

2017/2018 FIA Formula E Championship
Round 7: E-Prix of Rome

The MICHELIN Pilot Sport EV2 combines high performance with longevity in the Eternal City

The inaugural Rome E-Prix attracted a plethora of VIPs, celebrities and guests from the world of politics who, like the spectators present in the packed grandstands, were treated to one of the most entertaining races in FIA Formula-E history.

The undulating circuit, which twisted through the streets of the Italian capital's busy EUR district, provided a challenging arena for the 20 all-electric single-seater racing cars which were able to compete in clear conditions. The sky was partially-covered, the track temperature did not exceed 38°C, and the MICHELIN Pilot Sport EV2 gave its own contribution to the afternoon's spectacle.

Felix Rosenqvist (Mahindra Racing) hit the ground running to chalk up his third pole-position of the season, six-tenths of a second clear of Sam Bird (DS Virgin Racing). The Swede then used his grid advantage to appear in front at lights out, chased by Bird who seemed to be the only driver capable of matching the Mahindra youngster's pace up to the mid-point car changes.

On Lap 16, as the front-runners were preparing to pit to swap their respective single-seaters, the track was blocked by a tangle involving Mortara, Heidfeld, Piquet and Filippi. The incident failed to influence the order at the front, though, and everyone managed to pit to switch to fresh machinery.

As the early part of the race's second half unfolded, the positions at the top remained unchanged, but Alex Lynn (DS Virgin Racing) overshot a turn and his car came to a stop in a delicate spot, prompting Race Control to declare a brief Full Course Yellow period.

On Lap 22, Rosenqvist's dreams of Rome glory were dashed when he was forced to park up with rear-left suspension damage. The Swede's troubles handed top spot to Bird who enjoyed an enviable cushion at that point, although New Zealander Mitch Evans (Panasonic Jaguar Racing) was doing his utmost to close the gap. With five laps remaining, however, Bird's most pressing chasers were the charging Di Grassi (Audi Sport Abt Schaeffler) and Lotterer (Techeetah).

Leaving his opponents to scrap for podium honours, Bird held firm to take the day's win and he was joined for the podium celebrations by Di Grassi and Lotterer.

"The Rome E-Prix turned out to be an exceptional event, both on and off the track," commented **Serge Grisin**, the manager of Michelin's Formula-E programme. "The work of the championship's organisers in close collaboration with the local authorities paid off handsomely. The circuit, which was very fast in places, provided numerous overtaking opportunities, while the MICHELIN Pilot Sport EV2 performed faultlessly and made a real contribution to the action, including at the very end of the race which was particularly entertaining at the front of the field".



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”The different types of asphalt that made up the track provided our tyre with another opportunity to showcase its versatility, while the low wear-rates at the finish were on a par with what we had been expecting. That testifies to the MICHELIN Pilot Sport EV2’s outstanding durability, even when the racing gets as close as we saw today.”

The next round of the 2017/2018 FIA Formula-E Championship will take teams to Paris (April 28) where the drivers will perform in the heart of the French capital, around the magnificent Hôpital des Invalides.



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