

**2019/2020 FIA World Endurance Championship
Round 1: 4 Hours of Silverstone**

***Records tumble as Michelin's new endurance racing tyres
shine in all four classes at Silverstone***

Michelin's latest range of endurance racing tyres contributed to a long list of new records when 2019/2020 FIA WEC action kicked off with the 4 Hours of Silverstone. The British round was won by the N°7 Toyota TS050 Hybrid (Conway/Kobayashi/Lopez) which also topped Saturday's qualifying when Mike Conway and Kamui Kobayashi posted an average lap time of 1m36.015s – a gain of eight-tenths of a second over 2018's pole-winning effort in comparable conditions. However, the improvement in lap times was most notable in LMP2 which saw the N°29 Racing Team Nederland Oreca 07-Gibson of Van Eerd/Van der Garde/Van Uiter clock a 1m40.948s in qualifying, which was practically four seconds quicker than the best time posted in 2018 by the similar, TDS Racing-run car.

Race lap records also tumbled and Toyota's Mike Conway secured the afternoon's fastest lap with a 1m37.289s, almost 2.3 seconds faster than Kamui Kobayashi's benchmark in 2018 in the same car.

It is worth recalling that the British track was resurfaced prior to last season's 6 Hours of Silverstone and has since been resurfaced again, leading to greater consistency.

The 2019/2020 campaign's opener was Michelin's first opportunity to evaluate its latest range of endurance racing tyres in race conditions. Working in close collaboration with the manufacturers and teams involved in the FIA WEC, Michelin Motorsport's engineers have sought to match the recent progress made by the cars, while also addressing the constraints associated with the championship's new-look calendar.

"It is very satisfying to have met all the objectives we set ourselves for the weekend!" underlined **Pierre Alves**, the manager of Michelin's endurance racing programmes. "July's Prologue test allowed us to assess a certain number of parameters but we were keen to collect more comprehensive feedback at Silverstone. We were able to obtain some vital data for the upcoming rounds of the FIA WEC association with our GTE partners because our soft-, medium- and hard-spec slicks were all used. We were consequently able to obtain a global analysis after the race. We achieved the biggest step forward with the non-hybrid LMP1 cars – especially their front tyres, as illustrated by the Rebellion Racing prototypes which lapped consistently two seconds faster than last year. The lap times in LMP2 were also much faster than they were at the same race in 2018. Michelin effectively won this class in both Saturday's ELMS round and Sunday's WEC race.

"Last but not least, the brief period of rain that lasted around 10 minutes during the WRC race provided us with a chance to validate our latest LMP2 rain tyres. On average, the improvement amounted to more than three seconds a lap compared with our previous range. That gives us a useful competitive advantage in this class where we face competition from another brand."



“Everyone at MICHELIN Motorsport was very sad to hear about the death of Anthoine HUBERT. He is a driver who has contributed to the development of our racing tyres,” added **Pierre Alves**. “We would like to extend our condolences to his family and friends.”

The Silverstone weekend produced a mixed bag of weather conditions. Although the ELMS and WEC races were both marked by bright spells, they also saw some rain, while the track temperature remained quite low in spite of the sunshine, with peaks of 28°C during qualifying and 20°C at the start of the 2019 4 Hours of Silverstone.

At lights out, the N°7 Toyota TS050 Hybrid got away to the best start and completed the opening lap in front, chased by the N°8 sister car which managed to take advantage of a period of neutralisations to appear in the lead. The N°7 prototype recovered top spot 90 minutes later, however, thanks to a quicker pit stop. The Japanese cars then settled into a rhythm and the top two positions remained unchanged to the flag. Third place went to the N°3 Rebellion R13-Gibson of Berthon/Derani/Duval.

Michelin’s partners stole the limelight in LMP2 which was won by the Cool Racing-run Oreca07-Gibson of Coigny/Lapierre/Borga, ahead of the N°36 Alpine Signatech Elf Alpine A470 (Laurent/Negrão/Ragues) and Racing Team Nederland’s Oreca07-Gibson.

Porsche GT Team claimed first and second places in LMGTE Pro with its N°91 (Bruni/Lietz) and N°92 (Christensen/Estre) 911 RSRs. The N°97 AMR Aston Martin Vantage of Lynn/Martin was third. LMGTE Am was won by the AF Corse Ferrari 488 GTE EVO of François Perrodo, Emmanuel Collard and Nicklas Nielsen.

“We are delighted with these new lap records and, more generally, with the performance of our latest-spec endurance tyres,” says Michelin Motorsport Director **Mathieu Bonardel**. “Now it has been resurfaced, Silverstone is a big test of tyres and that could easily have led to some graining, but that wasn’t the case. Our partners in all four classes reported how pleased they were with our new dry- and wet-weather tyres at this demanding track, so that’s encouraging for the 2019/2020 FIA WEC.”

