

**2019/2020 FIA World Endurance Championship
Round 4: BAPCO 8 Hours of Bahrain**

Michelin tyres ready for Kingdom of Bahrain marathon

This week sees the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) visit Bahrain for the first time since 2017. Back then, the race's duration was six hours, but it has been extended to eight hours this time around. Although the final clash of the calendar year, it is only the fourth of the 2019/2020 campaign's eight rounds after the 4 Hours of Silverstone (Great Britain), the 6 Hours of Fuji (Japan) and the 4 Hours of Shanghai (China).

With the exception of a small chance of rain on Friday, the weather promises to be predominantly mild for this year's trip to the Gulf state. The thermometer is likely to vary between 20°C and 25°C in the course of the three-day meeting (free practice, qualifying and race), while the track temperature is expected to stand at around 30°C for the 3pm start of Saturday's race.

The 15-turn, 5.412km International Sakhir Circuit is even more abrasive than Shanghai, so this heat – along with the brushing of sand that tends to get blown onto the track – will only add to the challenge faced by the drivers and their Michelin tyres as they tackle this technical venue's punishing combination of short straights and slow turns for all of eight hours.

"Sakhir's layout calls for frequent hard reacceleration," notes **Pierre Alvens**, the manager of Michelin's endurance racing programmes. "As a result, significant demands will be made of our tyres and traction performance will be very important. The fact that this year's race in Bahrain will last two hours longer compared with 2017 means our technical advisers will be in big demand as our partners work on their strategies to take maximum advantage of our tyres' longevity and performance. The conditions will evolve as the race progresses, too, since it starts at 3pm and the sun sets shortly before 5pm. The majority of the action will therefore take place after nightfall when the track will be cooler, with less sand on the surface, plus a little more ambient humidity."

For the 2019 8 Hours of Bahrain, Michelin's **LMP1** teams will be able to choose between the firm's **soft** and **medium** endurance racing tyres. Meanwhile, the options for Michelin's partners in **LMP2** – whose ranks now include G-Drive – will be between the **medium** and **hard** compounds.

In **LMGTE Pro** and **LMGTE Am**, Michelin's partners have gone for different strategies. Some have specified **soft** and **medium** rubber, which is an aggressive choice given the track's configuration, while others have opted for a package of **medium** and **hard** tyres.

In the case of wet weather, teams will be able to fit either **Wets** or **Full Wets**, while the **LMP1** prototypes will be able to run the versatile **MICHELIN Hybrid** which notably revels in drying conditions.

Free Practice will kick off on Thursday, December 12, with qualifying to follow on Friday December 13. The race itself will get underway at 3pm on the afternoon of Saturday, December 14, and the chequered flag is scheduled to be shown at 11pm on Saturday evening.

