

2016 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC)

Vodafone Rally de Portugal

The MICHELIN LTX Force H4 and S4 poised to play key role in Rally de Portugal strategy

The 2015 Vodafone Rally de Portugal saw the country's round of the WRC return to Porto, in the north, after a decade of the Algarve region's notoriously rough, abrasive stages.

The organisers have made very few changes to the route that was visited in 2015 and the event will again be based in Matosinhos, to the north of Porto. Only 6.52 of the 338 competitive kilometres are different compared with last year.

Last year's switch to Porto led to a menu of less aggressive stages compared with those in the south which dictated the nomination of hard-compound tyres and careful tyre-related strategy. *"In the north, the surface tends to be looser but tyre choices still promise to be important,"* notes **Jacques Morelli**, manager of Michelin's FIA WEC programme. *"The drivers will no doubt have their own preferences and we are likely to see a combination of soft and hard tyres on the cars at the same time, either front and rear, or mounted on diagonally opposite corners depending on the conditions. This could produce some interesting developments because this is one of the rounds where grip is the most delicate."*

After an official send-off in Guimarães, the week's action begins with a super-special round the rallycross track in Lousada on Thursday, May 19. Friday's route will take crews close to the border with Spain to the north, while Saturday's itinerary will visit the Amarante region. The event will conclude with Sunday's three tests, including the Power Stage which will incorporate the infamous Fafe jump.

"The organisers' decision to stay with practically the same route as 2015 will facilitate tyre choices. Last year, with the exception of Fafe, the stages were fresh territory for the majority of today's generation of drivers," points out **Jacques Morelli**.

For the 2016 Vodafone Rally de Portugal, the WRC drivers will be able to use up to 24 tyres from a total individual package that features:

- 24 tyres MICHELIN LTX Force S4 (soft compound)
- and 16 tyres MICHELIN LTX Force H4 (hard).

The maximum number for the WRC2 runners is 22 tyres to be chosen from the following allocation:

- 22 tyres MICHELIN LTX Force S81 (soft compound)
- And 16 tyres MICHELIN LTX Force H91 (hard)



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The J-WRC competitors will be able to use up to 22 tyres from a basic allocation of:

- 22 tyres MICHELIN TZS 81 (soft compound)
- 16 tyres MICHELIN TZS 91 (hard)

The MICHELIN LTX Force H4 and MICHELIN LTX Force S4

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

Width: 205 mm

Sidewall height: 133 mm

Interior diameter: 15 inches

Tread pattern: asymmetric and directional (i.e. a left-hand side and a right-hand side tyre)

Surface: non-sealed surfaces

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

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

Rallies where the H4 is the nominated tyre: Mexico, Italy, Australia, Spain

Rallies where the S4 is the nominated tyre: Argentina, Portugal, Poland, Finland, Wales

The MICHELIN LTX Force and TZS for the Rally de Portugal

Total number of tyres available for the Vodafone Rally de Portugal: 1,925

WRC = 690 tyres S4 and H4 (asymmetric tread pattern)

WRC2 = 700 tyres S81 and H91 (symmetric tread pattern)

J-WRC = 535 tyres TZS 81 and TZS 91 (asymmetric tread pattern)

Michelin's staff for the Vodafone Rally de Portugal

Michelin will have a total staff of 21 in Portugal:

- 1 manager
- 2 senior managers
- 1 press officer
- 2 development engineers
- 4 technical team advisors
- 2 coordinators
- 9 fitters

The following Michelin vehicles will be in Portugal:

- 2 truck workshops
- 3 tyre-carrying trucks
- 1 motorhome (office and hospitality)



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