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6 Hours of Fuji

New Michelin Pilot Sport Endurance tyres take on the contrasts of Fuji Speedway

- From 25 to 27 September, Fuji Speedway will host the sixth round of the 2026 FIA World Endurance Championship, against the spectacular backdrop of Mount Fuji.
- With three sectors featuring very different characteristics, the Japanese circuit represents a particularly demanding challenge for the tyres, which must combine rapid warm-up, grip and consistency throughout each stint.
- Michelin will make the Soft and Medium specifications of its new 2026 MICHELIN Pilot Sport Endurance range available to its partners, with improved warm-up performance.

Three sectors, three challenges for the tyres

Since joining the FIA WEC calendar in 2012, Fuji Speedway has established itself as one of the key fixtures of the FIA World Endurance Championship. Located near Gotemba, at the foot of Mount Fuji, the Japanese circuit is 4.563 km long and features 16 corners. Its highly distinctive layout, notably including a straight of almost 1.5 km, provides a particularly interesting setting in which to showcase tyre performance.

The circuit's three sectors feature very different characteristics. The first is dominated by the long pit straight, where Hypercars exceed 300 km/h. This requires manufacturers to find the right compromise between aerodynamic efficiency, power and tyre temperature management, as the tyres tend to cool during this prolonged phase at very high speed.

The second sector is radically different, featuring fast corners that generate significantly more energy through the tyres. Turns 4 and 5, in particular, will be important when it comes to managing tyre performance over the course of a stint.

Finally, the third sector consists of a succession of slower corners, where mechanical grip, traction and the tyre's ability to deliver sustained performance become particularly important.

One of the key challenges of the weekend will therefore be to manage the energy transmitted through the tyres in the faster sections while preserving sufficient performance potential to maintain a high level of grip in the final sector. The ability to deliver consistent performance lap after lap will be crucial over the course of a six-hour race.

Soft and Medium to cover different scenarios

As in 2025, Michelin will offer its partners the Soft and Medium specifications. This combination is designed to cover the range of temperatures likely to be encountered at Fuji at this time of year, while giving teams several strategic options depending on track conditions and how they evolve over the course of the weekend.

This year's event will also provide the new 2026 Michelin Pilot Sport Endurance tyres with an opportunity to demonstrate their qualities on a circuit that is particularly revealing in terms of tyre performance.

One of the key developments of the new range concerns tyre warm-up. The tyres reach their optimum operating window more quickly, which is particularly beneficial at the beginning of a stint when track and tyre temperatures are relatively low. This enables drivers to regain the level of grip required to exploit the full potential of their Hypercar sooner.

This performance must, however, be maintained over time. At Fuji, finding the best balance between rapid warm-up, immediate performance and control of thermal and mechanical degradation will be essential. This challenge takes on even greater importance in endurance racing, where tyre consistency also gives teams greater strategic flexibility.

Thanks in particular to its warm-up characteristics, the Soft specification could prove an interesting option in cooler conditions or when the track offers less grip. The more versatile Medium will be capable of responding to a wide variety of conditions and strategies.

An event where strategy plays a major role

The diversity of the layout is not the only challenge presented by Fuji Speedway. Located at the foot of Mount Fuji, the circuit is also renowned for weather conditions that can change rapidly.

Temperatures, humidity and track conditions can therefore alter the technical parameters over the course of a single weekend – and sometimes even within the same day. In this context, the ability to bring the tyres into their operating window quickly while maintaining their performance throughout each stint is a major asset.

Free Practice will allow Michelin's partner teams to compare the two available specifications and fine-tune their choices according to the conditions they encounter, as well as the specific characteristics of each Hypercar. The data gathered will be essential in determining tyre strategies for the race and finding the best compromise between performance and endurance.

Pierre Alves, Michelin Endurance Programme Manager

"Fuji is a particularly interesting circuit from a tyre perspective because its three sectors have very different characteristics. The very long straight in the first sector contributes to cooling the tyres before the cars enter a much faster second section, where the loads and the energy transmitted through the tyres increase significantly. Turns 4 and 5 will be particularly important: the drivers will need sufficient grip to be competitive through this fast section without overworking the tyres, in order to preserve their performance potential for the final sector."

"This last section is much slower and requires a high level of mechanical grip and traction. The objective will therefore be to preserve tyre performance throughout the stint so that the driver can rely on a consistent level of grip right through to the final laps. Finding the right balance between warm-up, immediate performance and endurance will be one of the keys to the weekend."

"Our new 2026 Michelin Pilot Sport Endurance range delivers an important improvement in terms of warm-up. The tyres reach their optimum operating window more quickly, enabling drivers to regain grip and confidence sooner, particularly when the track is relatively cool. At the same time, we still need to manage the energy transmitted through the tyres to avoid excessive thermal or mechanical degradation over the course of a stint."

2026 6 Hours of Fuji schedule

The 6 Hours of Fuji, the sixth round of the 2026 FIA World Endurance Championship, will take place from 25 to 27 September at Fuji Speedway:

- **Friday, 25 September:** Free Practice 1 at 10:15 (local time), followed by Free Practice 2 at 14:30.
- **Saturday, 26 September:** Free Practice 3 at 09:30, Hypercar Qualifying at 14:40 and Hyperpole at 15:00.
- **Sunday, 27 September:** the 6 Hours of Fuji gets underway at 11:00 (local time), for six hours of racing.

About Michelin

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