



SPEED, STRATEGY ON DISPLAY FOR MICHELIN IN MONTEREY

Wide range of temperatures and strategies play to Michelin's various strengths at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca

Monterey, Calif. (Sept. 15, 2019) --- WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca proved a particularly apt track name for Michelin teams in IMSA's WeatherTech SportsCar Championship and MICHELIN Pilot Challenge series competitors this weekend.

The sandy, abrasive, notoriously low-grip but high-wear surface is a known quantity to most competitors. However, unseasonably warm temperatures on Friday threw a curveball as teams worked to optimize both their MICHELIN® tire strategy in tandem with fuel strategy for the pair of races.

Extreme swings occurred throughout the weekend. On Friday, Michelin engineers recorded temperatures as high as 93 degrees ambient and 115 degrees track. Sunday morning, the coldest session of the weekend occurred in warm-up with temperatures of 57 ambient and 60 track. Sunday's race was more normal with temperatures in the low 70s ambient and mid 80s on track. These variances make it challenging for a team's tire strategy and ask the tire to perform consistently in wide-ranging conditions.

For this race, Michelin and IMSA coordinated to bring the MICHELIN® Pilot® Sport GT S8M commercial slicks back in action for the WeatherTech Championship GT Daytona and Pilot Challenge GS classes after running the S9M over the summer months. However, Michelin maintained its IMSA Hard tire for DPi and LMP2 competitors, and the Pilot Challenge TCR remained on the harder S9M compound as they have all season.

The mix of tires still helped teams continue to set lap records in both qualifying and the two races. With eight more lap records (four apiece in qualifying and the races), Michelin is now up to 78 new IMSA records set this season.

"True to form for IMSA's 2019 season, the weather played a major factor for our teams and our Michelin team of engineers and Motorsport Tire Specialists here in beautiful Monterey," said Chris Baker, director of motorsport, Michelin North America.

"Michelin designs tires to perform in a wide range of conditions, both on and off the track. And while there are optimal conditions for different tire choices, we were pleased with another great weekend of discovery as our teams continued to extract both great pace and long-lasting consistency at a track that's typically treacherous on tires."

Dominant WeatherTech Race Winners

Sunday's Monterey SportsCar Championships Powered by McLaren saw all four class winners dominate the caution-free race. This is IMSA's third caution free race in the last four races. Meanwhile, the winners set new distance records in Monterey's two-hour, 40-minute race format.

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Dane Cameron and Juan Pablo Montoya led an Acura Team Penske 1-2 result in DPi, ahead of teammates Helio Castroneves and Ricky Taylor. Taylor took pole in the No. 7 ARX-05 while Cameron got ahead in the No. 6 ARX-05 before half distance, and only lost the lead during a pit stop sequence. The two cars combined to lead 113 of 121 laps. Pipo Derani and Felipe Nasr (No. 31 Whelen Engineering Racing Cadillac DPi-V.R) finished third.

“We qualify strong because we get more and more out of the tires. Michelin brought a great tire again though,” Montoya said. “They are so consistent. We managed not only the pace but we had tires at the end, and it paid off.”

In the two GT classes, two entries claimed their first wins of the season.

Joey Hand and Dirk Mueller got into the lead early in their No. 66 Ford Chip Ganassi Racing GT and controlled the pace in the GT Le Mans class. Polesitter Jesse Krohn and co-driver John Edwards finished second in the black No. 24 BMW Team RLL M8, while a late pass netted Antonio Garcia and Jan Magnussen third in the No. 3 Corvette C7.R.

Paul Miller Racing controlled the weekend in GT Daytona. Polesitter Corey Lewis ran a solid first stint and handed off to Bryan Sellers to deliver the win for the No. 48 Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo. The pair achieved a rare flag-to-flag victory in class, leading all 110 laps from pole. Cooper MacNeil and Toni Vilander finished second in the No. 63 Scuderia Corsa Ferrari 488 GT3, with Andy Lally and John Potter completing a great day for Lamborghini with third place in their No. 44 Magnus Racing car.

PR1/Mathiasen Motorsports claimed its fifth straight LMP2 victory with Matt McMurry and Dalton Kellett sharing the No. 52 ORECA 07.

MICHELIN Pilot Challenge Fueled by Strategic Gambles

After a flurry of rain-affected races, IMSA MICHELIN Pilot Challenge competitors raced Saturday afternoon’s two-hour race under pleasant conditions and clear, sunny, skies with no chance of precipitation in the forecast.

A pair of early-race cautions brought most of the 35-car field in around the halfway mark. Most GS cars needed a final stop within the final 35 minutes.

As the race drew to its finish, Dominik Baumann (No. 33 Winward Racing/HTP Motorsport Mercedes-AMG GT4) made the ultimate winning pass on Trent Hindman (No. 7 Park Place Motorsports Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport) as Hindman sought to save enough fuel to make the flag.

Baumann and Russell Ward emerged victorious. GS championship leaders Tyler McQuarrie and Jeff Westphal (No. 39 CarBahn by Peregrine Racing Audi R8 LMS GT4) dominated the race from pole and finished a solid second. Hindman and Alan Brynjolfsson finished third, after Hindman ran the final 69 minutes on both a single tank of fuel and the Michelin S8M tires to showcase the tire’s longevity of performance.

TCR also saw fuel and tire strategy come into play, with most of the field pitting with well over 70 minutes to go. In the end, Roadshagger Racing secured an overdue first win with Jon Morley

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and Gavin Ernstone sharing the No. 61 Audi RS3 LMS TCR. From pole, Mark Wilkins and Michael Lewis were second in the No. 98 Bryan Herta Autosport Hyundai Veloster N TCR, with Shelby Blackstock and Tom O’Gorman third in the No. 37 L.A. Honda World Honda Civic Type R.

“It is all about the consistency over a stint with these MICHELIN® tires,” Morley said. “This race was one of two we ran last year, and there was a ton of fall off then. Now, I could run consistent laps. The tire was super today.”

Championship Pictures

WeatherTech Championship driver points leaders hold healthy margins headed to the season finale.

The No. 6 Acura pairing of Cameron and Montoya has a 12-point lead in DPi. Porsche’s Earl Bamber and Laurens Vanthoor lead their teammates Nick Tandy and Patrick Pilet by the same margin in GT Le Mans. Meyer Shank Acura’s Trent Hindman and Mario Farnbacher’s lead in GT Daytona is north of 30 points, and McMurry’s LMP2 lead is eight points over Cameron Cassels.

PFAFF Porsche’s Zacharie Robichon claimed the inaugural WeatherTech Sprint Cup driver championship.

In Pilot Challenge, both points leaders finished second and extended their points leads heading into the final weekend. McQuarrie and Westphal (GS) have a 33-point lead and only need to start to claim the class title. Wilkins and Lewis (TCR) extended their gap to 11 points in that class, with the top four pairings within 16 points.

Next Up: Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta

The 2019 IMSA regular season concludes with a showcase weekend at the renamed Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta, October 10-12.

Motul Petit Le Mans caps off the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship and Michelin Endurance Cup seasons for all four classes.

Both IMSA Challenge series race Friday, with Prototype Challenge Friday morning and Pilot Challenge’s FOX Factory 120 Friday afternoon.

Michelin has other additional weekend elements planned, including the dedication and grand opening of the new Michelin Tower.

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

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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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