

2019 FIA World Rally Championship
Round 8/14: Rally Italia Sardegna

***The MICHELIN LTX Force H4 and MICHELIN LTX Force M6
combine to deliver at demanding Rally Italia Sardegna***

This week's visit to northern Sardinia for Round 8 of the 2019 FIA World Rally Championship produced a hot, dusty challenge for the cars and crews who had to contend with a cocktail of narrow, rock-lined dirt roads and sandier tracks which revealed a particularly hard-wearing base after the first passes. Despite the challenging terrain, Michelin's WRC partners were again able to rely on their MICHELIN LTX Force tyres which were available this week in a choice two of the range's three compounds, namely the H4 (hard) and M6 (medium) versions.

The hot and occasionally humid weather saw the teams opt for sometimes contrasting tyre strategies, influenced notably by their cars' respective positions in the running order in Sardinia where the phenomenon of 'road sweeping' can play a big role. On Day 1, for example, Sébastien Ogier and Julien Ingrassia – who were first on the road in their Citroën C3 WRC – went for three hard and two medium Michelins, while Thierry Neuville and Nicolas Gilsoul (Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC) chose six MICHELIN LTX Force M6s.

"Tyre strategies had a big influence on the different performances we saw in Sardinia," notes **Arnaud Rémy**, the manager of Michelin's rally programmes. "Often, the drivers chose their compounds and how many spares they wanted to carry just moments before leaving service. Although the regulations specify that there must always be at least one spare in the car, many of them took two, and occasionally of the same compound. Indeed, the secret in Sardinia often involves striking the ideal balance between the two types of compound and mixing the H4 and M6 versions of the MICHELIN LTX Force frequently proved beneficial this year, especially for the morning loops. For the afternoon stages, the chief decision that needed to be made concerned carrying either one or two spares. Apart from that, the hard compound stood out as the natural option for the hard-wearing bedrock that became exposed during the first passes. Despite all this, our tyres rose to the occasion to enable the drivers to keep pushing all the way to the finish."

The 2019 Rally Italia Sardegna featured a menu of 19 special stages (one fewer than in 2018) totalling 310.52 competitive kilometres, for a total distance of 1,383.64km.


The event was won by Dani Sordo/Carlos Del Barrio (Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC), ahead of Teemu Suninen/Marko Salminen (M-Sport-run Ford Fiesta WRC), while third-placed Andreas Mikkelsen/Anders Jaeger (Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC) made it an all-Michelin podium.

The WRC2 battle was won by Finns Rovaniemi/Halttunen (Skoda Fabia R5), ahead of the Czech Republic's Kopecky/Dresler (Skoda Fabia R5) who secured a one-two finish for Michelin in this class which is characterised by particularly close competition between tyre brands.



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The next round of the 2019 FIA World Rally Championship will take teams to Jyväskylä, Finland, on August 1-4.



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