



NEW RECORDS, STRATEGIES HIGHLIGHT MICHELIN'S LONG BEACH'S 100-MINUTE STREET FIGHT

Both DPi and GTLM teams use latest generation MICHELIN® tires to set new marks

Long Beach, Calif., April 13, 2019 — IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship teams took to the streets of Long Beach for the first time with the latest generation MICHELIN® race tires, and the record book may never be the same.

With new records set and different strategies utilized in the 100-minute race, it marked a solid start in the first of two IMSA street races this season.

“We came here with more than 300,000 on track miles at Daytona and Sebring but zero miles on a street circuit with our current tires, so we are pleased that so many teams and drivers were able to turn record laps and develop their different race strategies,” said Ken Payne, technical director, motorsport, Michelin North America.

Records and More Records

New qualifying and race lap records fell in both the WeatherTech Championship DPi and GT Le Mans class entries.

In DPi qualifying, 10 of the 11 entries beat the previous track record on the first day teams ran the Michelin IMSA Medium tires on a street circuit. Class polesitter Acura Team Penske's Helio Castroneves smashed the previous record by nearly 1.6 seconds, qualifying at a 1:11.332 lap time.

Then in the 100-minute race, 10 of the 11 DPi cars bested the previous race lap record of 1:13.492. Whelen Engineering Cadillac's Pipo Derani broke the previous mark by an impressive 1.560 seconds, with a 1:11.932 lap.

Porsche (qualifying) and Chevrolet Corvette (race) set new records in GTLM. Nick Tandy's pole lap of 1:16.313 was more than half a second faster than the 2018 mark, with five of the eight cars in class under the previous mark. In the race, Oliver Gavin's mark of 1:17.215 was fastest as six of the eight cars in class eclipsed the previous mark.

The race laps came during warmer conditions, with ambient temperatures of 73 degrees Fahrenheit and track temperatures of 91. The race temperatures were warmer than Friday's practice and qualifying sessions, where ambient temperatures hovered in the 60s and track in the 70s and 80s.

Enabling Strategies

The speed, consistency and extended tread life of the MICHELIN® tires opened a diverse array of pit strategies in the 100-minute race on the 1.968-mile downtown circuit.

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“We had the Juncos Cadillac team go long on its first stint to lead after others pitted, the Acura Penske Racing cars split their tire strategies with the No. 6 car crew changing just the left side tire and the No. 7 crew changing just the rear tires,” said Ken Payne, technical director, motorsport, Michelin North America.

However Action Express Racing deployed the ultimate winning strategy with its No. 5 Mustang Sampling Racing Cadillac DPi-V.R.

Pitting for a right front tire only with 40 minutes remaining in the race, the team leapfrogged its competitors who pitted later. Filipe Albuquerque defended against Ricky Taylor in the Acura Penske for the final 48 race laps on the rear and left side tires. Albuquerque and Joao Barbosa repeated their 2018 Long Beach win.

“What I enjoy on these tires is that when they’re brand new and fresh, the car is on rails. I love it and knew exactly where to place the car,” Albuquerque said. “It was a pleasure to drive and we hung on in a tough battle against Ricky. This is what American racing is. It’s about strategy, not making a mistake and putting it all together.”

Porsche Wins Second Straight in GTLM

The Porsche GT Team continued its successful start to the 2019 season as Laurens Vanthoor and Earl Bamber scored their first win of the season aboard the Porsche 911 RSR.

Emerging from the pits with one hour remaining in the 100-minute race, Bamber tracked down and passed the GTLM class leading Ford Chip Ganassi Racing Ford GT of Dirk Mueller and then held off a series of attacks to made it two consecutive wins for the Rock Hill, S.C.-based Porsche factory team.

The team also won at Sebring with its sister car, driven by Nick Tandy, Patrick Pilet and Fred Makowiecki. Tandy, however, scored Porsche’s third straight GTLM pole to start 2019 after winning the first at Daytona and Pilet winning the second at Sebring.

Corvette Racing completed the podium with its two cars. Jan Magnussen and Antonio Garcia finished second ahead of the sister car, driven by Oliver Gavin and Tommy Milner.

Next Stop

After a bit of a break with just two WeatherTech classes here at Long Beach, Michelin will be ready for a full house with all four WeatherTech classes at Mid-Ohio, plus the IMSA Prototype Challenge and MICHELIN Pilot Challenge series. That race weekend is May 3-5, 2019.

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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