

2016 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC)

Neste Rally Finland

***The MICHELIN LTX Force
and the MICHELIN Latitude Cross fly high in Finland!***

The 2016 Neste Rally Finland, one of the star rounds of the FIA World Rally Championship, lived up to its promise once again by providing yet another emotion-packed, high-speed rollercoaster and its usual high-octane spectacle.

The 1,370.66km-long event included 333.99km divided into 24 stages. Forty-three percent of the total competitive distance was new compared with this time last year. One of the chief changes saw the classic Ouninpohja test run in the opposite direction for the very first time, but these modifications in no way detracted from the magic of the rally which attracted its traditional big turnout of connoisseur fans. Based once again in Jyväskylä, central Finland, the service park was visited by thousands of spectators from Thursday through to Sunday.

To cater for the specific demands of this exceptionally fast fixture, Michelin Motorsport provided its WRC partners with the MICHELIN LTX Force H4 (hard compound) and S4 (soft), while its WRC2 crews were able to choose between the H90 and S80 versions of the MICHELIN Latitude Cross. As in previous years, though, they used a single type of compound for the entire event.

*“As expected, and even though the temperatures were well into the 20 degrees centigrade, our partners only used our soft-compound options,” reports **Jacques Morelli**, manager of Michelin’s FIA WRC programme. “These tyres are generally intended for cooler weather, but the sandy base of the stages here in Finland, plus the need to be able to count on good grip the moment the cars touch down after the countless jumps, along with faultless traction, meant they were run from start to finish this week. A potential issue was wear because the softer-compound tread blocks tend to suffer in heat. However, during the development of our WRC tyres, we dialled in a very broad spectrum of situations in order to cater for all the gravel rounds of the championship. That said, producing a single tyre which functions just as well in Sardinia as it does in Finland or Australia – where the ground and weather can differ greatly – is a big challenge for our engineers who have to find a solution that is sufficiently competitive and robust for all these events. This goes some way to explaining why we faced more competition in Poland and Finland from rival manufacturers who targeted these events more specifically, and that obviously added to the closeness of the fight. We still came out on top in both the overall standings and the WRC2 battle where there is always fierce rivalry between the different tyre brands.”*

The 2016 Neste Rally Finland was won by Ulsterman Kris Meeke and his Irish co-driver Paul Nagle (Citroën DS3 WRC) who successfully warded off Finns Jari-Matti Latvala/Miikka Anttila (Volkswagen Polo R WRC). Irishman Craig Breen and England’s Scott Martin (Citroën DS3 WRC) rounded out the all-Michelin top three.



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

Michelin runners monopolised the podium in the WRC2 fight, too, thanks to Skoda Fabia R5 runners Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm, Teemu Suninen/Mikko Markkula and Elfyn Evans/Craig Parry (Ford Fiesta R5).

The next round of the 2016 FIA World Rally Championship will take teams to Trier, Germany, for the ADAC Rallye Deutschland on August 18-21 when the new 'FW2' version of the MICHELIN Pilot Sport will be available for the first time in case of very heavy rain.

The MICHELIN LTX Force S4/H4, and the MICHELIN Latitude H90/S80

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

Width: 205mm

Sidewall height: 133mm

Interior diameter: 15 inches

Pattern: asymmetric and directional (a left- and a right-hand tyre)

Conditions: non-sealed surfaces

Use of the H4 and H90: aggressive, hard-wearing surfaces – dry ground – temperature: >15°C

Use of the S4 and S80: wet or damp dirt – temperature: <15°C

(The conditions may lead the drivers to make differing choices)

Michelin's staff for the 2016 Neste Rally Finland

- 1 manager
- 1 development engineer
- 4 Technical Team Advisors
- 2 coordinators
- 8 fitters

Michelin had 1,780 tyres for Rally Finland (WRC: 720 / WRC2: 800 / Junior WRC: 280).



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