

2016 FIA World Rally Championship
YPF Rally Argentina

MICHELIN LTX Force H4 and S4: strength in depth
MICHELIN LTX Force H91 and S81: tyres to cover every situation

The 2016 Rally Argentina saw victory go to Hayden Paddon and John Kennard (Hyundai i20 WRC) who became the first New Zealanders to win a round of the FIA World Rally Championship. They finished on top after a thrilling fight with Sébastien Ogier and Julien Ingrassia (Volkswagen Polo R WRC). The two crews were split by just 2.6 seconds going into the final stage which produced a superb scrap to the finish, aided by the quality, strength and performance of their MICHELIN LTX Force S4 (soft compound) and H4 (hard compound) tyres.

The stages of this year's YPF Rally Argentina were particularly rough due to heavy rain over the region during the week or so ahead of Friday's start. The waterlogged tracks consequently cut up quite badly in places, unearthing some occasionally sharp stones, often on the ideal driving line. An additional hazard on the stages that were contested twice was the formation of perilous ruts during the morning's passes.

"The conditions were much rougher for the second attempts in the afternoon, but we designed the MICHELIN LTX Force to cover an extremely broad spectrum of conditions," observed **Jacques Morelli**, manager of Michelin's World Rally Championship programme. *"This was probably one of the toughest Rally Argentinas we have ever seen, yet our WRC tyres performed impeccably, as did our new MICHELIN LTX Force S81 and H91 gravel tyres we have developed for our WRC2 partners. They were used for the first time last month in Mexico where they won out of the box. Here in Argentina, they played their role to the letter once again, despite the stages being significantly churned up in places by the WRC competitors running ahead of the WRC2 crews."*

After Day 1, when the ideal choice was the soft-compound S4, the drivers had to run a combination of S4s and harder-compound H4s to cope with the harder-wearing conditions and unpredictable weather which included mud in places and big differences in temperature. The roughest portions tended to be found on the longer stages, like 'Los Gigantes' (SS11/14) which was almost 39 kilometres in length, so consistent performance as they tyres wore proved to be a decisive factor. Air temperature also had a significant influence as the thermometer dipped from a pleasant 24°C in the Service Park in Villa Carlos Paz on Saturday afternoon to practically freezing point at the highest point of Sunday's 'El Condor' (SS16/18) which climbed to an altitude of more than 2,200 metres, while thick fog added to the challenge.

The next round of the 2016 FIA WRC will take teams to Portugal on May 19-22.



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MICHELIN LTX Force S4/H4 and LTX Force H91/S81 tyres

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

Width: 205mm

Sidewall height: 133mm

Int. diameter: 15 inches

S4/H4: asymmetric, directional tread pattern (a left- and a right-hand tyre)

H91/S81: symmetric tread pattern

Type of surface: non-sealed roads

H4/H91: aggressive, hard-wearing ground / dry conditions / >15°C

S4/S80: dirt / damp or wet conditions / <15°C

Rounds where the H4 and H91 are the chief choice: Mexico, Italy, Australia and Spain

Rounds where the S4 and S81 are the chief choice: Argentina, Portugal, Poland, Finland and Wales



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