



IMSA TEAMS AND MICHELIN REWRITE RECORD BOOK AT ROAD AMERICA

Michelin excels in caution-free WeatherTech and rain-shortened Pilot Challenge races

ELKHART LAKE, Wis. (August 4, 2019) ---Michelin is enjoying its first season as the Official Tire of IMSA, and so apparently are the IMSA teams and drivers who rewrote the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship record book here at Road America.

The classic 4.048-mile circuit, the longest of the IMSA season, presents a wide range of corners and elevation changes. But throughout all classes of competition, teams excelled here with marks consistently ahead of 2018 best lap marks.

The first sign of things to come appeared in qualifying, when Acura Team Penske's Dane Cameron broke the long-standing track record and posted a qualifying lap 3.218 seconds quicker than the 2018 race pole.

The teams and drivers took full advantage of the ideal conditions and MICHELIN® tires and technical support to set a new race distance record for the two-hour 40-minute race length.

The new mark set at 83 laps, a total of 335.984 miles. That eclipsed the old mark of 76 laps and 307.648 miles by 28.336 miles.

Through the first nine race weekends of the 2019 IMSA season, the IMSA WeatherTech, MICHELIN Pilot Challenge and Prototype Challenge teams have combined to set 65 new IMSA track records in either qualifying or race conditions.

“What makes the new race distance record especially satisfying is that the top seven cars all finished on lap 83 and the top 15 cars, including the top five GTLM class cars, all broke the old record,” said Chris Baker, director of motorsports, Michelin North America.

“To run these lap times in such close competition for the entire race is a tribute to the IMSA manufacturers, teams and drivers and we are grateful to work together with all of them.”

Streaks Roll on in IMSA WeatherTech Championship

Whether it's Mazda in DPi, Ford in GT Le Mans, PFAFF Porsche in GT Daytona or PR1/Mathiasen Motorsports in LMP2, teams continued their winning streaks in WeatherTech Championship competition at Elkhart Lake, Wis.

Mazda scored an emotional third straight win in DPi, this time with Jonathan Bomarito and Harry Tincknell in the No. 55 Mazda RT24-P. Tincknell withstood a hard challenge from Dane Cameron in the No. 6 Acura ARX-05 in the final laps and ultimately won by just 0.227 of a second. Cameron and Juan Pablo Montoya were second and the No. 77 Mazda of Tristan Nunez and Oliver Jarvis were third.

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The win comes after a breakthrough triumph at Watkins Glen, and then a follow-up at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park. Mazda Motorsports North America director John Doonan grew up not far from the track and has been coming here his whole life.

“MICHELIN® tires are a gift to this car. It’s made this car come alive,” Doonan said. “Today, these two boys put on a show and ultimately we have a really good race car. To get this one here, is really special.”

Ford Chip Ganassi Racing won its second straight race with Richard Westbrook and Ryan Briscoe sharing the No. 67 Ford GT. While they ran for a three-stop strategy to go faster over shorter stints at Lime Rock, they opted to go longer here with a two-stop strategy at Road America. Ford secured a 1-2 finish with Joey Hand and Dirk Mueller in second, and the points leading Porsche of Laurens Vanthoor and Earl Bamber finished third.

“The key was being good on the MICHELIN® tires,” Westbrook said. “The last 10 laps were most important. Today was the polar opposite of Lime Rock. There was a 3-stopper. Here was a 2-stopper.”

PFAFF Porsche won GT Daytona with Matt Campbell and Zacharie Robichon. Paul Miller Racing Lamborghini (Bryan Sellers and Corey Lewis) was second with Turner Motorsport BMW (Bill Auberlen and Robby Foley) third.

PR1/Mathiasen’s fourth straight LMP2 win came with its fourth different driver lineup. Patrick Kelly joined Matt McMurry in the No. 52 ORECA.

Wet, Drying, then Wet Dramatic MICHELIN Pilot Challenge Race

Saturday’s IMSA MICHELIN Pilot Challenge weather-shortened race brought more drama and an incredible finish.

Lightning in the area, followed by heavy rain and hail delayed the start before IMSA determined a reduced race length of 75 minutes, with a mandated 25-minute minimum drive time.

Teams had the option to switch to the MICHELIN® Pilot® Sport GT Rain tires before the race start, but not all opted to. As a result, some of the teams that started on the MICHELIN® Pilot® Sport GT S9M commercial slick tires were running anywhere from five to six seconds quicker per lap before most of the field came in for stops for slicks after the drive time window opened.

The skies opened again in the final half hour, prompting most of the field to return to the pits for wet weather tires. A pair of full course cautions ultimately set-up a one-lap dash to the finish.

Robin Liddell made the most of it in a charge from fourth-to-first on the final lap, after rising from outside the top 20 only seven laps earlier. He passed two cars on the outside of Canada Corner, Turn 12, and then darted to the outside of Kuno Wittmer’s McLaren heading up the hill to the start/finish line. Ultimately, Liddell scored the GS win by just 0.070 of a second in the No. 71 Rebel Rock Racing Chevrolet Camaro GT4.R he shared with Frank DePew. This is the first team to win twice in GS this season.

The TCR win changed hands after the checkered flag when the winning car on the road was dropped to the back of the class for failing to meet the minimum drive time. Mason Filippi and

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Harry Gottsacker inherited their maiden MICHELIN Pilot Challenge victory in their No. 21 Hyundai Veloster N TCR, for Bryan Herta Autosport's third win of the season.

With fourth place finishes in their classes, both Tyler McQuarrie and Jeff Westphal (No. 39 CarBahn Audi R8 LMS GT4, GS) and Mark Wilkins and Michael Lewis (No. 98 Herta Hyundai, TCR) have provisionally consolidated their points leads.

Next Up

IMSA heads next to VIRginia International Raceway for the Michelin GT Challenge at VIR, August 23-25.

WeatherTech Championship GTLM and GTD teams compete in the second and final GT-only race of the year (Sunday, August 25, 1:30 p.m. EDT, NBCSN).

IMSA's two Challenge series also race next at VIR on Saturday, August 24. Both the IMSA MICHELIN Pilot Challenge (2:05 p.m. EDT, IMSA.TV) and IMSA Prototype Challenge (5:45 p.m. EDT, IMSA.TV) are in action.

The premier WeatherTech championship DPi and LMP2 teams return at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca in Monterey, Calif. On September 13-15.

About Michelin

Dedicated to the improvement of sustainable mobility, Michelin designs, manufactures and sells tires for every type of vehicle, including airplanes, automobiles, bicycles, earthmovers, farm equipment, heavy-duty trucks and motorcycles. The Company has earned a long-standing reputation for building innovative premium tires. In addition to tires, the Company also publishes travel guides, hotel and restaurant guides, maps and road atlases. Headquartered in Greenville, S.C., Michelin North America (www.michelinman.com) employs more than 20,000 people and operates 19 major manufacturing plants. Forbes magazine has ranked Michelin No. 1 on its annual survey of "Best Large Employers in America" for 2018.

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