

2016 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC)

Kennards Hire Rally Australia

The MICHELIN LTX Force H4/S4 (WRC) and the MICHELIN Latitude Cross H90/S80 (WRC2) end 2016 on a high note

The 44th FIA World Rally Championship concluded with a thrilling contest in Australia where Andreas Mikkelsen and Anders Jaeger Synnevag steered their Michelin-equipped Volkswagen Polo R WRC to victory. The event was the swansong WRC appearance of Volkswagen Motorsport which bows out after winning four Manufacturers' world titles in association with the French tyre maker.

First included as a WRC qualifier in 1989, Rally Australia is always a popular fixture and its later-than-usual slot in this year's calendar made it even more of a challenge, as temperatures soared to a good 10°C higher than they would have been in New South Wales in September. Competitors consequently had to cope with additional tyre wear on the region's aggressive stages.

For the last time this year, the WRC runners benefitted from the versatility of the soft- (S4) and hard-compound (H4) versions of the MICHELIN LTX Force, while the French firm's WRC2 partners were able to choose between the MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H90 (hard) and S80 (soft). These four tyres have starred on all the year's world championship gravel rounds and have taken a uniquely wide range of weather conditions and surface types in their stride thanks not only to their strength, but also to the consistency of the performance they deliver over sometimes very long loops of stages. These properties helped Michelin to showcase the superiority of its solutions against fierce opposition.

"First of all, I would like to congratulate and thank Volkswagen Motorsport with whom we enjoyed a first class working relationship during the four seasons we spent together," underlined **Jacques Morelli**, manager of Michelin's WRC programme. "On the Kennards Hire Rally Australia, they showed they were as motivated and intent on winning as ever. This event, which is always one of the finest of the year, posed several additional challenges due to its later date which led to far hotter weather and higher wear rates on the drier, harder stages. As expected, though, none of our partners had any problems over the three days and they were able to establish their respective strategies in complete peace of mind. Our hard-compound options were understandably the preferred choice but use of the softer variant allowed them to fine-tune their plans at key moments. This year again, our tyres played crucial roles on many rounds of the world championship."

Second place behind Volkswagen's Norwegian crew went to team-mates Sébastien Ogier and Julien Ingrassia, while Thierry Neuville and Nicolas Gilsoul (Hyundai i20 WRC) made it an all-Michelin podium. The Clermont-Ferrand manufacturer came out on top in WRC2, too, thanks to Esapekka Lappi and Janne Ferm (Skoda Fabia R5).



Didier Laurent – didier@autopressclub.com – Phone: +33.6.75.60.50.62

Alessandro Barlozzi – alessandro.barlozzi@fr.michelin.com – Phone: +33.6.42.23.55.93

FIA World Rally Championship action will resume with the Rallye Monte-Carlo on January 18, 2017.

Technical information – MICHELIN LTX Force S4/H4 and MICHELIN Latitude Cross S80/H90

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

Width: 205 mm

Side wall height: 133 mm

Interior diameter: 15 inches

Type of tread pattern: asymmetric and directional (a left- and a right-hand tyre)

Surface: non-sealed

Conditions for the H4/H90: aggressive, hard-wearing ground – dry weather – temperature more than 15° C

Conditions for the S4/S80: damp or wet dirt – temperature less than 15° C

Rallies where the H4/H90 are nominated as the main choice: Mexico, Italy, Australia, Spain (gravel stages)

Rallies where the S4/S80 are nominated as the main choice: Argentina, Poland, Portugal, Finland, Wales

The MICHELIN LTX Force S4/H4 (for WRC crews)

Number of tyres available for Rally Australia: 560

Number of tyres per driver: 24 (20 + 4 spares) from an overall allocation of 24 H4s (hard compound) and 16 S4s (soft)

The MICHELIN LTX Force S80/H90 (for WRC2 crews)

Number of tyres available for Rally Australia: 160

Number of tyres per driver: 26 from an overall allocation of 26 H90s (hard compound) and 16 S80s (soft)

Total number of Michelin tyres available for Rally Australia (WRC+WRC2): 720

Michelin's staff for the 2016 Kennards Hire Rally Australia: 1 manager, 3 team advisors, 2 coordinators, 5 fitters and 1 press officer.



Didier Laurent – didier@autopressclub.com – Phone: +33.6.75.60.50.62

Alessandro Barlozzi – alessandro.barlozzi@fr.michelin.com – Phone: +33.6.42.23.55.93