

## MEDIA INFORMATION

*2017 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC)*

*Round 4: Che Guevara Energy Drink Tour de Corse-Rallye de France*

### ***A conclusive Corsica test for the MICHELIN Pilot Sport H5 (WRC), and a successful debut outing for the MICHELIN Pilot Sport R H3 (WRC2)***

Following the strategy that Michelin Motorsport revealed in Mexico with regard to its gravel WRC tyres, MICHELIN decided to use the 2017 Tour de Corse-Rallye de France as a test for the asphalt tyres that are used this season by the latest-generation World Rally Cars which combine extra power with impressive aerodynamic configurations and an active centre differential that evens out front and rear tyre-wear more uniformly.

Corsica has long been known as a demanding test not only for the drivers, but also for their cars and tyres, and Michelin had three solutions for the event, namely the soft- (S5) and hard-compound (H5) versions of the MICHELIN Pilot Sport, plus the 2017-specification of its 'Full Wet' rain tyre, the MICHELIN Pilot Sport FW3.

In the end, the weekend's weather turned out to be clear and dry throughout and Michelin's partners consequently opted for the 'hard' MICHELIN Pilot Sport H5 from start to finish.

Its WRC2 runners, meanwhile, benefited from a new hard-compound tyre, the MICHELIN Pilot Sport R H3, which Michelin registered with the FIA (Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile) in January and which features a new tread compound. It builds on the successful career of its predecessor – the MICHELIN Pilot Sport R H2 – but gets up to its ideal working temperature more quickly and delivers enhanced lateral grip.

The 2017 Tour de Corse-Rallye de France was a particularly crucial rally for Michelin which used the round as a full-scale test of its new WRC2 tyre while at the same time evaluating the performance of its existing WRC tyres with a view to steering their future evolution.

"The MICHELIN Pilot Sport H5 was developed with the higher performance of the new World Rally Cars in mind and it already had a significant margin for development built into its specification last year," notes **Jacques Morelli**, the manager of Michelin's World Rally Championship programme. "There is clearly less margin this season but we are still amply within the road map we set ourselves. Given the characteristics of this year's cars, the performance it delivers is nicely balanced, so we have no plans to modify it in the near future. It is fine for the season's other asphalt rallies, like Rallye Deutschland which tends to be less abrasive than Corsica. With regard to our latest WRC2 tyre, the MICHELIN Pilot Sport R H3, we had high expectations. Early feedback from the drivers has been very positive and we took advantage of the scope for improvement it had in terms of durability to upgrade its global performance, notably in terms of lateral grip. The drivers like how it feels and it also climbs to its working temperature more quickly. Given all these positive results, I think we can say that the 2017 Tour de Corse-Rallye de France was a big success for us."



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The season's fourth round was won by Thierry Neuville/Nicolas Gilsoul (Hyundai i20 WRC), ahead of Sébastien Ogier/Julien Ingrassia (Ford Fiesta WRC/M-Sport) and Dani Sordo/Marc Marti (Hyundai i20 WRC). It was the Belgian's first victory in Corsica with Hyundai, and he also becomes the fourth different winner to win a round so far this season.

The WRC2 victor in Corsica was Andreas Mikkelsen/Anders Jaeger (Skoda Fabia R5), with Teemu Suninen/Mikko Markkula (Ford Fiesta R5 M-Sport) and Yohann Rossel/Benoit Fulcrand (Citroën DS3) making it an all-Michelin podium in this fiercely competitive class.

The next round of the 2017 FIA World Rally Championship will take teams to Villa Carlos Paz for Rally Argentina (April 27-30).

## Michelin and the 2017 Tour de Corse-Rallye de France

Michelin had 1,990 tyres available for the 2017 Tour de Corse – Rallye de France (WRC: 790 / WRC2: 1,200).

Michelin Motorsport had 20 staff members in Corsica:

- **Pascal COUASNON**, Director
- **Olivier VIALLE**, Marketing Director
- **Jacques MORELLI**, FIA WRC Programme Manager
- 1 developer
- 4 team advisors
- 2 coordinators
- 8 fitters
- 1 press officer



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