



## ***HISTORIC SUPERSEBRING WEEKEND HIGHLIGHTS MICHELIN'S COMMITMENT TO TWO GLOBAL SPORTS CAR CHAMPIONSHIPS***

The biggest crowd in Sebring International Raceway history packed the historic Florida race circuit for an extraordinary week that was properly billed as *SuperSebring* and became the largest event in Michelin Motorsport history.

Called upon to support four championships, including the prestigious FIA World Endurance Championship and IMSA WeatherTech Championship, and 137 of 140 entries, Michelin responded with a massive 24,000 square foot tent housing 16,000 tires, 55 engineers and motorsport tire specialists, and a 42-person tire mounting center staff.

“With 20 different automotive marques, and so many outstanding teams, and drivers it was a great responsibility to provide the tires and technical support to help the teams perform at the highest possible level,” said **Matthieu Bonardel**, Michelin director of motorsport.

“Sebring is the birthplace of American endurance racing and a technically demanding circuit. The tremendous number of fans provided us the opportunity to engage with them and share their passion for motorsport. They inspired everyone to perform at the highest possible level every lap.”

By the end of Saturday’s 67<sup>th</sup> Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring, Michelin teams had recorded 30,803 laps, or more than 127,234 miles, of the fast and bumpy 3.74 mile, 17-turn Florida circuit throughout the weekend in a wide range of conditions. The resulting data and insights are invaluable in the development of future products.

### **Consistent and Versatile... Day and Night**

After Thursday’s IMSA Prototype Challenge and the IMSA MICHELIN Pilot Challenge on Friday afternoon, Friday evening’s 1,000 Miles of Sebring was the first of the two bill-topping races of this weekend’s double-header at the famous American circuit.

The sixth round of the 2018/2019 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) ran from 4pm local time until midnight, and action kicked off in bright, hot Florida sunshine, with the thermometer standing at 31°C, and the track temperature reaching as high as 45°C (36°C on the circuit’s lighter-colored concrete portions).

These figures naturally cooled as darkness swept over the former U.S. Army airfield and this provided Michelin’s partners with a chance to run different tire strategies, while rain during the race’s last half-hour or so saw teams switch to the French brand’s wet-weather rubber.

To cover the broad spectrum of possible conditions, Michelin took a total of 16,000 tires to the Sebring meeting. Six thousand of these were for the FIA WEC clash, including two slick options (soft and medium, medium and hard, or soft and hard, depending on car and class), plus Michelin’s full selection of FIA WEC wet-weather tires.



“The number of tires we had at Sebring was effectively very high, but Michelin takes great care to optimize its logistics to keep a careful check on polluting emissions,” explained **Jérôme Mondain**, the manager of Michelin Motorsport’s endurance racing programmes. “Of course, we needed to take appropriate quantities of the different choices required for the week’s different races in order to guarantee driver safety and deliver the high performance they expect from us. Our partners tend to consume just over a third of their respective allocations depending on their chosen strategies, which they fine-tune with support and advice from the Michelin technicians who are delegated to work with each of them.”

For the 1,000 Miles of Sebring, just as it does for every round of the championship, the FIA WEC placed a maximum cap on the number of tires teams may use, the quota being 12 for the three free practice sessions (LM GTE Am: 16 tires) and 28 (LM GTE Am: 36) for qualifying and the race. The performance and consistency of their tires allowed Michelin’s partner teams to run double stints in order to optimize how they used their allowances.

The 1,000 Miles of Sebring saw the two Toyota TS050-Hybrids follow up their domination of qualifying on Thursday evening (when pole position was secured by Fernando Alonso, a two-time Formula 1 world champion with Michelin, the 2018 Le Mans winner and winner of this year’s Rolex 24 at Daytona) with a one-two finish on Saturday evening. First past the flag was the No. 8 prototype shared by the Spaniard and his teammates Sébastien Buemi and Kazuki Nakajima, followed by the No. 7 sister car of Conway/Kobayashi/Lopez. Third place went to the No.11 SMP Racing prototype of Hartley/Petrov/Aleshin.

Michelin runners Signatech Alpine Matmut (Lapierre/Negrão/Thiriet) and Dragonspeed (Gonzalez/Maldonado/Davidson) claimed second and third places in LMP2.

There was plenty to keep the spectators on their toes in LM GTE Pro and LM GTE Am, too. The ‘Pro’ spoils eventually went to the No. 91 Porsche 911 RSR (Lietz/Bruni) which finished clear of the No. 81 BMW M8 GTE (Tomczyk/Catsburg/Sims) and No. 67 Ford GT (Priaulx/Tincknell/Bomarito), while the ‘Am’ victors were Christian Ried, Julien Andlauer and Matt Campbell in the No. 77 Porsche 911 RSR. The Dempsey-Proton Racing trio was joined on the podium by Spirit of Race’s Flohr/Castellacci/Fischella (No. 54 Ferrari 488 GTE) and Bergmeister/Lindsey/Perfetti in the Team Project 1-run No. 56 Porsche 911 RSR.

### **Record Laps At Record Speeds in IMSA WeatherTech Championship**

IMSA comprised three race series, seven classes and a total of 106 cars to make up the majority of Michelin and Sebring’s record setting weekend, for 15 hours and 45 minutes of racing. In the process, several other track records fell.

For the second consecutive IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship race, Michelin teams and drivers exercised their strategic arsenal to battle both the weather and the grueling Sebring International Raceway circuit.

The Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring began behind the safety car as persistent but not overwhelming rain hovered over the track. However after nearly 40 minutes, the race resumed with drivers restarting while on the MICHELIN® Pilot® Sport GT Rain tires.

## **PRESS INFORMATION**



By the third hour, the rain eased off to provide teams their crossover point back to Michelin's dry weather slick compounds, the IMSA medium for DPi/LMP2, the GTLM range and the MICHELIN Pilot Sport GT S8M for GTD. Lap times instantly fell as a result, even as the conditions remained overcast and muggy.

Only four additional full-course cautions slowed the pace, including a final caution with 15 minutes to go for a car stopped off course, which nearly changed the final complexion. In the end, Cadillac, Porsche and Lamborghini emerged as winning automotive brands in the second WeatherTech Championship race of the year.

The Action Express Racing team's trio of Felipe Nasr, Pipo Derani and Eric Curran drove the No. 31 Whelen Engineering Racing Cadillac DPi-V.R to the overall victory. The No. 10 Konica Minolta Wayne Taylor Racing and No. 5 Mustang Sampling Racing cars completed an all-Cadillac DPi podium. Cadillac combined to lead 334 of the 348 race laps; the 348-lap count tied the Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring distance record.

Porsche GT Team repeated a pair of wins at Sebring. Its FIA WEC team won the 1000 Miles of Sebring in GTE-Pro on Friday (Bruni/Lietz driving). On Saturday, Porsche's Nick Tandy, Patrick Pilet and Fred Makowiecki overcame an early race deficit to take the lead from Ford in the final hour of the race. This trio has now won this race in back-to-back years.

Ford finished second (Hand/Mueller/Bourdais) and Corvette finished third (Magnussen/Garcia/Rockenfeller). The highest BMW finished fourth to make it all four GTLM manufacturers in the top four positions.

Lamborghini went 1-2 in the GT Daytona class. The GRT Grasser team (Breukers/Bortolotti/Ineichen, No. 11 Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo) won over the Magnus Racing team (Potter/Lally/Pumpelly, No. 44 Lamborghini). Bortolotti held off Lally at the finish. Lamborghini has swept both the Rolex 24 At Daytona and Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring for a second consecutive year. Scuderia Corsa Ferrari (Vilander/MacNeil/Westphal) completed the podium.

Performance Tech Motorsports (Masson/Cassels/Evans) won the LMP2 class in its No. 38 Oreca 07.

--

IMSA records set and other notes this weekend included:

- IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship: Top 9 DPis beat existing qualifying record. DPi and GTLM also set new fastest race laps.
- IMSA MICHELIN Pilot Challenge: Top 6 GS cars beat existing qualifying record, top 10 TCR cars beat existing qualifying record. In the race, 16 GS cars broke the previous fastest race lap, and 9 TCR entries broke the previous fastest lap.
- WeatherTech Championship gap of 1.030 seconds was the closest margin of victory in race history.

--

## **PRESS INFORMATION**



Both IMSA Challenge series also raced as part of the *SuperSebring* weekend. These two series combined for three hours, 45 minutes of racing on Thursday and Friday.

In the MICHELIN Pilot Challenge series' Alan Jay Automotive Network 120, Tyler McQuarrie and Jeff Westphal delivered Carbahn Motorsports its first series win in GS. They drove the No. 39 Audi R8 LMS GT4. In the TCR class, Tom O'Gorman and Shelby Blackstock shared the No. 37 L.A. Honda World Racing Honda Civic Type R for their second win in as many races to start the season.

Stevan McAleer claimed the victory in the No. 43 Robillard Racing Norma M30 in Thursday's IMSA Prototype Challenge race.

### **Media Contacts**

#### Michelin North America

Tom SULLIVAN  
Michelin North America  
Mobile: 704-222-5488  
Email: [tom.sullivan@michelin.com](mailto:tom.sullivan@michelin.com)

John LOVE  
Jackson Motorsports Group  
Mobile: 313-506-2114  
Email: [john.love@jacksonmg.com](mailto:john.love@jacksonmg.com)

#### Michelin Group

Alessandro BARLOZZI  
Michelin Group  
Mobile: +33-6-4223-5593  
Email: [alessandro.barlozzi@michelin.com](mailto:alessandro.barlozzi@michelin.com)

# # #