

Round 4: 2013 6 Hours of Sao Paulo

New MICHELIN endurance racing tyres: Medium compound for hot weather... mission accomplished!

The 2013 6 Hours of Sao Paulo saw Audi Sport Team Joest claim a one-two finish. The job of the two Audi R18 e-tron quattros was facilitated by the early elimination of the TOYOTA TS030 Hybrid following a tangle 35 minutes into the race. However, that didn't prevent the German team's drivers from producing an exciting fight as they battled for WEC FIA World Endurance Championship points. Their clash lasted until Lap 142 when the N°2 Audi lost a wheel as it re-joined the track after a pit-stop. It was compelled to complete a whole lap with just three corners attached before the situation was corrected during an unscheduled stop.

Despite all these incidents, MICHELIN Motorsport's technical staff were able to carry out a thorough analysis of the brand's latest LMP1 endurance racing tyres after they had used the summer break to develop new solutions adapted to the more abrasive tracks visited by the second half of the 2013 FIA World Endurance Championship.

Audi Sport Team Joest and Toyota Motorsport GmbH were both able to use these new tyres during Friday's free practice session. They were won over by their performance and chose to use them for qualifying.

"We were pleasantly surprised because we had very few opportunities to test the new medium-compound MICHELIN tyres before leaving for Brazil," observed Audi Sport Team Joest driver **Benoît TRELUYER** before the start of the race. "It's always a little delicate to discover new tyres during race week, even though we have every confidence in MICHELIN. We put them through their paces at Interlagos which is a rather atypical circuit in terms of grip. We wanted to make sure that MICHELIN's new tyres delivered a very high level of grip and longevity. They did and, thanks to that, we have every intention of double stinting in our bid to win this race..."

The Frenchman and his team-mates in the N°1 Audi R18 e-tron quattro, André LOTTERER and Marcel FASSLER, went on to win the 2013 6 Hours of Sao Paulo after qualifying in pole position on Saturday afternoon and also posting the weekend's fastest race lap (1m20.784s). That's a very big improvement of 2.363s over Audi Sport Team Joest's fastest race lap in 2012 and 1.579s quicker than the pole-winning lap for last year's race.

"True, the cars have evolved compared with last year, but so have MICHELIN's tyres! Our tyres have been made faster to keep apace with the evolutions made to our partner's prototypes in the LMP1 class. On top of that, they are now also capable of double stinting at twisty, abrasive tracks like Interlagos, noted **Jérôme MONDAIN**, manager of MICHELIN's endurance racing programmes.

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In the other classes:

- **LMP2.** PeCom Racing, MICHELIN's only partner in this class, came third in Brazil. **Nicolas MINASSIAN** (driver, PeCom Racing): "We are pleased to be on the podium after a very consistent race. The car and tyre package was of a good level and we also used the race to fine-tune our tyre strategy ahead of the 6 Hours of Circuit of the Americas by comparing MICHELIN's 'medium' and 'medium plus' compounds for hot weather.
- **LMGTE Pro.** The class was won by the N°51 Ferrari 458 Italia of the Italian team AF Corse. Gianmaria BRUNI and Giancarlo FISICHELLA successfully shrugged off pressure from the Aston Martins. The N°98 Vantage V8 was strong early on before the chase was taken over by the similar N°97 car which also failed to find a way past the Italian car.
- **LMGTE AM.** The N°96 Aston Martin Vantage V8 of Britons HALL and CAMPBELL-WALTER finished the race clear of the N°81 Ferrari 458 Italia (8 Star Motorsports).

Round five of the 2013 FIA WEC (September 22) will take teams to the Circuit of the Americas near Austin, Texas, USA. The race will feature American Le Mans Series and World Endurance Championship competitors.

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