

2014 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC)
6 Hours of Fuji

Michelin tyres to cover all weather scenarios

Round five of the 2014 FIA World Endurance Championship will take place on Sunday, October 12, at Japan's Fuji Speedway, to the backdrop of the iconic mountain of the same name. The 4.563km track, which was built in 1965 and which has been the property of Toyota since 2000, features an exceptionally long straight of 1.5km in length.

Located near Oyama, in Japan's Shizuoka prefecture, around 100km southwest of Tokyo, the circuit is situated in countryside between the sea and the famous Mount Fuji and is consequently prone to fickle weather conditions. Last year, heavy rain compelled the organisers to interrupt the race after 16 laps spent behind the safety car.

The downpour began minutes before the start, leaving the track under a coating of standing water. Although the water-clearance capacity of Michelin's 'Full Wet' tyre was sufficient to ensure contact between the cars and the ground, the lack of visibility prevented the competition from taking place in complete safety.

For this year's 6 Hours of Fuji, Michelin has prepared a comprehensive range of tyres for its partners which will enable them to benefit from safety and performance whatever the conditions.

In dry weather, after running 'high temperature' tyres at Austin, Texas, USA, drivers at Fuji will revert to the same selection that was available to them for June's Le Mans 24 Hours.

The LM P1 prototypes will be able to choose between Michelin's 'low temperature' and 'high temperature' soft-compound slicks.

In damp or wet conditions, Michelin's patterned 'wet' tyres will be the preferred choice to clear standing water in persistent rain, while competitors in the WEC's premier class will also be able to use the MICHELIN Hybrid tyre if the track is simply damp. This solution was first introduced for the 2012 FIA WEC and resembles a slick inasmuch as it doesn't have a pattern. Yet it is capable of delivering outstanding grip thanks to the special compound employed for its tread.

In case of very heavy rain, Michelin will have 'Full Wet' tyres, the more extensively grooved tread pattern of which allows the tyre to remain in contact with the track surface and ensure grip even in deep standing water.

Tyres could well play an important role in the battle between Audi Sport Team Joest, Porsche Team and Toyota Racing at this year's 6 Hours of Fuji. All these teams will have two cars each and, while they will all be competing on Michelin rubber, variable conditions could see the three makes deploy differing strategies.

In the other classes, all the Michelin-equipped cars are likely to run on softer tyres than those they raced at the WEC's fourth round in Texas.



MICHELIN tyres for the 6 Hours of Fuji by class

LM P1

- Slicks = choice between 'soft high temperature' and 'soft low temperature' compounds
- Hybrid
- Wet
- Full Wet

LM P2

- Slicks = choice between 'medium' and 'medium plus' compounds
- Wet = choice between 'drying track' tyres and Full Wets

LM GTE (Pro and Am)

Porsche

- Slicks = choice between 'medium high temperature' and 'medium low temperature' compounds
- Wet = choice between 'drying track' tyres and Full Wets

MICHELIN has 2,400 tyres at Fuji for the 24 cars of its partner teams.