Paris (France), October 28, 2026

## *Petronas Grand Prix of Malaysia*
## At Sepang, Michelin Power Slick Tires Face the Dual Challenge of Heat and Abrasive Asphalt

- The FIM MotoGP™ World Championship heads to Malaysia and the Sepang International Circuit, a fast and demanding track where high temperatures and abrasive asphalt put tires to the test.
- Michelin will offer two symmetric front tire specifications (Soft and Medium) and three rear options (Soft, Medium and Hard), including a new symmetric Medium compound originally selected in anticipation of a planned track resurfacing.
- With nearly 200,000 passionate fans expected over the weekend, the Malaysian Grand Prix promises another exceptional atmosphere at a circuit Michelin's teams know particularly well.

Located approximately 50 kilometers from Kuala Lumpur, near the international airport, the Sepang International Circuit is one of the key venues on the FIM MotoGP World Championship calendar. Inaugurated in 1999, this modern and spectacular circuit regularly hosts testing sessions for teams and tire manufacturers, particularly ahead of the season. As a result, Michelin has developed an in-depth understanding of the track's characteristics and the demands it places on tires.

Measuring 5.543 kilometers, the circuit features 15 corners, including 10 right-handers and five left-handers, along with two long straights connected by a particularly tight hairpin. The longest straight stretches nearly one kilometer, allowing MotoGP bikes to reach extremely high speeds. However, Sepang is best known for its combination of hard acceleration, heavy braking and long, fast corners, which generate considerable mechanical and thermal stresses on the tires.

These demanding characteristics are compounded by the challenging tropical climate. Air temperatures are generally high, while track temperatures can exceed 50°C (122°F). During the 2025 event, Michelin recorded track temperatures of 55°C (131°F) during the Tissot Sprint and 50°C (122°F) during Sunday's Grand Prix. Under these conditions, managing operating temperatures, tire wear and performance consistency is a major challenge.

The Malaysian Grand Prix is also renowned for its passionate fans. Nearly 200,000 spectators gather at the circuit over the course of the weekend, creating an incredible atmosphere that makes this event one of the highlights of the championship's Asian tour.

**Piero Taramasso**, Michelin Motorsport Two-Wheel Competition Manager

*"Sepang is a circuit we know extremely well because we regularly come here for testing, in addition to the Grand Prix itself. It's a fast track, but above all, it's particularly demanding on tires. For this year's event, we originally prepared our tire allocation with a planned resurfacing of the circuit in mind. However, the work was ultimately not carried out, so we will be racing on the same asphalt as in 2025.*

*Nevertheless, we decided to retain the new rear Medium specification, which was not originally intended for this surface, to give our partners an additional option. It will complement two well-proven solutions: last year's Soft, which performed extremely well and was used in both the Sprint and the Grand Prix, and the 2025 Medium, which becomes our Hard this year.*

*We will therefore have three rear tire specifications with different characteristics, allowing riders and teams to fine-tune their choices according to the conditions and their race strategies. On such a demanding circuit, this additional flexibility could prove to be a real advantage.*

*Finally, it's always a pleasure to return to Malaysia, where we are welcomed by huge numbers of passionate fans and an exceptional atmosphere."*

For the 2026 PETRONAS Grand Prix of Malaysia, Michelin will provide its partners with a MICHELIN Power Slick tire allocation featuring two front specifications (Soft and Medium), identical to those used in 2025. Both feature a symmetric construction designed to meet the demands placed on the front tire at this particularly challenging circuit.

At the rear, the allocation has been expanded to three specifications (Soft, Medium and Hard). The Soft remains unchanged after demonstrating its effectiveness in 2025, during both the Tissot Sprint and the Grand Prix. Last year's Medium becomes this year's Hard, while a new Medium specification completes the range.

The new Medium also features a symmetric construction, unlike the other two rear options, which are asymmetric and feature a reinforced right shoulder to cope with the greater stresses generated by the circuit's higher number of right-hand corners.

In the event of rain, Michelin will provide its MICHELIN Power Rain range in Soft and Medium specifications for both the front and rear.

**Looking Back at the 2025 Malaysian Grand Prix**

In 2025, Álex Márquez won the Malaysian Grand Prix and set a new race lap record of 1:58.873, improving on his previous benchmark from 2023 by 0.106 seconds. Riding on MICHELIN Power Slick Soft tires at both the front and rear, he finished ahead of Pedro Acosta and Joan Mir, with track temperatures exceeding 50°C (122°F).

Pedro Acosta also established a new top-speed record of 342.8 km/h (213 mph). The outright circuit lap record remains in the hands of Francesco Bagnaia, who set a time of 1:56.337 in 2024.

## Weekend Schedule

At Sepang, riders will take to the track on Friday for Free Practice 1 (10:45–11:30 a.m.), followed by the Practice session (3:00–4:00 p.m.), which will determine the 10 riders who qualify directly for Q2.

Saturday's action will begin with Free Practice 2, followed by the two qualifying sessions (all taking place between 10:10 and 11:30 a.m.), ahead of the 10-lap Tissot Sprint at 3:00 p.m.

On Sunday, riders will compete in the 20-lap PETRONAS Grand Prix of Malaysia, scheduled to start at 3:00 p.m., with weather conditions once again potentially playing a decisive role in tire selection and race strategies.

**About Michelin**

Michelin is building a world-leading manufacturer of life-changing composites and experiences. Pioneering engineered materials for more than 130 years, Michelin is uniquely positioned to make decisive contributions to human progress and to a more sustainable world. Drawing on its deep know-how in polymer composites, Michelin is constantly innovating to manufacture high-quality tires and components for critical applications in demanding fields as varied as mobility, construction, aeronautics, low-carbon energies, and healthcare. The care placed in its products and deep customer knowledge inspire Michelin to offer the finest experiences. This spans from providing data- and AI-based connected solutions for professional fleets to recommending outstanding restaurants and hotels curated by the MICHELIN Guide. Headquartered in Clermont-Ferrand, France, Michelin is present in 175 countries and employs 122,600 people.

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