

## MEDIA INFORMATION

**2017 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC)**  
**Round 9: NESTE Rally Finland**

### ***High-flying success for the MICHELIN LTX Force and MICHELIN Latitude Cross at Rally Finland***

The 2017 Rally Finland, round nine of the FIA World Rally Championship, produced its usual three days of spectacular action which attracted thousands of fans to its high-speed stages and to the service park in Jyväskylä.

The event featured a total distance of 1,422.34km, including 315.63km divided into 25 stages, some of which had been carried over from last year, while others hadn't been visited for some time or were run in the opposite direction. The programme incorporated two attempts at the infamous 'Ouninpohja' stage which boasts one of the most spectacular jumps of the WRC.

Like Rally Poland earlier this month, Rally Finland's dirt stages are covered in a sandy top-coating but they tend to have a harder-packed base. Meanwhile, not only are they wide and fast but the terrain is gently undulating, which explains why there are so many high-speed, potentially tricky jumps. The championship leader Sébastien Ogier found out how awkward they can be to his cost on SS3 when a wheel broke on a particularly heavy landing, ultimately leading to an 'off'. On top of that, Rally Finland accounts for nine of the 10 fastest events in WRC history!

For this year's event, Michelin Motorsport's WRC partners were able to choose between the soft-compound MICHELIN LTX Force S5 and the harder H4, while its WRC2 runners could similarly opt for either the MICHELIN Latitude Cross S80 (soft) or H90. Over the past six years, Michelin drivers have gone for the softer option 95% of the time, but this year they all selected the MICHELIN LTX Force S5 from start to finish.

"This way this weekend's Rally Finland unfolded is further confirmation of the view we have held since the MICHELIN LTX Force S5's launch in Mexico," notes **Jacques Morelli**, the manager of Michelin's World Rally Championship programme. "The combination of its outstanding versatility and longer-lasting high performance means the drivers are able to push from start to finish irrespective of whether the conditions are dry, damp or wet. I am naturally disappointed for Jari-Matti Latvala who looked strong before his technical hitch, but I would like to congratulate Esapekka Lappi on winning his first WRC round at only his fourth attempt in a World Rally Car. He was fast and consistent and stood up to the pressure all the way to the finish. I would also like to congratulate Jari Huttunen on his excellent WRC2 win. Thanks to the backing of Marcus Grönholm and support from Michelin, it was his maiden appearance in this class and he produced an assertive performance to take first place."



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The 2017 Rally Finland was won by Esapekka Lappi/Jane Ferm (Toyota Yaris WRC), while their compatriots and team-mates Juho Hänninen/Kaj Linström followed in third place. Both cars were on Michelin tyres.

A Michelin-equipped Skoda Fabia R5 in the hands of Jari Huttunen and Anti Linnaketo topped the WRC2 order.

The next round of the FIA World Rally Championship will take teams to Germany for the all-asphalt Rallye Deutschland on August 17-20.

### **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. 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 Finland: **792**

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 LATITUDE Cross H90/S80 (for WRC2 crews)**

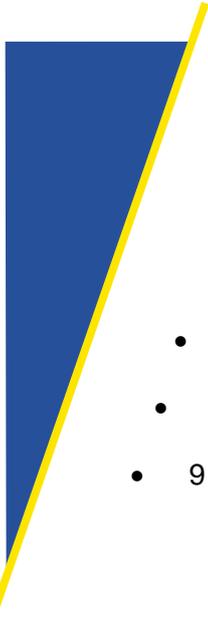
Number of tyres available for Rally Finland: **880**

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



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## Michelin's staff for the 2017 Rally Finland

Michelin has a staff of 16 in Finland:

- **Jacques Morelli** (FIA WRC programme manager)
- 2 coordinators
- 4 Team Tyre Advisors
- 9 fitters



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