



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Champion driver Fredric Aasbo and Papadakis Racing unveil new competition car  
*Rockstar Energy Drink / Nexen Tire Toyota Corolla iM to debut in Long Beach***

HAWTHORNE, California (March 27, 2017) -- The most winning team in Formula Drift history surprised fans on Monday with the unveiling of their latest Formula Drift competition machine. Champion driver Fredric Aasbo will pilot the all-new Rockstar Energy Drink / Nexen Tire Toyota Corolla iM in the 2017 Formula Drift series.

“We know we kept people guessing in the off-season as we built our 2017 car, and we couldn’t be happier to finally have a chance to show it off,” said team owner Stephan Papadakis. “Corolla is an iconic nameplate in drifting and we’re proud to bring it back to the championship.”

The vehicle was revealed Monday in a short online video titled Rockstar D, a live-action, shot-by-shot remake of the opening to the cult-favorite Initial D anime series.

LINK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH6Qf-yDtTU>

“So many of us who love drifting grew up watching Initial D and it was fantastic to take the car out into the mountains and pay tribute to drifting history,” said driver Aasbo, who is the 2015 Formula Drift world champion.

The rear-wheel drive Rockstar Energy Drink / Nexen Tire Toyota Corolla iM hatchback produces 1,000 nitrous-boosted horsepower from its four-cylinder turbocharged Toyota 2AR engine.

It features a four-speed dog-engagement transmission, a Borg Warner EFR turbo, AEM Infinity-8 fuel injection, and RS-R suspension. Custom-designed Dzine Unlimited fenders make room for sticky Nexen N'fera SUR4 tires on Motegi Technomesh D wheels.

The Toyota Corolla last year celebrated its 50th anniversary of production and is a global best-seller.

Fans will get their first chance to see the car in person at the Formula Drift opener Friday (March 31) and Saturday (April 1) in Long Beach, California.

Drifting is a high-skill, high-powered motorsport with an emphasis on car control. Drivers compete in knockout heats on a closed course, sliding sideways in trials judged on speed and style. With origins in Japan, it is one of the fastest growing forms of motorsport in the world.

The #RockstarD video is a frame-by-frame tribute to Initial D created in co-operation with Bounty Content and Rockstar Energy Drink, produced by Jon Brewer and directed by DC Chavez. Initial D is distributed in the United States by Funimation.

**SHARE IT:** It's on! @FredricAasbo to drive the all new Rockstar Energy Drink / Nexen Tire Toyota Corolla iM in @FormulaDrift. #RockstarD



#### **ABOUT FREDRIC AASBO:**

Known for his flat-out style, Champion driver Fredric Aasbo has achieved 100-plus podium finishes on three continents over the past decade of competition. He returns to Formula Drift in 2017 for a full season. He finished second in the championship points last year.

In 2015, he scored four U.S. wins en route to the Formula Drift championship title and now holds the series record for most wins scored by a driver in a single season. Popular with fans, he was named "Fan Favorite of the Year" three years in a row (2012-2014).

Aasbo made his U.S. debut at a global drifting invitational in 2008 and turned heads as the winner of the 2010 Formula Drift Rookie of the Year title. Since then, he has charged through the drifting ranks around the world and is both a fan favorite and championship winner.

Originally from Ski, Norway, Aasbo now splits his time between his native country and Southern California. He campaigns a full international season, with competition stops in the USA, Canada, Europe, and Asia.

#### **ABOUT PAPADAKIS RACING:**

The Papadakis Racing team began drifting in 2004 and is the most winning team in Formula Drift history, earning the 2015 title with driver Fredric Aasbo, as well as back-to-back championship titles with driver Tanner Foust in 2007 and 2008. The Rockstar Energy Drink / Nexen Tire Toyota Corolla iM is the latest competition build from the Hawthorne, Calif., based team.

Team owner Stephan Papadakis is a legend of sport-compact racing who began building his reputation in the 1990s with the first front-wheel-drive, tube-chassis drag car in the U.S. The team earned multiple records and championships in the discipline, turning in elapsed times and trap speeds previously thought unattainable in front-drive drag cars. Papadakis' successes in front-wheel drive were matched by his efforts in rear-wheel drive when he campaigned a Civic that became only the fifth car to join the NHRA's Sport Compact 200 MPH club.

#### **PAPADAKIS RACING IS SUPPORTED BY:**

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#### **ABOUT ROCKSTAR:**

Rockstar Energy Drink is designed for those who lead active lifestyles -- from athletes to rockstars. Available in over 25 flavors at convenience and grocery outlets in more than 30 countries, Rockstar supports the Rockstar lifestyle across the globe through action sports, motor sports, and live music. For more information visit [www.RockstarEnergy.com](http://www.RockstarEnergy.com).

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Additional media assets for download: <http://bit.ly/2017-Papadakis-Racing-Downloads>