

2019 FIA World Rally Championship
Round 13/14: RallyRACC Catalunya – Rally de España

Michelin's tyres prepared for Rally de España's mix of dirt and asphalt

As the last-but-one clash of the season, Spain's round of the 2019 FIA World Rally Championship promises to be a particularly intense affair, especially as the fights for both the Drivers' and Manufacturers' crowns have yet to be settled. The weather tends to be mild in Catalonia at this time of year and forecasters are expecting a sunny week, with cool mornings before temperatures climb to more than 20°C for the afternoon's loops.

As in previous years, the service park is based in Salou, a touristic town 100km southwest of Barcelona. In contrast to the coastal resort's pleasant holiday atmosphere, the crap on the stages is likely to be extremely fierce throughout the three-day event which – in addition to the importance of what is at stake for those teams and drivers who are still in contention for their respective titles – is the only mixed-surface contest of the season, with Friday's action on gravel followed by two days on asphalt.

This unique feature means the teams have to plan for two distinct specifications for their respective cars (different ride heights, suspension settings, etc.) to cover both types of surface. It also means that Michelin has to take tyres for all the different types of road visited during the week.

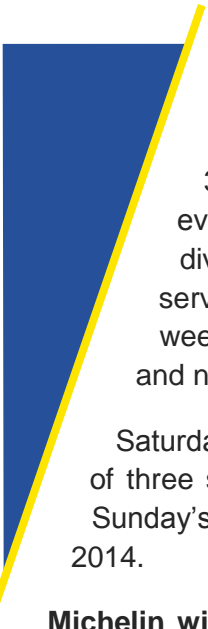
Tyres for gravel, asphalt and rain

As in 2018, Michelin will provide its WRC partners with a choice that ranges from the hard-compound MICHELIN Pilot Sport H5 and softer S6 for the sealed-surface tests, to the MICHELIN LTX Force H4 (hard compound) and M6 (medium) for gravel. In WRC2, the alternatives for Michelin's runners will be the MICHELIN Pilot Sport RH3 (hard) and RS (soft) for asphalt, and the MICHELIN Latitude Cross H90 (hard) and M80 (medium) for dirt.

In the case of heavy rain on Days 2 and/or 3, competitors in both classes will be able to fit the MICHELIN Pilot Sport FW3 (FW = Full Wet) which has a specific tread pattern and a higher sea-to-land ratio, with grooves that drain water to the shoulders to help combat the phenomenon of aquaplaning, while continuing to deliver the performance expected of a world-class rally tyre.

"Calendar changes and a desire to make this an all-asphalt rally in the future mean this could well be the last mixed-surface WRC round we see for some time," says **Arnaud Rémy**, the manager of Michelin's rally programmes. "It's always a complex exercise for our logistics people because we need to transport and manage more than 1,500 tyres divided into five different types. Our technicians also need to reboot after Friday's gravel stages and find their marks again to get choices right for Saturday and Sunday's abrasive asphalt roads. We have competitive tyres for both types of surface, however, and I believe this year's Rally de España is going to be quite spectacular."





The 2019 RallyRACC Catalunya-Rallye de España includes 17 stages totalling 325.56km and an overall distance of 1,288.85km. After a start ceremony on Thursday evening on Salou's seafront, crews will head for Friday's all-gravel run which will be divided into loops of three tests to be contested twice each, split by a midday visit to service next to the PortAventura theme park. Leg 1 includes the longest stage of the week, namely Fatarella-Vilalba (38.85km) which features some short portions of asphalt and numerous grip-level changes.

Saturday's all-asphalt run to the northeast of Salou is identical to that of 2018, with two loops of three stages, followed by a super-special along the seafront in Salou to wrap up the day. Sunday's run marks the return of 'La Mussara' which hasn't been visited by the rally since 2014.

Michelin will have 1,540 tyres in Salou for the 2019 Rally de España, including 700 for the WRC crews and 840 for their WRC2 colleagues. The WRC drivers will be able to use up to 36 tyres, including for shakedown (WRC2: 32). They will be able to choose from a total allocation of 32 asphalt tyres and 26 gravel tyres (WRC2: 30 and 24). Crews in both classes will also have a stock of eight MICHELIN Pilot Sport FW3 tyres on hand in the case of heavy rain.

Michelin's staff for the 2019 RallyRACC Catalunya

Michelin will have a staff of 14 in Spain:

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

