

Le Mans, September 20, 2020

A 23rd consecutive victory and a longevity record for Michelin at the 2020 Le Mans 24 Hours

- **A 23rd consecutive victory for Michelin at Le Mans 24 Hours**
 - **Grand Slam: Michelin wins all four categories**
- **Tyre longevity record achieved by Gustavo Menezes (Rebellion)**
 - **Flawless tyre performance and consistency in LMP2**
- **Fewer tyres consumed, more distance covered with Toyota Gazoo Racing**

At 2:30pm CEST today (Sunday, September 20), the N°8 Toyota TS050 Hybrid crewed by Sébastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and Kazuki Nakajima took the chequered flag to win the 88th edition of the Le Mans 24 Hours. Second place fell to the N°1 Rebellion R13 Gibson of Norman Nato, Gustavo Menezes and Bruno Senna, with the N°7 Toyota TS050 Hybrid shared by Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and José María López coming home third to make it an all-Michelin podium. The result also marked the third consecutive triumph in the event for Toyota Gazoo Racing.

In LMP2 – a category in which Michelin was battling against another manufacturer – the United Autosports-run N°22 Oreca 07 Gibson emerged on top in the hands of Paul Di Resta, Filipe Albuquerque and Philip Hanson, underscoring yet again the superiority of Michelin tyres in long-distance races.

In the LMGTE Pro class – in which all competitors chose Michelin as their tyre partner – a sustained and intense duel for glory between Ferrari and Aston Martin was one of the big stories of the weekend. In the end, the N°97 AMR Aston Martin Vantage (Alexander Lynn, Maxime Martin and Harry Tincknell) pipped AF Corse’s N°51 Ferrari 488 GTE EVO (James Calado, Alessandro Pier Guidi and Daniel Serra) to the top prize, while the N°95 AMR Aston Martin Vantage (Marco Sørensen, Nikki Thiim and Richard Westbrook) crossed the line in third place.

In LMGTE Am, finally, victory went the way of the N°30 TF Sport crew (Jonny Adam, Charlie Eastwood and Salih Yoluc) in an AMR Aston Martin Vantage. They finished ahead of the N°77 Dempsey Proton Racing Porsche 911 RSR (Matt Campbell, Riccardo Pera and Christian Ried) and the N°83 AF Corse Ferrari 488 GTE EVO of Emmanuel Collard, Nicklas Nielsen and François Perrodo.

Ultimately, Michelin was the biggest winner of this somewhat extraordinary edition of the round-the-clock La Sarthe classic, since the French firm ended up with a clean sweep of victories across all four classes.

“This race was certainly very special,” acknowledged **Pierre Alves**, Manager of Michelin’s Endurance Racing programme. “The conditions were not what we had anticipated and our stocks of wet-weather tyres went untouched. Indeed, with minimum air and track temperatures of 17°C and 19°C respectively, it was on the whole very mild, allowing our partners to really exploit the performance of their tyres. The fastest LMGTE Pro and LMGTE Am times were posted their fastest lap times in the middle of the night. Once again, our tyres revealed that consistent, long-lasting performance is the key to success, whatever the track conditions. Providing the drivers with tyres that allow them to push just as hard at the end of their stint as they do at the start is a key factor in the overall performance package, while simultaneously prioritising safety as it instils confidence behind the wheel. Our new Endurance range, launched back at the beginning of the season, allowed all the drivers to push to the maximum with complete faith in their tyres and no concerns about wear”.



“From an organisational point of view, I must also congratulate the Michelin staff on-site at Le Mans. With the health and safety protocol implemented by the ACO and the large number of cars we partnered this year, we had to call upon numerous in-house reinforcements, the majority of whom had never previously set foot inside a motorsport paddock. It is to their immense credit that everything went so well, and I applaud their commitment.”

The unique atmosphere surrounding this year's Le Mans 24 Hours which, for the first time in its history, was held behind closed doors, took nothing away from the intensity of the numerous on-track battles that lit up the race. Taking place three months later than usual and with an earlier start time, brought forward by half-an-hour to 2:30pm CEST on Saturday, more than 12 hours of the race took place in the dark, as opposed to eight hours in the race's usual June slot. This represented an entirely new experience for competitors in the 2020 edition, because whilst Le Mans has been held in September once before – in 1968, due to the civil unrest in France that spring – the vast majority of current drivers had not been born back then...

For this 88th edition of the Le Mans 24 Hours, Michelin supplied tyres to 54 of the 59 cars on the starting grid, namely all five in the LMP1 class, 19 of the 24 LMP2 entrants and the entire LMGTE Pro and LMGTE Am fields.

It should be noted that the allocation of tyres per car was different to previous editions in order to factor in the introduction of the Hyperpole session for the six fastest competitors at the end of the qualifying session in all four classes – LMP1, LMP2, LMGTE Pro and LMGTE Am. This modification to the qualifying format increased the quantity of tyres required. This meant that beyond the 24 tyres normally allocated to LMP1 and LMP2 crews and the 28 to GTE Pro and GTE Am entrants to cover free practice, opening qualifying and the race morning warm-up, eight additional tyres were provided to all those contesting the Hyperpole shootout.

In the race, 48 tyres were supplied to each LMP1 car, 56 in LMP2 and 60 in both the LM GTE Pro and LM GTE Am categories. That said, it seems likely that competitors did not need to use their full allowance...

A new tyre distance record

The N°1 Rebellion R13 Gibson driver Gustavo Menezes both matched and surpassed the previous tyre distance record established by Benoît Tréluyer in 2011. Like the Audi Sport driver before him, Menezes completed five stints – a total of 55 laps – on the same set ofMichelins, equating to 750km. However, the American Rebellion driver covered the distance at a significantly higher average speed. With an average lap time of 3m25.180s (including the time spent entering and exiting the pits, as well as two yellow flag neutralisations), Menezes nudged an average speed of 240km/h.

The achievement speaks volumes for the thinking behind Michelin's Endurance range which is designed to last while providing the same level of performance from the first kilometre to the last. The performance of a tyre is not only measured by its road-holding capabilities. It is also about ensuring the shortest possible stopping distances, directional precision and efficient traction whatever the surface conditions. These aspects take on particular importance in race situations when the driver's priority is to be as consistent as possible in spite of shifting track and air temperatures.

In all four classes, Michelin Motorsport's crews worked closely with their partners, a relationship that underlines the professionalism of Michelin's technical advisors while reinforcing the strength of the brand's association with these teams, which goes far beyond a mere tyre supply agreement.



“I would like to congratulate our partners Toyota Gazoo Racing, United Autosports, Aston Martin Racing and TF Sport for their victories – this race has been a prestigious ‘grand slam’ success for Michelin,” remarked **Matthieu Bonardel**, Michelin Motorsport Director. “This year’s Le Mans 24 Hours brought down the curtain on the race’s current hybrid prototype era. Since 2012, we have supported the design and evolution of these cutting-edge, technologically-sophisticated cars with increasingly competitive and consistent MICHELIN Pilot Sport tyres, while simultaneously reducing their size and weight by 15 percent since 2014. We are also very proud of the result achieved by our partner United Autosports in LMP2, a category that allows open to competition between tyre brands, albeit for the last time this season. Despite spending over the course of the race around five minutes longer in the pits than its direct competitor JOTA, the N°22 Oreca 07 Gibson made back all of that time and more on the track to win, with a big helping hand from its Michelin tyres. Finally, there is one environmentally-friendly statistic that perfectly illustrates just why we are working so hard at Michelin to increase the durability of our tyres: the winning Toyota used 10 percent fewer tyres compared with last year, yet it succeeded in covering two additional laps!”

The last round of the 2019/20 FIA World Endurance Championship (FIA WEC) will be the 8 Hours of Bahrain on November 14.

