

2018 FIA World Rally Championship
Round 10: Rally Turkey

The MICHELIN LTX Force shows its strength in Turkey

After an eight-year absence from the FIA World Rally Championship calendar, Rally Turkey returned to the sport's elite series this season with a visit to a brand new venue, Marmaris. The southwestern coastal resort and its magnificent surrounding countryside featured a menu of exceptionally selective stages which provided the foundations for a thrilling contest on a level playing field, since they were unknown territory for all of the front-running competitors.

The three-day event turned out to be not only the slowest gravel fixture of the season but also the roughest, with most competitors reporting misadventures of some sort. The total distance of 882.69 kilometres included 321.20 kilometres of against-the-action clock divided into 17 challenging tests which clearly entertained the many spectators – most of whom were newcomers to the sport.

To help the WRC runners in their battle for supremacy, Michelin had two types of tyre available in Turkey: the hard-compound MICHELIN LTX Force H4 and the medium MICHELIN LTX Force M6. Meanwhile, its WRC2 partners were able to choose between the hard-compound MICHELIN Latitude Cross H90 and the softer Latitude Cross S80. In both classes, the harder variant was by far the preferred option, although the M6 did play a part in the strategies of certain crews.

The hostile conditions, which included rocks described by some as being as big as footballs, effectively put the cars and their tyres to a gruelling test.

"Despite the punishment the cars were subjected to, our tyres proved extremely resilient," says **Arnaud Rémy**, the manager of Michelin's rally programmes. "We always knew it was going to be a tough rally but we didn't think the crews and cars would suffer this much. The fact that we were able to deliver this level of performance and safety in these extraordinarily difficult conditions speaks volumes for the value of the work put in by our engineers at the development stage when it is essential to strike the right balance between strength and competitiveness. When it comes to tyres, it is always hard to improve on several, seemingly opposing fronts at the same time but nothing is impossible and it was gratifying to hear the teams praise our products here in Turkey. I think this rally would have gone very differently had our tyres not progressed so much in terms of their technology over the past decade."

The 2018 Rally Turkey was ultimately won by Ott Tänak / Martin Jarveoja, ahead of fellow Toyota Yaris WRC runners Jari-Matti Latvala / Miikka Anttila. Hayden Paddon / Sebastian Marshall (Hyundai i20 WRC) made it an all-Michelin podium.

The Czech Republic's Kopecky / Dresler (Skoda Fabia R5) took the top prize in the WRC 2 class, while Romania's Tempestini / Itu (Citroën C3 R5) and Britons Ingram / Whittock (Skoda Fabia R5) rounded out another all-Michelin top three.



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The next FIA World Rally Championship clash will take crews to Great Britain for Wales Rally GB on October 4-7.



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