

FIA Formula E Championship
2016/2017

A very strong debut for the new MICHELIN Pilot Sport EV2 at the first FIA-sanctioned race to take place in Hong Kong

The first ePrix of the 2016/2017 FIA Formula E Championship was held today (Sunday, October 9) in Hong Kong where the organisers designed a 10-turn, 1.860km street circuit for the first ever round of an FIA (Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile) championship to be held on the island.

The 20 cars featured new liveries and significant technical changes compared with 2015/2016, including the fitment of the latest-generation MICHELIN Pilot Sport EV2 tyre. The race kicked off at 4pm local time in overcast conditions with the thermometer standing at barely more than 30°C (track: 45°C). The inaugural season's champion Nelson Piquet Jr started from pole position, with his NEXTEV NIO team-mate Oliver Turvey alongside on the grid's front row. DS Virgin Racing's José Maria Lopez and Sam Bird monopolised the second row, with Sébastien Buemi (Renault e.dams) in fifth spot. Lucas Di Grassi (ABT Schaeffler Audi Sport), the Swiss driver's main rival during Season 2, lined up last after an accident during qualifying.

After a relatively drama-free start (although ABT Schaeffler Audi Sport drivers were forced to pit for repairs after collisions), the race ran without incident until Lap 17 when a crash for Lopez brought out the safety car. Some drivers took advantage of the slow-speed neutralisation to bring forward their mandatory mid-race car swap. It was a risky plan, but it was during the pit stops that Buemi emerged in front, while the particularly efficient strategy of Lucas Di Grassi saw the Brazilian climb from 15th to second place. The two men spent the last part of the race duelling for the lead but the Swiss driver succeeded in clinching the spoils, followed over the line by Di Grassi. They were joined on the podium by Nick Heidfeld (Mahindra Racing) whose consistency earned the Indian manufacturer its first Formula E podium finish.

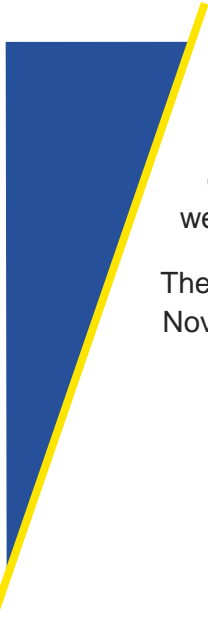
The new MICHELIN Pilot Sport EV2 lived up to its promise around the Hong Kong circuit. "The technology of the MICHELIN Pilot Sport EV2 marks a big step forward compared with last year's tyre," observed **Serge Grisin**, manager of Michelin's Formula E Programme. "Its enhanced energy efficiency equates to a gain of one lap per race thanks to a 16 percent reduction in rolling resistance. Each set is also 5kg lighter, which represents a raw material saving of 2.5 tonnes over the season.

"Given the scale of the changes we have made this season, as well as the considerable development work carried out by Michelin Motorsport's engineers, we were eager to get feedback after the new tyre was used in anger for the first time. The Hong Kong track was particularly slippery and inconsistent, but the drivers were pleased with the MICHELIN Pilot Sport EV2."



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

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



“We were happy with its debut performance, too, and we are looking forward to confirming these initial positive reactions in other types of conditions, including wet weather.”

The second ePrix of the 2016/2017 season will take teams to Marrakech (Morocco), on November 12.

