



PRESS RELEASE

MOTORSPORT

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Qatar 1812 Km

The Qatar 1812 Km's specific demands ideally covered by Michelin's endurance-racing range

- The inaugural Qatar 1812 Km was won by the Porsche Penske Motorsport-run Porsche 963 of Kevin Estre/André Lotterer/Laurens Vanthoor.
- Michelin is the exclusive tyre supplier to the 19-strong Hypercar entry for the 2024 FIA World Endurance Championship.
- The experience of Michelin's experts and the quality of the brand's endurance-racing tyres provided the teams with the means to triple-stint on Lusail's recently relaid, highly abrasive track.

The 2024 FIA World Endurance Championships boasts the participation of no fewer than nine manufacturers and 19 Hypercar prototypes, all of which run on Michelin tyres. In addition to the teams that were involved in 2023 (i.e. Cadillac, Ferrari, Peugeot, Porsche and Toyota), the French company is working with new three new partners this season (namely BMW, Isotta Fraschini and Lamborghini), while Alpine is making its comeback to the Hypercar fray.

The opening round of the 2024 calendar – which includes visits to Europe, the Middle-East, North America and Asia – was today's Qatar 1812 Km. Despite being a tough test for the drivers and their cars alike, it ended up delivering an entertaining show that lasted practically 10 hours.

The track of the 5.380-kilometre Lusail International Circuit – one of four new additions to the championship this year, along with Imola (Italy), Sao Paulo (Brazil) and Austin (Texas, USA) – was entirely relaid last autumn and the drivers were swift to praise its smooth, bump-free surface and high grip levels.

335 enthralling laps

After two warm-up laps, the race kicked off at 11am local time and ended after nightfall, a format that led Michelin to provide its partners with a choice of two compounds: its particularly versatile medium (yellow sidewall markings) for the race's cooler phase, notably towards the end, and a harder alternative (red) for the hotter spells. Most of the teams favoured the hard option for the majority of the 335 laps, and some even kept it on their car all the way to the chequered flag. All the cars took advantage of the hard compound's consistency to double-stint from lights-out, with some even going on to triple-stint it.



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*"Some of the prototypes – including the two Hertz Team Jota Porsche 963s – completed almost 100 laps on a single set. That's something like 500 kilometres," reports **Pierre Alves**, the manager of Michelin's endurance racing programmes. "The #7 Toyota GR010 Hybrid started the race on previously-run tyres and covered 104 tours, which is almost 560km. Other cars only triple-stinted their right-hand tyres which are subjected to fewer constraints at Lusail. That says a great deal about the ability of our tyres to take different approaches onboard. The drivers took care to get their rubber up to temperature at the beginning of their stints, and that was a key to the tyres lasting the longest distance possible. Interestingly, the fastest times were often posted towards the end of stints, when the car was at its lightest, with less fuel onboard. That's a good pointer to the consistency of our tyres which performed at their peak for up to 100 laps. That's a real achievement, especially at such an abrasive circuit as Losail where our tyres succeeded in resisting well to wear."*

As darkness swept over the circuit and the thermometer started to cool, the medium compound gradually emerged as the chief choice, initially on just two wheels of certain cars, then on all four of others. As the race neared its final phase, however, some cars - like one of the Ferrari 499Ps - continued to triple stint on the hard compound, with less than an hour remaining. Together, the medium and hard illustrated the versatility of Michelin's endurance racing range and gave the front-runners the pace they needed to keep up their respective challenges all the way to the flag.

The podium of the inaugural Qatar 1812 Km was an all-Porsche 963 affair, with winners Kevin Estre/André Lotterer/Laurens Vanthoor (#6, Porsche Penske Motorsport), joined by Team Jota's Callum Illot/Norman Nato/Will Stevens (2nd, #12) and third-placed Matt Campbell/Michael Christensen/Frédéric Makowiecki (#5 (Porsche Penske Motorsport).

All the Hypercars had an overall allocation 32 tyres for qualifying and the race, with an additional set of four (of an identical specification) made available for the 10 prototypes that took part in the Hyperpole shoot-out. For Qatar, Michelin chose to provide these 10 cars with its hard compound, before recovering them afterwards. The tyres used for the Hyperpole session are effectively intended to provide high performance and a level playing field but are not included in the cars' individual allocations. For cost-saving and environmental reasons, these tyres will subsequently be provided to Michelin's partner teams for private testing purposes in order to make the maximum use of their distance potential.

Round 2 of the 2024 FIA World Endurance Championship will take teams to Italy for the 6 Hours of Imola on April 21. Before then, Michelin's partners have been invited to attend a bespoke test at Portimao, Portugal, as part of its 2025 tyre's development programme.



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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).

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