

AN ARGENTINIAN ADVENTURE AWAITS MICHELIN IN LATIN AMERICA

Michelin has embarked on one of the most challenging trips of the MotoGP™ calendar as it heads over the equator to Latin America and then across Argentina to Termas de Rio Hondo for round two of the championship as the Gran Premio Motul de la República Argentina is held at one of the most demanding circuits of the year.

Initially constructed in 2007 and opened the following year for a round of Argentina's Touring Car championship, the circuit was completely redeveloped, enlarged and restructured in 2012 to make it ready to stage MotoGP, which it has done since 2014 and this season will see Michelin making its second visit to one of South America's safest and most modern circuits. The track is one of the fastest on the calendar and is very demanding on tyres, it features fast sweeping bends, high cambers and hard-braking zones throughout the circuit's layout of nine right-hand bends and five left-handers, allied to a straight over one kilometre long. With such demands, the range of MICHELIN Power Slicks will have a lot of work to do to cope with the high temperatures that are created and the abrasive nature of the surface. Michelin's series of tyres to handle these challenges will be the soft, medium and hard compound options for the front and rear, these will be identifiable by white bands, no bands and yellow bands respectively. The soft and medium rear compounds will feature an asymmetrical design with a harder right-hand shoulder, whilst the hard option will be a symmetrical version.

The nature of the circuit and its location - situated in the Province of Santiago del Estero approximately 1,100km from Buenos Aires and close to the Andes mountain range - can mean that weather can play a large part in proceedings. From very hot conditions which can be a big test on the riders' stamina and requires careful tyre management to get the best performance from their respective machines, to cooler, wet conditions. To combat any precipitation the MICHELIN Power Rain tyres will be available in a soft and medium compound for both the front and rear of the bikes, these will be identifiable by a blue and no band on the side of the tyre respectively.

Track action in Argentina will begin on Friday 7th April with two Free Practice sessions, the third Free Practice will be staged the following morning. The all-important qualifying sessions to establish the grid positions for the 25-lap race will take place on Saturday afternoon. Sunday's race will start at 16.00hrs local time (21.00hrs CEST, 19.00hrs UST/GMT, 20.00hrs BST).

Piero Taramasso – Manager of the Two-Wheel Motorsport Group:

"This is one race that everyone at Michelin is very focused on. We learnt many things from the event in Argentina last year and it altered the course of our plans in 2016. The target now is to improve at the tracks where we struggled last season and Termas is one of those, so we will be looking to make big steps there. The track is not used very often and we expect it to be quite dirty when we first arrive, so the first session will be more of a cleaning exercise, but after that we expect improvements throughout the weekend - conditions permitting. The asphalt is very abrasive with some very fast and long corners, plus very hard braking zones, all of which is expected to result in one of the highest average speeds of the year, these characteristics put big demands on both the front and rear and the weather can also be very unpredictable in that area at this time of the year. This is a race with many variables, but with the knowledge we have gathered, and the evolutions we have made over the last 12-months, we are ready for any eventualities, and the determination from the whole team to do well is as strong as it has ever been."

