

**2017 FIA World Endurance Championship (FIA WEC)  
Round 9: 6 Hours of Bahrain**

***Titles to play for and announcements expected at the last round of the 2017 FIA World Endurance Championship***

The swansong edition of the FIA WEC's 6 Hours of Bahrain takes teams to Sakhir International Circuit on the country's east coast on Saturday November 18. Although Porsche and Ferrari both wrapped up the Manufacturers' crown in their respective classes on November 5, in Shanghai, China, several titles remain to be settled at the season's finale. For example, three crews are still in contention for GT FIA World Endurance Driver's Championship honours, with Pier Guidi/Calado (Ferrari/Michelin, 135 points), Makowiecki/Lietz (Porsche/Michelin, 133) and Priaulx/Tincknell (Ford/Michelin, 127.5) blanketed by just seven-and-a-half points.

As usual, the weather in the Persian Gulf kingdom is likely to be dry and pleasant, with stable temperatures of around 29°C for free practice, qualifying and the race itself. Meanwhile, the track temperature will probably stand at around 35°C when the six-hour contest kicks off at 4pm local time, Saturday, before cooling as darkness moves in.

A combination of hot asphalt and sand blown onto the track are the classic ingredients that drivers and Michelin's tyres have to cope with at the 5.412-kilometre Sakhir International Circuit which is reputed as a technically demanding venue due to its cocktail of short straights and slow turns.

Conditions tend to evolve significantly during the race, too, so expect the teams to run different strategies as they seek to optimise the way they use the various slick options provided by Michelin. Indeed, victory could well depend on sound tyre management and successfully selecting the ideal fitment for the race's different phases.

"It's been an extremely demanding season for Michelin," admits **Jérôme Mondain**, the manager of Michelin's endurance racing programmes. "The reduction in the number of tyres teams have been able to use in 2017 presented Michelin Motorsport's engineers with a number of stiff challenges but they rose to them all. When we designed our endurance racing range for this year, we succeeded in making our tyres more durable without sacrificing performance, which means we were able to meet the needs of our partners as the year progressed. Due to the heat, especially during the first few hours, the 6 Hours of Bahrain will be the last big test for our tyres since the allocation for qualifying and races was cut from eight to four sets this season."

For the 6 Hours of Bahrain, Michelin's LMP and LM GTE partners will be able to choose between **MEDIUM, HARD and HARD** slicks, while WETs and Full WETs will be on hand as alternatives if it rains. The LM P1 teams will also be able to fit the versatile MICHELIN Hybrid in drying conditions.

In addition to the on-track action, a number of important announcements are expected in Bahrain.





A number of the FIA WEC's players will effectively be presenting their plans for the future as the series prepares to resume next year with a new-look calendar that straddles 2018 and 2019, plus two visits to Le Mans and closer competition between the hybrid and no-hybrid LMP1 prototypes.

