thus spinning the car around in obvious defiance over the decision by the judges and his team's misunderstanding. As he did this he reached out of the car and gave everyone and obscene gesture, but as he was doing this he also clipped our race starter's knee with his rear bumper and ran over his foot. An injury that required the EMT's to assist our starter with his injuries.

Immediately following, Kumakubo retired in protest over the Tanaka loss. Kumakubo was supposed to go up against Wang, Wang then immediately advanced into the final against Nomura. With Kumakubo retired and Tanaka disqualified (after his actions), Hokkanen was awarded 3<sup>rd</sup> place and we went on with the Championship battle between Nomura and Wang. Nomura beat Wang in the Championship battle.

The infractions by Team Orange include, but are not limited to:

D1GP USA Rulebook Re: Conduct

- Refusing to cooperate with, interfering with, or obstructing the action of the Officials, Competition Director or others in the performance of their duties.

Infractions by Team Orange:

- Tanaka not listening to course officials who directed him to hold his position on course and ordering him to turn around and go back to the pits thus delaying the competition (also considered unsportsmanlike).
- Tanaka placing his car firmly against course officials leg and revving engine in defiance of course officials direction (also considered unsportsmanlike)
- Team Orange Mechanic slapping the arm of the course official repeatedly in an attempt to defy the course officials direction and the judgment of the officials (also considered unsportsmanlike)

D1GP USA Rulebook Re: Conduct

- Public criticism of the event or the series, its Officials or Sponsors

Infractions by Kumakubo and Tanaka:

- Blog's portraying the series and it's officials in a negative light over their loss (this could also be considered unsportsmanlike)

D1GP USA Rulebook Re: Breach of Rules

- Line item re: dangerous or reckless driving

Infraction by Tanaka:

- Performing an illegal wheel spin in the starting area which resulted in the starter being injured (this could also be considered unsportsmanlike)

D1GP USA Rulebook Re: Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- Line Item as defined under Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Infractions by Team Orange:

- All of the above mentioned including Kumakubo's retiring in protest

My ruling in this matter is as follows:

D1GP USA's mission in 2009 was to produce the most unbiased and fair competition possible. It is this mission that allows us to not see nationality, experience, celebrity or the difference between a heavily sponsored team or privateer, but rather to see every driver on the same level.

We understand that Team Orange is the most famous drift team in the world and its drivers regarded as some of the best drivers there are, however that does not give them the right to expect to be treated differently and does not give them the right to act the way they did at this event, therefore the following penalties are imposed.

The Penalties in this matter are as follows:

- 1) *Kazuhiro Tanaka – Fine of \$10,000 & loss of series points & suspension for the rest of the D1GP USA season.*
- 2) *Nobushige Kumakubo – Fine of \$5,000 & loss of event points in Chicago*
- 3) *Team Orange – As a result of the team mechanic's actions, an additional \$2,500 fine*

There has also many been many rumors surfacing regarding Ken Nomura's conduct at the Chicago event. Thus far our investigation into the matter is not complete. We will continue to investigate and make a ruling later next week.

Rich Goodwin  
President D1GP USA