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## ***Michelin to participate in the inaugural Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual***

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### **Introduction, by Matthieu Bonardel (Director, Michelin Motorsport):**

*“Not only are innovation, exploring new solutions and demonstrating their benefits all fundamental aspects of motorsport but they are also embedded in Groupe Michelin’s DNA.*

*“Michelin’s longstanding involvement in the Le Mans 24 Hours dates back to its victory in the very first race in 1923 and continues today as it expands its activities in the exciting world of sim-racing.*

*“The Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual provides us with a further opportunity to show that long-lasting performance is an underpinning quality of our tyres and a trademark of the brand, both on and off the race track.*

*“The realism of the driving experience using the rFactor 2 platform will effectively enable us to highlight the decisive role that Michelin tyres – through their performance characteristics, longevity and versatility – play both as the event unfolds and in the final outcome.*

*“The Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual will provide Michelin with valuable experience of the world of Esport and, thanks to realistic platforms like rFactor 2, will allow the brand to reach out to a younger, engaged audience, in addition to promoting the quality of our tyres.*

*“The participation of internationally acclaimed drivers in the Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual is a sure sign of the rapidly growing interest real motorsport is taking in Esport. People will be able to follow this new race from anywhere in the world, so it has all the ingredients to be a truly international success. Fans will benefit from comprehensive coverage, including the presence of motor racing experts in a bespoke TV studio, and Michelin is providing live streaming of the race on its Facebook pages in 28 countries.*

*“After the Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual, just as we do in real life, we will look at how we can enhance the realism of our tyres. Who knows, we may even spot some interesting ideas to carry over to the real world!”*



## Virtual racing, but real tyre strategies

Just as they do in the real race, teams contesting the Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual will be able to choose between three types of slick depending on their respective strategies, including the possibility of multi-stinting. Or perhaps they may opt to change their tyres every time they pit. They will also be able to adjust their tyre pressures, a parameter that influences both how their car handles and longevity, even in the virtual world!

Meanwhile, Race Control will be able to programme surprise weather changes when drivers will need to swiftly select the most appropriate tyre for the conditions if they want to steal a march over their rivals. In sim racing, as in real life, a judicious tyre choice can make a big difference!

The virtual MICHELIN Pilot Sport range consequently promises to be not only a frequent talking point over the weekend, but also one of the keys to providing an entertaining inaugural Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual.

Participants will be able to choose between four different types of tyre:

- The MICHELIN Pilot Sport Soft (qualifying and single stinting)
- The MICHELIN Pilot Sport Medium (approximately two stints)
- The MICHELIN Pilot Sport Hard (approximately three stints)
- The MICHELIN Pilot Sport Rain (wet conditions)

There is no limit to the number of tyres that drivers can use.

The Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual will see Michelin's tyres sport the new MICHELIN Pilot Sport sidewall logo that is a feature of all the firm's motorsport tyres.

The regulations that govern tyre changes during the Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual are the same as for the real race. During routine pit stops, it will be possible to take fuel only, or take fuel and fit fresh tyres, although doing the two jobs simultaneously will not be allowed. As a result, keeping the same set of tyres on the car for an additional stint will result in a time saving, as is the case in the real Le Mans 24 Hours.


## Eroding the frontier between video games and simulators

The spectacular realism and graphics of the rFactor 2 platform are the reason Michelin decided to become involved in the inaugural Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual.

Of course, Michelin is no stranger to the world of simulators and the Group has worked with manufacturers and race teams on highly sophisticated simulators for many years.

Today, the design of new Michelin racing tyres begins using data provided by its partners. At this stage, Michelin Motorsport's developers do not need detailed information about the car's specific characteristics.





The loads tyres have to withstand are measured on three axes, namely longitudinal (x), lateral (y) and vertical (z) and this basic data is used to initiate the tyre's design on computers before the work is finetuned by incorporating more complex parameters.

The advanced virtual systems Michelin employs enable it to speed up development without having to use the materials and energy that would otherwise have been required for making prototype tyres.

These latest-generation simulators allow the fitment to the cars of 'virtual' tyres that have been conceived entirely digitally to commence testing with the drivers before moving on to the track testing phase.

Michelin's expertise in the field of simulators has helped it to build close working relationships the designers of Esport platforms.

### **Sim-racing bringing different generations together**

Michelin's Esport strategy allows it to interact with a new audience, since these modern platforms allow several generations to share an exciting experience and see for themselves the fundamental role tyres play in the realms of safety, performance and driving enjoyment.

As a realistic bridge between the worlds of simulation and reality, the Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual is an effective platform to reach out to a broad audience. On the one hand, it allows sim-racers to benefit from a chance to enjoy a unique experience that is very close to reality. On the other, the race's virtual version will acquaint car enthusiasts with Esport to bring together different generations of motorsport and video game fans.

*"Our Esport partnerships are a way for us to assert our sim racing involvement," says **James Dimmock**, Michelin's Global Esport Manager. "The realism of today's leading platforms allows us to reach out to sim racers and share the Michelin experience and passion with them, while making them aware of the different challenges tyres face both in Esport and real-life motorsport."*


### **Fuel cell technology and MissionH24: the LMPH2G's new livery revealed in virtual form**

The Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual will provide endurance and Esport enthusiasts with an opportunity to discover H24Racing's LMPH2G race car, of which Michelin and Symbio are partners.

Indeed, through the intermediary of Symbio, the joint venture it has formed with the automotive equipment manufacturer Faurecia, the Michelin group recently became a preferential partner of the MissionH24 project which seeks to accelerate the development of zero-emissions mobility thanks to the use of fuel cell technology in endurance racing. This step-up in Michelin and Symbio's involvement will play a part in accelerating the development of this new technology.

To mark the announcement of its two new partners, H24Racing's LMPH2G prototype will sport a brand new livery featuring the colours of Michelin, Symbio and Total, which is already a partner of the project.





MissionH24 is participating in this weekend's Le Mans 24 Hours Virtual (June 13-14) with its fuel cell electric prototype which will serve as Lead and Safety Car. Driving on the rFactor 2 platform will be shared by the LMPH2G's development driver Olivier Lombard and sim-racer Aurélien Mallet.

