

2018 FIA World Rally Championship
Round 3/14: Rally Guanajuato Mexico

***MICHELIN's WRC gravel tyres prepared
for first dirt clash of 2019***

After the season's wintry trips to Rallye Monte-Carlo and Rally Sweden, the 2019 FIA World Rally Championship moves on to the year's first gravel fixture in León – some 400 kilometres northwest of Mexico City, Mexico – on March 8-11.

It will be the first visit to Mexico for the MICHELIN LTX Force H4 and MICHELIN LTX Force M6 which were introduced at last summer's Rally Finland. Meanwhile, Michelin's WRC2 runners will be able to choose between the familiar soft-compound MICHELIN Latitude Cross S80 and hard-compound MICHELIN Latitude Cross.

The MICHELIN LTX Force H4 (hard compound) and M6 (medium) provide eloquent glimpses of their performance in the latter part of 2018 in Turkey, Wales, Spain and Australia. This week, they face the unique conditions of Rally Mexico where the stages climb to altitudes of almost 3,000 metres above sea level, thereby starving the engines of oxygen and, as a consequence, depriving them of as much as 20 percent of their usual power potential. As a result, Michelin's tyres will notably be asked to deliver lateral grip and efficient traction to allow the drivers to carry as much speed as possible out of each corner.

"The first gravel rally of the year is always an eagerly-awaited occasion," says **Arnaud Rémy**, the manager of Michelin's rally programmes. "After the two wintry rounds we've already been to this season, Rally Mexico marks a significant contrast, with the promise of bright sunshine, technical stages and a very different sort of backdrop. Although we don't expect wear to be an issue, the potentially hot weather is likely to be a challenge, as will the fact that the stages tend to cut up for the second passes. That said, we have prepared thoroughly and we go into the event feeling reasonably reassured."

The 2019 Rally Mexico features a menu of 21 stages totalling 313.87 kilometres and an overall distance of 1,003.49km. The colourful start ceremony will take place on Thursday evening in the UNESCO-listed town of Guanajuato and competitors will go straight from the start ramp into the short first spectator stage which visits the maze of tunnels on which this former mining community sits. Friday's itinerary will take crews to the well-known stages near León before ending with two attempts at the super-special near the service park next to the city's exhibition centre. Leg 2, on Saturday, packs some of the week's toughest tests, including 'Otates' (32.27km). However, the famous El Brinco jump has been replaced by another impressive leap overlooking an empty reservoir, just before the flying finish. Sunday's run will be familiar to competitors before action concludes with the Power Stage ('Las Minas') where drivers can earn up to five bonus championship points.



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The MICHELIN LTX Force M6 and MICHELIN LTX Force H4 (WRC runners)

Number of tyres available for Rally Mexico: **584**.

Drivers may use up to 28 tyres (including shakedown) from a total allocation of 28 M6s (medium compound) and 16 H4 (hard compound).

The MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H90 and MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross S80 (WRC2 runners)

Number of tyres available for Rally Mexico: **336**.

Drivers may use up to 26 tyres (including shakedown) from a total allocation of 26 H90s (hard compound) and 16 S80s (soft compound).

Michelin's staff for the 2019 Rally Guanajuato Mexico

Michelin will have a staff of 12 in Mexico:

- **Arnaud Rémy** (manager of Michelin's rally programmes)
- 2 coordinators
- 4 technical team advisors (CTEs)
- 4 fitters
- 1 Press officer



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