

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday 28 February

Final countdown to FIA WEC season-opener in Qatar

The season-opening Qatar Airways Qatar 1812km – round one of the 2024 FIA World Endurance Championship – will get underway this weekend (1-2 March).

With 14 manufacturers (Alpine, Aston Martin, BMW, Cadillac, Corvette, Ferrari, Ford, Isotta Fraschini, Lamborghini, Lexus, McLaren, Peugeot, Porsche and Toyota), 37 cars (19 Hypercars ; 18 LMGT3 entries) and a star-studded entry list comprising of 111 drivers from 28 different countries, this year's FIA WEC is set to be the most exciting yet in its 12 year history.

During each tour of the 5.4km circuit Hypercar drivers shift gears 44 times, reaching top speeds in the range of 307kph and traveling with fully-opened throttle for 45% of the lap.

Some of the biggest names in motorsport are competing in this year's WEC including seven-time MotoGP World Champion Valentino Rossi (Team WRT in LMGT3), 2009 Formula 1 World Champion, Jenson Button (Hertz Team JOTA in Hypercar) and Mick Schumacher (Alpine Endurance Team, Hypercar).

Over the last 48 hours, four separate pre-season testing sessions have taken place as part of the official Prologue at the 5.418mile Lusail International Circuit in Doha, Qatar. It marked the first time that several of the new Hypercars and LMGT3 have been seen out on track other than at private pre-season tests.

Porsche Penske Motorsport's Frederic Makowiecki set the overall fastest time during the Prologue with a time of 1m40.404s in the Porsche 963. This was 0.054s quicker than the Alex Lynn driven

Cadillac V-Series.R Hypercar which took the second fastest time (combined of all four sessions). Britain's Callum Hogg was third overall with Hertz Team JOTA and its privately run Porsche 963. Rounding out the top five were two Ferrari 499P Hypercars (Antonio Fuoco in the No. 50 and Yifei Yi in the No. 83 AF Corse entry).

New for 2024, the all-new LMGT3 class is based around FIA's existing LMGT3 technical platform and is made up of 18 entries from nine different manufacturers in its inaugural season.

United Autosports topped the LMGT3 times in testing with Gregoire Saucy setting a 1m54.480s in the McLaren 720S LMGT3. Second quickest was the Vista AF Corse Ferrari 296 GT3 driven by Davide Rigon ahead of WEC debutants Akkodis ASP and its Lexus RC F with WEC rookie Esteban Masson driving.

Alongside Rossi in the No. 46 BMW M4 LMGT3 is Ahmad Al Harthy. Al Harthy, from Oman, is the only driver from the Middle East to compete in Qatar so is expected to have some strong home support.

Iron Dames' trio of females sees Doriane Pin replace Rahel Frey in the 2024 line-up driving the Lamborghini Huracan LMGT3 Evo2 alongside Sarah Bovy and Michelle Gatting.

WHERE TO WATCH

Several broadcasters across the world will broadcast the FIA WEC this weekend including a mix of pan-regional deals and various FTA, linear and online channels.

For a full breakdown of the broadcast coverage for the Qatar Airways Qatar 1812km, please click [HERE](#).

FIAWEC.TV will also broadcast Qatar live on its online platform. This is available worldwide. Individual race packages are available to buy for

8.99 Euros or fans. Available on the app will be qualifying, race replays and full English commentary from experts Anthony Davidson, Martin Haven, Graham Goodwin as well as pitlane reporter, Louise Beckett. For more information about the app, click [HERE](#).

Action from Free Practice 3 on Friday (1 March) will be live to watch on the FIA WEC YouTube channel.

To view the full entry list click [HERE](#).

Qatar Airways Qatar 1812Km Race Timetable

Thursday 29 February

Free Practice 1: 12:20 – 13:50

Free Practice 2: 17:30 – 19:00

Friday 1 March

Free Practice 3: 11:00 – 12:00

Qualifying: 16:00

Saturday 2 March

Race: 11:00 – 21:00

ENDS

About the FIA World Endurance Championship

The WEC is the world's premier endurance racing championship, offering motor manufacturers a real-world relevance to advances in road car design and crossover technology, performance and safety. Strong, stable regulations allow for complex yet beautiful sports prototypes featuring the latest in hybrid technology, independent chassis and engines suppliers competing at the highest levels, and the world's leading luxury car marques going head-to-head on track.

Over 35 cars are on track at the same time, leading to action, excitement, endless passing and entertainment for fans worldwide.

The WEC offers teams, drivers, partners and stakeholders a unique stage on which to compete, at premier race circuits around the world. Ranked alongside the Olympics, the Super Bowl and the soccer World Cup, the cornerstone of the WEC remains one of the world's greatest sporting events, the 24 Hours of Le Mans. Contested over eight rounds across North America, South America Europe, Asia and the Middle East – there are races of varying distances, from the shortest at 6 hours to the longest at 24 hours.

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