

## MEDIA INFORMATION

**2017 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC)**  
**Round 7: Rally Italia Sardegna**

### ***The MICHELIN LTX Force H4 and S5 ready for Sardinia's rough ride***

Since 2015, Rally Italia Sardegna has been based on the Mediterranean gem's east coast, in Alghero, where the harbourside service park exudes something of a holiday feel, an impression amplified by the location's backdrop of blue sea, sailing boats and nearby white beaches.

That said, it is on the other side of the island that the event will actually kick off on Thursday evening with a super-special in Olbia where the real start will get under way the following morning.

The total distance of this year's event is 1,495.36km, including 19 stages totalling 321.46km.

The first full day's menu features four tests totalling 125.46km, including two particularly rough classics – Terranova and Monte Olia – which are back on the programme and stand out as the chief change compared with last year.

The longest and potentially hardest leg for the crews and their cars comes on Saturday with six stages totalling 143.16km in the Monte Acuto region. The Italian event then concludes on Sunday with two visits to two coastal tests north of Alghero for a competitive distance of 42.04km.

To cope with Rally Italia Sardegna's specific challenges, Michelin's WRC partners will be able to choose between the MICHELIN LTX Force H4 (hard compound) and S5 (soft), while the options for their WRC2 counterparts are the MICHELIN Latitude Cross H90 and S80.

"Since the WRC stopped going to Greece, Rally Italia Sardegna is the only event that takes place on such hard ground," notes **Jacques Morelli**, manager of Michelin's WRC programme. "Tergu-Osilo [SS5] may be only 14.14km long but it is one of the hardest-wearing stages of the entire championship and forms part of a four-stage loop that totals 64km! Although rougher, the other tests tend to be tougher on the cars than on the tyres, especially on Saturday. This is an event that always springs a few surprises. In 2012, Sébastien Ogier was fastest on Tergu-Osilo in a Michelin-equipped Skoda Fabia because the WRC2 cars aren't as powerful and tend to take less out of their tyres. I think it's fair to say that Sardinia is the hardest round of the calendar for the crews and their cars, but recent testing indicates that our tyres will stand up to the ordeal."

#### **THE MICHELIN LTX Force H4 and S5**

The MICHELIN LTX Force H4 (hard compound) and MICHELIN LTX Force S5 (soft) were designed to cover the broad range of conditions encountered on the FIA World Rally Championship's gravel rounds and their specification was registered with the FIA (Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile) prior to the start of the season.



**Didier Laurent** – [didier@autopressclub.com](mailto:didier@autopressclub.com) – Phone: +33.6.75.60.50.62

**Alessandro Barlozzi** – [alessandro.barlozzi@michelin.com](mailto:alessandro.barlozzi@michelin.com) – Phone: +33.6.42.23.55.93

Because of the exceptional spectrum of temperatures, types of ground (soft, hard, rough, smooth, etc.) and weather (rain, dry, dust, mud) drivers can expect to face in the course of the year, the MICHELIN LTX Force H4 and S5 have to be extremely versatile. They consequently combine strength, résistance to wear and the consistent delivery of performance over even the longest loops of stages on events that range from hot and sunny, such as Rally Australia, to muddy Wales Rally GB. Michelin Motorsport's engineers benefited from the company's long and successful association with the FIA World Rally Championship to design these latest-generation gravel tyres. The lessons learned on the stages provide invaluable data for the development of Michelin road tyres, in keeping with the brand's policy of using motorsport as a proving ground for new technologies.

#### **The MICHELIN LTX Force S5/H4 (for WRC crews)**

Number of tyres available for Rally Italia Sardegna: 670

Number of tyres per driver: 28 (including 4 for shakedown) from an overall allocation of 28 S5s (soft compound) and 16 H4s (hard)

#### **The MICHELIN LTX Force H90/S80 (for WRC2 crews)**

Number of tyres available for Rally Italia Sardegna: 650

Number of tyres per driver: 26 (including 4 for shakedown) from an overall allocation of 26 S80s (soft compound) and 16 H90s (hard)

#### **Michelin's staff for the 2017 Rally Italia Sardegna**

Michelin has a staff of 16 in Sardinia:

- **Jacques Morelli** (FIA WRC programme manager)
- 2 coordinators
- 4 Team Tyre Advisors
- 8 fitters
- 1 press officer



**Didier Laurent** – [didier@autopressclub.com](mailto:didier@autopressclub.com) – Phone: +33.6.75.60.50.62

**Alessandro Barlozzi** – [alessandro.barlozzi@michelin.com](mailto:alessandro.barlozzi@michelin.com) – Phone: +33.6.42.23.55.93