



PRESS RELEASE

MOTORSPORT

Boulogne-Billancourt (France), November 13, 2022

## **Michelin celebrates 2022's FIA World Endurance Champions following the 8 Hours of Bahrain**

- Three hours of racing during the day and five more after sunset – making up an intense, eight-hour-long spectacle that brought down the curtain on an open and unpredictable FIA WEC season
- Buemi/Hartley/Hirakawa (#8 Toyota Gazoo Racing Toyota GR010 Hybrid) crowned World Champions in the headlining Hypercar category. Calado and Pier Guidi (#51 AF Corse Ferrari 480 GTE EVO) take the title in LM GTE Pro
- Toyota Gazoo Racing and Ferrari secure Manufacturers' spoils

Last Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> of November, was a big day for competitors in the FIA World Endurance Championship, because it was the day that the World Championship titles were decided in the final race of the 2022 campaign.

Not only was the race long – at eight hours – but the conditions were far from easy for the drivers, their cars and their tyres. When the action got underway at 2pm local time, the air temperature was almost 35°C, while the track temperature stood at a scorching 50°C – which only began to subside from 5pm, as darkness set in.

The evolving temperatures and aggressive track surface were the major challenges for tyres. Located in a desert, Bahrain International Circuit in Sakhir is not only the most abrasive venue of the season, but it is also one of the toughest on tyres. Its 15-turn (five left/ten right), 5.412-kilometre layout features a number of sections that call for heavy braking and hard re-acceleration. The changing temperatures and the presence of sand in places truly put tyres to the test both laterally and longitudinally, particularly under re-acceleration.

That said, the two compounds developed by Michelin for 2022 proved perfectly paired, competitive and durable. Drivers were able to count on tyres that provided them with the optimum balance between grip, traction and braking stability, irrespective of their degree of wear.

"First of all, I want to congratulate Sébastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and Ryo Hirakawa on winning the FIA World Endurance Championship in the Hypercar class, as well as Toyota Gazoo Racing - obviously – on securing the Manufacturers' crown," said Michelin Motorsport Director **Matthieu Bonardel**.



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"I would also like to offer my warm congratulations to James Calado, Alessandro Pier Guidi and Ferrari for their Drivers' and Manufacturers' titles at LM GTE Pro level. And, last but not least, congratulations to Ben Keating, Marco Sørensen and TF Sport for their success in the LM GTE Am Drivers' and Teams' FIA Endurance Trophy.

"Throughout the season, Michelin has supported its partners with a competitive, dependable range, as well as advice adapted to each car to enable them to benefit from the full potential of their tyres. The durability and, above all, consistency of our tyres were major factors in the 8 Hours of Bahrain, just as they have been all year. I would also like to pay tribute to the excellent relationships we have forged with our partners, on both the human and technical levels. The trust that the drivers are able to place in us allows them to push to the limit out on-track without having to worry about the performance of their tyres.

"Finally, I extend my sincere gratitude to every single member of the Michelin Motorsport team. They have had to focus on not just one season this year, but two. Indeed, in addition to unfailingly supporting our partners during the 2022 FIA WEC campaign, we have been working simultaneously on the development of our new range for 2023."

"Race day was the hottest day of the week," reports **Pierre Alves**, the manager of Michelin Motorsport's Endurance Racing Programme. "At the start of the race, the track temperature was nudging 50°C. Despite such extreme heat, our tyres handled the particular demands of this circuit whilst demonstrating low wear. The key moment of the race came when night fell, and the air and track temperatures began to dip. With the assistance of Michelin's Technical Advisors, our partner teams were able to change tyres at the right moment. Supplying our partners with two different types of compound allowed them to maintain a consistently strong performance out on the circuit throughout the eight hours of fast-paced racing without having any concerns from a safety perspective."

Michelin's Endurance ranges were developed entirely on the simulator and have received first-rate feedback from the brand's partners over the course of the past two seasons. In 2023, the Hypercar category will additionally welcome the discipline's new LMDh cars and – accordingly – new tyres, similarly developed digitally.

The 8 Hours of Bahrain was the final race appearance for both the Alpine A480 fielded by Alpine Elf Team – which will return the season after next with a new Hypercar – and the cars competing in the LM GTE Pro class, which will be replaced in 2024 in-line with the series' new regulations.



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### **About Michelin:**

Michelin's ambition is to improve the mobility of its customers over the long-term. As a leader in the mobility domain, Michelin designs, manufactures and distributes tyres best-suited to customers' needs and uses, as well as services and solutions to enhance vehicle efficiency. Michelin also offers its customers ways to enjoy unique experiences during their journeys and when travelling. In addition, Michelin develops high-tech materials for many sectors of activity. Based in Clermont-Ferrand, Michelin has offices in 177 countries, employs 124,760 people and operates 68 tyre factories which together produced around 173 million tyres in 2021 ([www.michelin.com](http://www.michelin.com)).

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