



MICHELIN HELPS IMSA DELIVER FAST, CLOSE RACING AT THE GLEN

Mazda, Porsche, Acura Prevail in “Cool” Watkins Glen

Watkins Glen, N.Y., June 30, 2019 --- Michelin marked the midpoint of its first season as the Official Tire of IMSA as it has since the outset, by working closely with manufacturers, teams and drivers to help them deliver incredibly close competition and another batch of new records.

The combined margin of victory in the three premier IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship classes was just 1.48 seconds after six hours of racing at the historic 3.4-mile Watkins Glen International circuit.

While last year Michelin recorded track temperatures in excess of 140 degrees Fahrenheit, the highest of the season, this year cooler temperatures prevailed. A weekend of extremes in temperatures, which reached 117 on Friday eventually ceded to a cool race day at the smooth, fast, high energy, high-load circuit where the race day track temperature topped out at 82 degrees. The weekend also saw a popular new overall winner with Mazda Team Joest scoring a long overdue maiden DPi victory.

Learning and Growing Into Second Half of 2019

To kick off the second half of the season, Michelin brought its semi-confidential IMSA Hard compound tire for its debut in DPi/LMP2, the top two classes of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship.

Meanwhile the WeatherTech GT Daytona and IMSA MICHELIN Pilot Challenge GS class cars raced with the MICHELIN® Pilot® Sport GT S9M hard compound commercial slicks for the first time in 2019. The hard compound tire is tuned specifically for circuits where drivers traditionally encounter the highest loads and track temperatures of the season. The TCR class remained on the S9M compound they have run all season.

“We are pleased that so many teams performed well and that the fans enjoyed some great IMSA competition. We want to congratulate our good friends at Mazda on this long overdue first victory. We look forward to the second half of the IMSA season as we continue to learn and to build our relationships with the teams and fans,” said Chris Baker, director of motorsport, Michelin North America.

Record Pace Continues

The race winning Mazda Team Joest helped provide the latest entries to the IMSA record book. Harry Tincknell’s fastest race lap of 1:29.657 in the No. 55 Mazda RT24-P was 3.767 seconds quicker than the 2018 best lap, and a mere 0.018 second off the new track record pole time set on Saturday by Mazda teammate Oliver Jarvis.

Through the first six races of the 2019 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, the headliner DPi class has bettered the 2018 pole lap times by an average 2.05 seconds, with a new qualifying record established in each of the six races.

PRESS INFORMATION



The GT Le Mans and GT Daytona classes also surpassed last year's fastest race laps, including all seven GTLM cars that made it past the first lap.

Breakthroughs and Win Streaks Continue

Mazda's win with Tincknell, Jonathan Bomarito and Olivier Pla was the first for its factory Prototype program in more than 50 IMSA races dating to 2014, and came with a 1-2 finish as teammates Jarvis, Tristan Nunez and Timo Bernhard finished second.

"It's a long time coming. We wanted to put Mazda on the top step of the podium and it's been a long journey to get here," said John Doonan, director of Mazda Motorsports.

"The people in the blue, white and yellow make an amazing tire. We're family and are partnered with them. It's absolutely fantastic. Michelin has played such a key role in this happening. Multimatic has transformed the race car; we knew we'd be quicker and a lot of it is down to these tires."

Porsche GT Team continued its run of wins in GT Le Mans, with its fourth consecutive win in class this season. That ties a class record set on multiple occasions. Nick Tandy and Patrick Pilet scored their second win of the year (Sebring) in the No. 911 Porsche 911 RSR.

"It was like 80 minutes of qualifying after that last restart. I was absolutely flat out," said Tandy, who set his fastest time on lap 190 of 195.

"It was time to go. The team told me that the Corvette was gaining and the MICHELIN® tires just kept getting better and better."

Pilet, his co-driver, added: "There was no drop in the tires, that was the key point."

Beyond the DPi and GTLM classes, Meyer Shank Racing with Curb-Agajanian broke through for its first GT Daytona class win of the season. Polesitter Trent Hindman scored his first WeatherTech Championship victory, with co-driver Mario Farnbacher holding back a hard-charging Bill Auberlen to secure the win in their No. 86 Acura NSX GT3 Evo. Justin Marks completed the winning GTD lineup.

PR1/Mathiasen Motorsports won its second straight LMP2 race with the trio of Matt McMurry, Gabriel Aubry and Eric Lux sharing the No. 52 Oreca 07.

Two Series, Two Endurance Tests

Sunday's WeatherTech Championship race also marked the third of four IMSA Michelin Endurance Cup races this season.

The Mazda, Porsche, PR1/Mathiasen and Scuderia Corsa Ferrari teams are unofficial class winners in Round 3. Results are unofficial until verified as final by IMSA.

Sunday's six-hour endurance race followed the second IMSA MICHELIN Pilot Challenge endurance race of the year. Saturday's four-hour Tioga Downs Casino Resort 240 kicked off that series' busiest stretch of the year, as the first of five races in the next nine weekends.

PRESS INFORMATION



Through a weather-delayed start, a number of yellow flags, a late rain shower that caused a guessing game on whether to use MICHELIN® Pilot® Sport GT Rain tires or stick to slicks, the victors emerged.

The trio of Dylan Murry, James Cox and Jeroen Bleekemolen won in GS in the No. 35 Riley Mercedes-AMG GT4, with 18-year-old Murry excelling against sports car veterans more than double his age while racing slicks on the damp but fast-drying track surface. Mat Pombo and Mike LaMarra claimed the TCR class victory in their No. 73 L.A. Honda World Racing Honda Civic Type R.

Next Up

All three of Michelin's series in IMSA race again next weekend in Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park.

The races are as follows:

- IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship (Sunday, July 7, 1 p.m. EDT, NBC)
- IMSA MICHELIN Pilot Challenge (Saturday, July 6, 1:45 p.m. EDT, IMSA.TV)
- IMSA Prototype Challenge (Saturday, July 6, 4:20 p.m. EDT, IMSA.TV)

About Michelin

Dedicated to the improvement of sustainable mobility, Michelin designs, manufactures and sells tires for every type of vehicle, including airplanes, automobiles, bicycles, earthmovers, farm equipment, heavy-duty trucks and motorcycles. The Company has earned a long-standing reputation for building innovative premium tires. In addition to tires, the Company also publishes travel guides, hotel and restaurant guides, maps and road atlases. Headquartered in Greenville, S.C., Michelin North America (www.michelinman.com) employs more than 20,000 people and operates 19 major manufacturing plants. Forbes magazine has ranked Michelin No. 1 on its annual survey of "Best Large Employers in America" for 2018.

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