

**2018/2019 FIA World Endurance Championship  
Round 2: Le Mans 24 Hours**

***Michelin tyres play key winning roles  
in the 2018 Le Mans 24 Hours***

The 2018 Le Mans 24 Hours produced a resounding one-two finish for Toyota Gazoo Racing which was spearheaded by the N°8 TS-050 HYBRID of Fernando Alonso/Sébastien Buemi/Kazuki Nakajima, ahead of the similar N°7 prototype of Mike Conway/Kamui Kobayashi/Jose Maria López. The Japanese cars completed the race clear of the N°3 non-hybrid Rebellion of Thomas Laurent/Mathias Beche/Gustavo Menezes who made it an all-Michelin podium to which the French firm's technical advisors actively contributed.

As in LMP1, Michelin provided tyres to the entire LM GTE Pro field which saw Porsche GT Team claim first and second places with its N°92 and N°91 Porsche 911 RSRs shared respectively by Christensen/Estre/Vanthoor and Lietz/Bruni/Makowiecki. The two German cars were chased over the finish line by the Ford Chip Ganassi Team USA-run Ford GT of Hand/Müller/Bourdais.

For the 2018 Le Mans 24 Hours, Michelin provided its partners with a brand new range of soft-, medium- and hard-compound slicks. The challenge was to match these new tyres to the characteristics of the latest-generation LM P1 prototypes whose numbers include non-hybrid cars entered by five different teams and which call for specific tyres compared with the LM P1-H machines. Another important objective during the development phase was to meet the demands of Michelin's LMP2 partners while also working closely with the carmakers active in the LM GTE classes in which, in addition to other changes, has seen Aston Martin and BMW both introduce new cars.

When developing Michelin Motorsport's new 2018/2019 endurance racing tyre range, the brand's engineers focused notably on delivering winning performance to the line by ensuring they performed consistently and strongly over the duration of races. This was evidenced this weekend at Le Mans where Michelin's partners were able to choose winning strategies.

Toyota Gazoo Racing opted for a strategy of quadruple stints from start to finish, while SMP Racing preferred the principle of quintuple stints - equivalent to 54 laps or 736km. This distance was not far off the record established by Audi Sport in 2011 when the German make completed 55 laps of Le Mans on a single set of tyres.

In LM P2, Michelin's partners monopolised the grid's front row thanks to the Idec Sport and Dragonspeed prototypes which were split by mere hundredths of a second in qualifying. For the first 20 or so hours of the 2018 Le Mans 24 Hours itself, Michelin's partners were in a position where they could challenge for the class lead until they were hit by mechanical problems.





“I would like to congratulate our partner Toyota Gazoo Racing on its maiden Le Mans victory. It fully deserves today’s result,” said Michelin Motorsport Director **Pascal Couasnon**. “Not only did it win but it also came away with a splendid one-two finish to which its faultless tyre strategy contributed. I obviously also want to congratulate Porsche who celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary in style by winning the fiercely-fought LM GTE Pro class. And last but by no means least, a big bravo to Dempsey-Proton Racing for its success in LM GTE Am.”

“Thanks to the work put in upstream by Michelin Motorsport’s engineers, our latest range of endurance racing tyres performed perfectly across a particularly broad temperature window to cover all the scenarios encountered at Le Mans this year,” observed **Jérôme Mondain**, the manager of Michelin’s endurance racing programmes. “The temperature didn’t fall too low overnight and the teams essentially continued to lap on our medium compound which allowed them to benefit from excellent cornering stability without necessitating a pointier solution like the soft option. The durability and consistency of our tyres were clear in both the LM GTE Pro and Am classes and I would like to thank our partners for having provided us with yet another opportunity to showcase the technology and efficiency of our endurance racing range.”

The next round of the 2018/2019 FIA World Endurance Championship (FIA WEC) will take teams to Silverstone, Great Britain, on August 19, 2018.

