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Paul Ricard pre-season testing shows promise of strong year for Dunlop endurance teams

Four days of testing at the Paul Ricard in southern France has concluded with the Dunlop teams now poised for the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) and European Le Mans Series (ELMS) opening races at Silverstone in three weeks.

Friday and Saturday saw 15 Dunlop WEC cars adding mileage across three classes. The number 13 Rebellion Racing was the fastest privateer LMP1 entry followed by the sister car and the ByKolles Racing Team. Also new to Dunlop for 2016 are the Aston Martin Racing duo in the LMGTE Pro and Am classes. All five squads spent time learning the chassis/tyre combination during the 17 hours of track time.

In LMP2, Signatech Alpine was the fastest over the test with a time of 1:46.974, some 0.5 seconds faster than the top 2015 LMP2 time despite warmer temperatures this year. The LMP2 category is looking particularly strong and all the teams tested all three slick compounds – soft, medium and medium-plus. The full LMP2 range is new for 2016.

16 teams used Dunlop tyres on Tuesday and Wednesday for ELMS testing, on seven different chassis, completing over 17,000 kilometres during the 18 hours on track. Dunlop-shod LMP2 teams topped four of the five sessions in terms of pace

but the emphasis was on distance, with teams choosing to gather data on race distance performance. The all-Dunlop LMGTE category looks set for a particularly closely fought year with the majority of contenders separated by just 0.5 seconds.

Mike McGregor, Dunlop Manager Testing & Track Support, Race Design & Development

“This is a very exciting time with teams adapting to new products at different rates. Signatech Alpine were very complimentary about the new package and did well to beat last year’s LMP2 time given the warmer conditions. We have all-new LMP2 products with the biggest product change for several years. The work is going well with the LMP1 and Aston Martin Racing teams too where there is a huge amount of learning happening. We have an amazing group of teams, drivers and engineers and we are all looking forward to the first races at Silverstone.”

About Dunlop

Dunlop is one of the world’s leading brands for high and ultra-high performance tires with an impressive track record of motor sport successes. Dunlop’s extensive racing experience has led to innovative technologies for tires designed for everyday motoring. Always looking to maximize driving pleasure, Dunlop offers all types of motorists the performance and durability of the latest tire technologies. For more information on Dunlop, visit www.dunlop.eu

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