

RALLY GUANAJUATO MEXICO 2013

MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H2
A punishing test for the new hard-compound tyre

The 2013 Rally Guanajuato Mexico lived up every bit to the fixture's reputation as a demanding event, not only for the drivers and cars, but also for their tyres. The rally's rocky stages, which visited altitudes of more than 2,000 metres, were particularly rough, combining fast and extremely fast portions with much slower and twistier parts. Meanwhile, the spectator stages in Guanajuato and León provided samples of the different conditions competitors would encounter during the rest of the rally. The high temperatures were another important parameter, with the thermometer reaching almost 30°C at the hottest moment of the day.

Despite these exacting circumstances, the hard-compound MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H2 delivered a high degree of durability and tyre-life was effectively the chief objective of the new tyre's development programme during the close-season. Indeed, it was important for MICHELIN to respond to this year's reduction in the number of tyres each crew could use in Mexico (from 35 in 2012 to 28 this year), but without detracting from the high level of performance delivered by the 'H1' version of the MICHELIN LATITUDE last season.

Sébastien OGIER, who took the win in Mexico in his VOLKSWAGEN POLO R WRC, was very pleased with his MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H2 tyres: "The new tyre performed impeccably from start to finish. We managed the wear factor well and it proved very durable. At the same time, and just as important, the performance was there, too!"

"Congratulations to Sébastien OGIER and Julien INGRASSIA, who dominated the rally, and also to VOLKSWAGEN on the quality of their work in Mexico," said **Jacques Morelli**, manager of MICHELIN's rally programmes. "I would also like to congratulate CITROEN Racing. They came second with Mikko HIRVONEN and Jarmo LEHTINEN and showed their qualities once again. They also continue to top the Manufacturers' championship.

"With regard to the MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H2, which was making its debut this week, its durability proved highly satisfactory, even on Friday's two loops which featured the roughest stage of the rally [SS6/11, 'El Chocolate'], and on Sunday morning's SS21 ['Guanajuatito'] which was the longest of the event (54.85km). The new tyre's performance hasn't changed compared with 2012, yet it was sufficiently robust to stand up to the punishment of this year's route in Mexico.

"That's all very encouraging for the next round, the Vodafone Rally Portugal, where the number of tyres the drivers will be able to use has come down from 40 to 24, even though the total distance is the same as it was 12 months ago. On top of that, the power of the engines was lower here in Mexico because of the high altitudes. That won't be the case in Portugal..."

The validation of the new MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H2 on the Rally Guanajuato Mexico was only the first step in the process. This new MICHELIN gravel tyre was designed to meet the demands of events which feature a wide variety of surface types, temperatures and stage profiles.

The MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H2 has also been 'nominated' by MICHELIN for the next round of the championship, the Vodafone Rally Portugal (April 11-14, 2013). The 'S2' soft-compound version, which some drivers used on last week's qualifying stage, will appear 'officially' for the first time on May 1 in Argentina.

The MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H2 and S2

Size: **205/65R15** (or 17/65-15)

Width: **205mm**

Sidewall height: **133mm**

Interior diameter: **15 inches**

Tread pattern: **asymmetric and directional**

Weight: **approximately 16kg**

Conditions: **non-sealed surfaces**

Hard-compound version: **hard-wearing, aggressive conditions / dry stages / temperatures more than 15°C**

Soft-compound version: **gravel / damp or wet conditions / temperatures less than 15°C**

'Hard-compound' rallies: **Mexico, Portugal, Greece, Italy, Australia, Spain**

'Soft-compound' rallies: **Argentina, Finland and Wales GB**

