

**2018/2019 FIA World Endurance Championship
Round 7: TOTAL 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps**

Consistent high performance: always a key tyre-related parameter at the 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps

After six-hour clashes in Japan and China, followed by March's double-bill 'SuperSebring' weekend in Florida (which featured both the FIA WEC's 1,000 Miles of Sebring and IMSA's Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring), world class endurance racing returns to Belgium this weekend for the second 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps to count towards the 2018/2019 FIA World Endurance Championship.

The penultimate round of the current series, and traditionally one of the most exciting rounds of the season, the Belgian fixture provides a valuable opportunity to prepare for the Le Mans 24 Hours which, this year, will wrap up the 2018/2019 FIA WEC Super Season on June 15-16.

Located in the Belgian Ardennes, Spa-Francorchamps (length: 7km) is a high-speed, technically challenging circuit that is frequently made even more complex by the fickle weather that can sweep over the region's forested hills at this time of the year. A poll has confirmed that this is one of the drivers' favourite venues, if only because of the infamous Raidillon de l'Eau Rouge compression and climb, while repeated hard braking and reacceleration out of the slower turns call for a judicious balance between high downforce to provide grip through the fast corners and low drag for straight-line speed.

Tyres obviously have a major part to play when it comes to striking the ideal compromise which often takes the form of running low aerodynamic loads and favouring mechanical grip through the corners.

"Spa-Francorchamps is an exacting track when it comes to tyres," says **Jérôme Mondain**, the manager of Michelin's endurance racing programmes. "We work closely with our different partners to find the most efficient set-up possible and identify the most effective windows for each compound. Not only is this groundwork crucial for the race at Spa but it also helps everyone to prepare for Le Mans where a thorough grasp of the tyre factor is essential. The weather in Belgium often allows us to run our wet-weather tyres and that, too, can be very useful in the build-up to Le Mans."

The forecast for this year's 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps is cloudy weather for both Friday's qualifying session and Saturday's race when the risk of rain stands at 70 percent. There is consequently every reason to expect that the Michelin-equipped teams will fit rain tyres at some point. Meanwhile, the thermometer isn't expected to exceed 10°C, which means the drivers will probably choose Michelin's medium-compound slick if the conditions are dry. There is also a strong possibility that the LMP1 cars will run with the MICHELIN Hybride intermediate slick sometime during the meeting.

