

FIM Endurance World Championship (EWC)

Michelin's sights set on 15th endurance racing world crown at Le Mans

The last round of this year's FIM Endurance World Championship – the 24 Heures Moto – takes teams to the celebrated 'Bugatti' track at Le Mans, France, this weekend. Michelin partner Yamaha France GMT 94 tops the provisional standings ahead of this crucial clash where it is targeting a 15th motorcycle endurance racing world title.

With the season poised to end on Sunday afternoon, Michelin can look back at a year that has seen its tyres reveal their performance and consistency in association with Yamaha France GMT 94. Results include podium finishes at the Bol d'Or and 8 Hours of Oschersleben, as well as ninth overall at the 8 Hours of Suzuka which enabled the French team and its tyre partner to move to the top of the provisional standings. Its current points cushion gives it an enviable edge going into the 24-hour classic at Le Mans.

Nothing can be taken for granted, however, and Michelin Motorsport's bike racing manager **Piero TARAMASSO** explains that the mission at Le Mans will be to win and not just manage the situation in the title chase. "Our intention is to win the 24 Heures Moto. That's the best way to make sure we earn the 2014 title. It would be a mistake to adopt a defensive strategy. That would probably be the surest way of failing to achieve our objective."

Aware of the race's importance and fully motivated, Michelin's technical staff have developed new tyres for this key contest, and these solutions could well make the difference at the weekend, believes Piero TARAMASSO: "Pre-race testing allowed us to sign off new rear tyres. In endurance racing, we know that performance is not the only important parameter that needs to be taken into account. We consequently focused our development work on consistency, grip and versatility. The results were excellent over the two-day run. Yamaha Racing France GMT 94 has done a splendid job and the three riders form a nicely balanced line-up in terms of their lap times, whatever the conditions. There is good reason to feel confident in our chances of winning and of claiming the title therefore. I am naturally conscious of the fact that you can never be sure of anything in such an exacting 24-hour race; nor can we discount the potential of our partner's rivals. They will all be highly motivated, too, but I believe we have the key to success in our hands."

If it does wrap up the championship at Le Mans on Sunday, Michelin will take its score to 15 endurance world titles after securing 13 FIM EWC crowns and one endurance Masters title.

