

2016 FIA World Endurance Championship (FIA WEC)
6 Hours of Fuji – Round 7

***Toyota Gazoo Racing wins on home soil
thanks to a flawless Michelin tyre strategy***

At the start of the 2016 6 Hours of Fuji, Audi Sport differed from its LMP1 class rivals by selecting the MICHELIN SOFT 'Hot Weather Plus' tyre, whilst Toyota Gazoo Racing and Porsche Team opted for the 'Hot Weather' version, designed to suit lower track temperatures. Notwithstanding a strong performance, Audi Sport found itself having to give best to Toyota Gazoo Racing as Kamui Kobayashi, Mike Conway and Stéphane Sarrazin produced a determined effort behind the wheel of the N°6 Toyota TS050-Hybrid and the Japanese manufacturer pulled off a strategic masterstroke at its final pit-stop.

It was as the race entered its sixth hour that Kobayashi peeled into the pits for his last stop. Whilst both Audi Sport and Porsche Team decided to change tyres on the N°8 R18 and N°1 919 Hybrid respectively, the Japanese squad put its faith in the consistency and durability of Michelin's tyres. The time saved enabled the N°6 Toyota TS050-Hybrid to rejoin the fray in the lead – a position it would not subsequently relinquish.

Tyre strategy therefore played a key role in the outcome of a breathless race in which three different teams, cars and manufacturers pushed flat-out and duelled wheel-to-wheel for six hours straight, rarely separated by more than a handful of seconds.

From pole position, the N°8 Audi R18 (Duval / Jarvis / Di Grassi) held sway at the front of the field for more than five hours, with all three of the Ingolstadt marque's drivers posting extremely competitive lap times to maintain the car's advantage.

Behind the leading Audi Sport crew, the N°1 Porsche 919 Hybrid (Bernhard / Hartley / Webber) and N°6 Toyota TS050-Hybrid (Kobayashi / Conway / Sarrazin) disputed the runner-up spot until Toyota Gazoo Racing unleashed its late-race strategic coup to snatch victory from under the nose of Audi Sport, with Porsche Team completing the podium in third.

"We took a gamble on a strategy that some might have perceived as risky, but we did so with the full confidence that we have in our tyre partner Michelin," explained **Kamui Kobayashi** at the end of the event. "Our car was very competitive and we were all tremendously fired-up to deliver a home win for Toyota, so we gave it our absolute all. Even when Loïc [Duval] began closing back in on us towards the end of the race, we knew we had enough pace in the car to withstand his challenge and we were all thrilled to take the chequered flag first."



“What a race from our three LMP1 partners! They captivated the Japanese fans throughout the six-hour duration, with so many exciting battles from start to finish. Once again today, our tyres ably proved their potential and consistency. Congratulations to Toyota Gazoo Racing, who thoroughly deserve this home triumph,” commented **Jérôme Mondain**, Michelin’s Endurance Racing Programme Manager.

“Congratulations must also go to Ford Chip Ganassi Team UK – who claimed a commanding one-two finish in the LMGTE Pro category – and to Dalla Lana / Lamy / Lauda, who made it back-to-back GTE Am class victories after their similar success in the 6 Hours of Circuit of the Americas,” Mondain concluded.

The eighth and penultimate round of the 2016 FIA WEC campaign will take place in Shanghai on November 6, around a fast circuit and in what are expected to be cool conditions.

Michelin tyres for the 2016 6 Hours of Fuji – by class

LMP1 (size: 31/71-18)

Dry conditions:

- SOFT ‘Hot Weather Plus’
- SOFT ‘Hot Weather’
- SOFT ‘Cold weather’

Damp or drying conditions:

- MICHELIN Hybrid

The ‘slick’ MICHELIN Hybrid does not have a tread pattern. It was first used to replace the conventional intermediate tyre in 2012. Its revolutionary compound enables it to be used in damp or drying conditions.

Wet conditions:

- WET
- Full WET

The ‘Wet’ and ‘Full Wet’ have the same tread pattern but different compounds.

Number of tyres authorised for the 6 Hours of Fuji: 6 sets for the race



LM GTE Pro and Am (size: 30/68-18 front / 31/71-18 rear)

Dry conditions:

- MEDIUM
- MEDIUM 'Cold Weather'

Wet conditions:

- WET
- Full WET

Number of tyres authorised for the 6 Hours of Fuji: 6 sets for the race

Total number of tyres for Michelin's 17 partner cars: 1,700

