



**MICHELIN KICKS OFF 2021 IMSA SEASON WITH BIG FIELD,  
OPPORTUNITIES AT ROLEX 24**

**GREENVILLE, S.C. (January 21, 2021)** – Michelin is preparing for a significantly expanded field for the 2021 edition of the Rolex 24 At DAYTONA, with 50 cars taking part in the traditional ROAR Before the Rolex 24 mandatory practice sessions.

By comparison, the January 2020 event prior to the first COVID-19 impacts was held with just 38 entries.

“Michelin recognizes that racing this week is a privilege in the current circumstances. We thank IMSA and all the teams for respecting the protocols that have allowed us to safely begin a new race season,” said Tony Ménard, director of motorsport, Michelin North America.

“The 24 Hours of Daytona is one of the world’s premier races and the field of extremely competitive cars, teams and outstanding drivers is testament to that,” Ménard said.

**The Field Grows**

Toyota will debut its new Supra GT4 in Friday’s four-hour IMSA MICHELIN Pilot Challenge race. Toyota becomes the 18th automotive brand entered in the IMSA 2021 season.

Plenty of Michelin® Pilot® Sport GT race tires will be on site to support the 106 cars competing in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, MICHELIN Pilot Challenge and Prototype Challenge series.

The eight days of on-track practice, qualifying, and races culminate with the 24-hour race January 30-31. To support the efforts across the ROAR and Rolex weekends, Michelin brought approximately 18,000 tires to Daytona from its North American headquarters in Greenville, S.C.

A second tradition is the number of drivers from other major race series who target IMSA’s Rolex 24 At DAYTONA as one of the premier events worldwide.

With more than 300 drivers expected across the 24-hour race and two Challenge series races, there is a great blend of drivers competing against the established talent in IMSA competition.

NASCAR stars entered include seven-time Cup series champion Jimmie Johnson, 2020 Cup champion Chase Elliott and 2018 Daytona 500 winner Austin Dillon. IndyCar and/or Indianapolis 500 champions in the field include Scott Dixon, Simon Pagenaud, Alexander Rossi, Juan Pablo Montoya, Helio Castroneves and Sebastien Bourdais.

Robert Kubica and Kevin Magnussen arrive at Daytona from Formula 1 along with international champions of the 24 Hours of Le Mans, DTM, and the FIA World Endurance Championship.

They will team up with or take on the established IMSA WeatherTech champions whose performances they will strive to match lap-for-lap.

**First Impressions Last**

For Michelin, one of the best parts of the Daytona experience is hearing the initial impressions of tire performance, especially by those experiencing the Michelin® Pilot® Sport GT race tires for the first time.

## PRESS INFORMATION



Having won the 24 Hours of Le Mans overall for the past 23 consecutive years, Michelin, the Official Tire of IMSA since 2019, traditionally sets the bar in endurance racing.

Each tire maker has its own philosophies, technical priorities, and secret recipes. Joe Ignacio, Michelin Motorsports Operations manager, often joins the first tests with many IMSA teams and drivers.

He notes that some teams and drivers come from other series where they raced on Michelin tires and jump right in. Others discover Michelin for the first time.

“These are top drivers and teams and they quickly adapt,” Ignacio said. “The first thing that drivers usually comment on is that our tires deliver more grip and work very well under braking. After longer runs they like the consistency and predictability of the tires, and how the performances all combine to give the drivers and teams confidence.”

The combination of so many major manufacturers, top teams, and champion drivers competing for 24 hours in a wide array of cars at the same time, on the same track, and in the same conditions provides invaluable feedback, data and opportunity to Michelin.

“The Michelin vision for competition is aligned with our understanding of the needs of our consumers. We want to develop and deliver lasting performance, grip, braking and handling to racers and to consumers,” said Ménard. “When both top racers and consumers find those same attributes in our tires, we have won a great victory.”

### How to watch / listen

The Scouts of America 145 for the IMSA Prototype Challenge airs live, Saturday, January 23 at 12:50 p.m. ET on *TrackPass* on NBC Sports Gold.

The Motul Pole Award 100 for the WeatherTech Championship, a 100-minute qualifying race, airs live Sunday, January 24 at 2:05 p.m. ET on *TrackPass* on NBC Sports Gold and 4:30 p.m. ET on NBCSN.

IMSA MICHELIN Pilot Challenge race, the BMW Endurance Challenge, can be seen live flag-to-flag on *TrackPass* starting Friday, January 29, at 1:35 p.m. ET.

The Rolex 24 At DAYTONA will air flag-to-flag across NBC, NBCSN, the NBC Sports App and *TrackPass*. Times are below.

Date	Event	Network	Time (ET)
Sun., Jan. 24	Roar Before the Rolex 24 At Daytona*	NBCSN	4:30 p.m.
Sat., Jan. 30	Rolex 24 At Daytona	NBC	3:30 p.m.
	Rolex 24 At Daytona	NBCSN	4:30 p.m.
	Rolex 24 At Daytona	NBCSN	11 p.m.
Sun., Jan. 31	Rolex 24 At Daytona	NBCSN	6 a.m.
	Rolex 24 At Daytona	NBC	2 p.m.

IMSA Radio covers the series on radio.

### About Michelin North America, Inc.

Michelin, the leading mobility company, is dedicated to sustainably enhancing its clients' mobility; designing and distributing the most suitable tires, services and solutions for its clients' needs; providing digital services, maps and guides to help enrich trips and travels and make them unique experiences; and developing high-technology materials that serve a variety of industries. Headquartered in Greenville, S.C.,

## **PRESS INFORMATION**

Michelin North America ([www.michelinman.com](http://www.michelinman.com)) has more than 21,400 employees and operates 19 major manufacturing plants.



**For more information contact:**



**Contact:** Phil Watson  
Michelin North America  
Office: 864-458-4996  
Email: [phil.watson@michelin.com](mailto:phil.watson@michelin.com) | [www.michelinmedia.com](http://www.michelinmedia.com)

John Love  
Jackson Motorsports Group  
Cell: 313-506-2114  
Email: [john.love@jacksonmg.com](mailto:john.love@jacksonmg.com)

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