



**2014 Vodafone Rally de Portugal**

**AFTER THE RAIN, FINE WEATHER...**

**The MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross takes Portugal's mixed conditions in its stride**

It is always hard to predict the weather you will get for Portugal's round of the FIA World Rally Championship. The 2013 Vodafone Rally de Portugal took place in bright, sunny weather, but this year's event was predominantly cloudy. Meanwhile, the stage conditions ranged from dusty to damp and even muddy after the torrential rain that fell during the days before the start, not to mention the usual cocktail of sharp stones and abrasive rocks. Only the last three stages, i.e. 44km out of 340km, benefited from markedly warmer and clearer weather...

Given that each driver was only allocated 16 soft-compound MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross S2 tyres for the rally, crews had to take great care with their strategies, especially as the challenging conditions were far from consistent. In the end, however, the combination of the hard-compound MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H2 and the softer S2 version had all the different situations covered to fulfil their role and deliver both performance and versatility.

At the same time, the development work carried out upstream of the season for the Vodafone Rally de Portugal, which is one of the roughest rounds of the season, paid dividends to provide competitors with a high degree of robustness.

Said **Jacques MORELLI**, manager of MICHELIN's rally programmes: "The weather we had in Portugal was further evidence that we need to be able to offer our partners a choice of compounds. Yet even though only a limited number of 'soft' tyres was available, the competition was not affected. The strength of our tyres also played a key role this week. The two versions of the MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross demonstrated their superiority and all the teams competing on MICHELIN rubber benefited from a combination of performance and safety despite everything that was thrown at them..."

Indeed, the way this year's Vodafone Rally de Portugal unfolded was quite unique, with heavy rain prior to the start completing transforming the stages' usual physiognomy and posing some tough tyre choices when drier weather moved in over the Algarve, although the conditions remained damp, and even muddy in places.

Thanks to a strategy that saw them choose the MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross S2 for Friday's action, M-Sport WRT drivers Mikko HIRVONEN and Ott TANAK (FORD Fiesta RS WRC) succeeded in appearing at the top of the leaderboard after Day 1. It was only on Saturday morning that VOLKSWAGEN Motorsport's defending world champion Sébastien OGIER (POLO R WRC) managed to recover the lead. Along with his co-driver Julien INGRASSIA, he went on to claim Sunday's Power Stage and finish the rally clear of Mikko HIRVONEN/Jarmo LEHTINEN and third-placed Mads ØSTBERG/Jonas ANDERSSON (Citröen DS3 WRC).

## A thrilling fight in WRC 2

Meanwhile, the standard of the WRC-2, which opposes a number of internationally-known drivers and four different car manufacturers, is extremely high and close, too. The MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross also shone in this class, with Michelin claiming three of the top four places at the end of the rally. The battle was eventually won by the experienced Nasser AL-ATTIYAH and his co-driver Giovanni BERNACCHINI in their FORD Fiesta RRC: "We started on soft tyres but then changed our strategy on Friday afternoon despite the lingering damp portions. It was the right choice and it enabled us to take the lead." Third place went to another Michelin crew, Pontus TIDEMAND/Ola FLOENE, while Karl KRUUDA/Martin JARVEOJA were fourth.

The next round of the 2014 FIA World Rally Championship (May 8-11) will take teams to Argentina where the MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross S2 (soft compound) is the nominated tyre.

## The MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H2 and the MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross S2

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

**Width:** 205mm

**Sidewall height:** 133mm

**Diameter:** 15 inches

**Tread pattern:** asymmetric and directional (a left- and a right-hand side tyre)

**Weight:** 16.4kg

**Use:** non-sealed surfaces

**MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross 'H2':** hard-wearing, aggressive surfaces, dry conditions, temperatures over 15°C

**MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross 'S2':** smooth gravel, wet or damp, temperatures up to 15° C

**MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross 'H2':** Mexico, Portugal, Italy, Australia and Spain

**MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross 'S2':** Argentina, Poland, Finland and Great Britain

**Number of tyres available for the 2014 Vodafone Rally de Portugal:** 1,200

**Number of tyres that can be used by RC1 drivers:** 25 for the event (five tyre-change opportunities) + 4 for shakedown

**Number of tyres that can be used by RC2 drivers:** 20 tyres for the event (five tyre-change opportunities) + 4 for shakedown.

### Allocation for each RC1 driver:

- 29 MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H2s
- 16 MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross S2s

### Allocation for each RC2 driver:

- 24 MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross H2s
- 16 MICHELIN LATITUDE Cross S2s

**[Note: Michelin also provided tyres for the 14 cars competing in the first round of the 2014 Junior World Rally Championship. This year's J-WRC exclusively involves Citroën DS3 R3s competing on Michelin tyres.](#)**