

FIA Formula E Championship 2018/2019
Final round: New York City E-Prix

Michelin looks back at the MICHELIN Pilot Sport's maiden Formula E campaign

Energy-efficiency, versatility, longevity and high performance... the four essential qualities a tyre needs to be successful in Formula E.

The drivers involved in the FIA Formula E Championship are delighted that their respective cars will continue to race on the MICHELIN Pilot Sport when action resumes with the opening round of Season 6 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in November. Indeed, being able to count on a tyre that is designed to be raced two seasons in a row provides them and their teams with a valuable performance benchmark... so long as it is successful, of course!

When developing its new Formula E tyre – the MICHELIN Pilot Sport – in readiness for the 2018/2019 championship, which coincided with the introduction of faster, new-generation cars, Michelin set itself a number of ambitious objectives in terms of not only performance and longevity, but also energy-efficiency and versatility.

As expected, the season's 13 races put the newcomer through its paces at some very challenging venues, as well as in particularly varied and frequently extreme conditions, but the MICHELIN Pilot Sport took everything in its stride to live up to its promise and endorse the choices made by Michelin Motorsport's engineers during the development of this technologically-sophisticated tyre.

Energy efficiency – the name of the game

Compared with Michelin's first Formula E tyre (the MICHELIN Pilot Sport EV) which was launched in 2013, the MICHELIN Pilot Sport is much lighter. The total weight saving for a set of four amounts to almost 10 kilograms which is equivalent to the weight of one of the original tyres. In addition to this exceptional achievement, the newcomer's rolling resistance is around 20 percent lower, which works out at one additional lap per race in terms of battery range. Thanks to the new MICHELIN Pilot Sport, the drivers are able to manage their energy allocation much more efficiently while still continuing to make maximum use of their cars' potential.

Versatility: all types of weather, all types of track and all types of driving style

When the subject of the MICHELIN Pilot Sport's versatility is raised, observers frequently refer to the design of its tread pattern which enables this unique racing tyre to deliver safe performance in dry and wet conditions alike. But the French tyre has also forged a reputation for its ability to adapt to all the different types of circuit and track surface that are visited by Formula E, not to mention the exceptionally wide range of track temperatures it covers.



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At the same time, the fact that nine different drivers won Season 5's thirteen races is evidence that the MICHELIN Pilot Sport suits all the cars and different types of driving style.

Longevity: raw material and energy savings

In the course of 2018/2019, the longevity delivered by the MICHELIN Pilot Sport exceeded the level demanded by the FIA Formula E Championship's regulations. The drivers are effectively allocated a very limited quantity of tyres per race which must last from free practice to the chequered flag, yet wear rates have always been satisfactory. The New York City E-Prix provided eloquent evidence of the MICHELIN Pilot Sport's longevity when some drivers opted to use just one set of tyres during the racing day.

High performance: a long list of new records

A comparison of this season's lap times with those of 2017/2018 reveals an average improvement of around two seconds, a trend that both the cars and their Michelin tyres have contributed towards.

"It's been a highly positive first season for the new MICHELIN Pilot Sport," said **Serge Grisin**, the manager of Michelin's Formula E programme. "The teams have expressed their satisfaction with our new tyre and everyone is delighted that it will back next season. The MICHELIN Pilot Sport showcased its qualities at all the circuits we visited in the course of the 2018/2019 championship and I would also like to underline the contribution the smart, modern design of its sidewalls makes to the great overall look of the current cars."

The 2019 New York City E-Prix: a spectacular finale!

The 2019 New York City E-Prix featured two races which gave the rivals of Jean-Eric Vergne (DS Techeetah) – who topped the Drivers' standings ahead of the trip to the USA – two opportunities to close the gap to the Frenchman. The 2015/2016 champion Sébastien Buemi (Nissan e.Dams) demonstrated his and his car's form on Saturday by winning Race 1 which the Swiss driver started from pole position before warding off strong challenges from Mitch Evans (2nd, Panasonic Jaguar Racing) and Antonio Felix Da Costa (3rd, BMW i Andretti Motorsport). Vergne failed to score any points at all.

That obviously dented his cushion and, on Sunday morning, three drivers still stood a chance of depriving him of a second crown: Lucas di Grassi (+22 points, Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler), Mitch Evans (+25) and Buemi (+26).

However, the result of Sunday afternoon's clash – which was won by Robin Frijns (Envision Virgin Racing), ahead of Alexander Sims (BMW i Andretti Motorsport) and Sébastien Buemi – handed the title to Jean-Eric Vergne who is the only driver in Formula E history to have claimed the title twice. The 2018/2019 Teams' championship was won by DS Techeetah, ahead of Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler.



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“Congratulations to Jean-Eric Vergne and DS Techeetah on winning this season’s titles to conclude what has been a fiercely contested and highly spectacular season,” said Michelin Motorsport Director **Matthieu Bonardel**. “We are already busy preparing for next season when we will continue to provide our partners with the MICHELIN Pilot Sport. Although no changes will be made to its successful specification, it will introduce a major new feature for Formula E as motor racing’s first ever connected tyre.”

Michelin was the first tyre manufacturer to market a connected tyre, namely the MICHELIN Track Connect, which is aimed at Track Day enthusiasts. Michelin Motorsport’s engineers have now turned their attention to an evolution of this system which comprises a combination of sensors inside the tyre and a central control unit, plus an app to present the data it collects.

“Several technologies are suitable for use in Formula E and we are currently in the process of evaluating different solutions to ensure that they are reliable and respect data confidentiality,” added **Matthieu Bonardel**. “Connected tyres, which notably monitor tyre pressures, promise to be a big ‘plus’ for the championship and the teams.

“Last but not least, I would like to extend my gratitude to Serge Grisin who has looked after Michelin’s Formula E programme so efficiently for the past five seasons. He will be handing over the baton to somebody else next season because he is moving on to a different post within the Group.”



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