



PRESS RELEASE

MOTORSPORT

Portimão (Portugal) – April 16, 2023

## Tyre-strategy variations play central role at the 6 Hours of Portimão

- Michelin's new Hypercar tyre range proved a perfect match for the challenging conditions encountered at the Autodromo Internacional do Algarve
- The compound choices of Michelin's partners underlined the coherence of the two options nominated for this exacting venue
- Unprecedented tyre strategies for the Algarve's atypical track

Round 2 of the 2023 FIA World Endurance Championship at Autodromo Internacional do Algarve provided six hours of exciting action in both the Hypercar and LM GTE Am classes, in which all the cars compete on Michelin tyres.

In the headlining Hypercar category, the weekend was the first chance for Ferrari, Peugeot, Porsche and Vanwall to take on defending FIA WEC champions Toyota Gazoo Racing and the American privateer outfit Glickenhaus in Portugal.

Michelin Motorsport provided its Hypercar partners with a choice of two compounds from its 2023 range, namely the Soft Hot Weather and Medium Hot Weather options which were nominated for the Algarve venue where the air and ground temperatures stood at 28°C and more than 40°C respectively as the race got under way at noon local time, Sunday.

The hot conditions prompted the teams to run different strategies as a function not only of the hilly, 4.684-kilometre, 15-turn circuit, but also of the technical characteristics of their respective prototypes.

*"Portimao is a technically challenging circuit that is notoriously hard on tyres," reports **Pierre Alves**, the manager of Michelin's endurance racing programmes. "The long, right-hand Turn 15 sees the cars lean heavily on their left-side wheels and this, along with the necessity for them to double-stint the same tyres at times, meant that some teams didn't hesitate to run different compounds concurrently, with Mediums on the left and Softs on the right - which is the side that suffers less from wear. Certain teams chose to double-stint their right-hand tyres and replace the lefts at every refuelling stop, whereas others ran the Medium compound only, and changed their tyres every two stops. This confirms how important it was to offer two choices for Portugal in order to provide the teams different ways to push from lights-out to the chequered flag with a solution adapted to their individual needs."*



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### Long lasting performance

Michelin's range for today's Hypercar endurance-racing prototypes was developed entirely virtually and conceived to deliver consistent performance with wear, with no effect on either lap times or the feedback provided to the drivers. The fact that they were developed digitally did away with the need for on-track testing and this, combined with their exceptional longevity with no detriment to performance, fits perfectly with Michelin's sustainable approach to motor racing, while highlighting the value of its technologies at this particularly harsh circuit.

*"Like Sebring in March, Portimao proved reassuring regarding the pertinence of our design and development work," adds **Pierre Alves**. "The lap times clocked towards the end of stints were at least as fast as those at the beginning, irrespective of the compound choice. We worked closely with our partners throughout the race and they were all very pleased. With regard to LM GTE Am, the air and ground temperatures favoured fast tyre warm-up performance. As a consequence, the banning of tyre warmers - which used to allow tyre treads to be preheated to 80°C before taking to the track - was not a major issue, and our team advisors were on-hand to help the teams make the very most of their tyre allocations all weekend."*

The 2023 6 Hours of Portimao was won by the #8 Toyota GR010 Hybrid of Sébastien Buemi/Brendon Hartley/Ryo Hirakawa, ahead of the #50 Ferrari 499P (Miguel Molina/Antonio Fuoco/Nicklas Nielsen) and #6 Porsche 963 (André Lotterer/Kevin Estre/Laurens Vanthoor).

The day's LM GTE Am victor was the Corvette Racing Corvette C8.R of Benjamin Keating/Nicolas Varrone/Nicky Catsburg, followed over the finish line by the Richard Mille AF Corse Ferrari 488 GTE EVO (Luis Perez Companc/Lilou Wadoux/Alessio Rovera) and the Iron Dames Porsche 911 RSR-19 (Michelle Gatting/Rahel Frey/Sarah Bovy).

The next round of the 2023 FIA World Endurance Championship will take teams to Belgium for the TotalEnergies 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps on Saturday, April 29.

### About Michelin

Michelin's ambition is to sustainably improve its customers' mobility. The leader in the mobility sector, Michelin designs, manufactures, and distributes the tires best suited to their requirements and uses as well as services and solutions to improve transport efficacy. Michelin also puts forward offers that allow its customers to enjoy unique moments when traveling. Michelin also develops high-technology equipment intended for multiple fields. Based in Clermont-Ferrand, Michelin is present in 175 countries, employs 132,200 people and operates 67 tire factories that, together, produced approximately 167 million tires in 2022. ([www.michelin.com](http://www.michelin.com)).



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