**Full speed ahead for women in motorsport:**

**Hankook is official tyre partner of the new W Series**

**Hankook is kicking off the 2019 motorsport season with another partnership. As the new partner of the W Series, Hankook will provide the series with its high-end racing tyre, the Ventus Race (F200 slick and Z217 wet), in sizes FA 230/560-13 and RA 280/580-13. With the new single-seater series, the organisers and Hankook are campaigning for female racing drivers, who are featuring more and more in the world of motorsport, but are still very much in the minority compared to their male counterparts.**

***Neu-Isenburg/Germany, 14th January 2019*** – The W Series will share the bill with the DTM, which Hankook has been providing with its premium tyres as exclusive partner since 2011, on six race weekends in 2019. Hockenheim will host the inaugural round of the all-woman Formula series on 4th/5th May, while the finale takes place at Brands Hatch on 10th/11th August. The overall prize purse is 1.5 million dollars, with the winner picking up a cheque for 500,000 dollars.

Over 100 female drivers from 30 countries applied for a seat in one of the 270-PS Tatuus T-318 Formula 3 cars, with 60 women progressing to qualifying. The final decision as to who would occupy the 18 coveted starting places was made by a jury of experts, including former Formula 1 driver David Coulthard.

The select few will now undergo extensive training courses, tough fitness tests and a lot of driver training, to ensure that they are ideally prepared for the start of the W Series in Hockenheim. As all the cars are identical, tyre management will be particularly important, as even minor changes to tyre pressure can have a big effect out on the track. As such, Hankook’s Ventus Race tyre, with its extreme consistency and high grip level, is the ideal partner for the young drivers.

**Manfred Sandbichler, Hankook Motorsport Director Europe:**“We are very enthusiastic about this new partnership with W Series and are looking forward to supporting this fascinating new race format to the best of our ability with the Ventus Race [tyre] and our know-how. One major reason for our involvement is the fact that W Series is exclusively for women. This is great, as it allows female drivers to develop in a professional environment within the motorsport scene, which is still male-dominated. However, we are not just thinking about the women in the cockpit, but also want to ensure that female mechanics, engineers and team managers get more opportunities in motorsport too.”

**Catherine Bond Muir, Chief Executive Officer W Series:** “Hankook is an exciting and innovative company, which, like the W Series, is always prepared to strike out in a new direction. For this reason, we are happy to have a partner like this on our side. We received a lot of interesting offers, but Hankook had by far the best overall package and will be fully committed to helping us offer women better opportunities in motorsport.”

**Dave Ryan, Racing Director W Series** “Hankook has an impressive global presence in motorsport and is the tyre partner of many racing series around the world, whether in touring cars, single-seaters, endurance racing or rallying. Furthermore, Hankook has been exclusive partner of the DTM, with which the W Series will share the bill, since 2011. Its high-tech products, know-how and global involvement in motorsport make Hankook the perfect partner for us. It will provide optimal support for the W Series, not only with its race tyres, but also its engineers and mechanics.”

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| **Contact:**  **Hankook Tire Europe GmbH |** Corporate Communications Europe/CIS **|** Siemensstr. 14, 63263 Neu-Isenburg **|** Germany | | | |
| **Anna Pasternak**  PR Manager  Tel.: +49 (0) 61 02 8149 – 173  a.pasternak@hankookreifen.de | **Yara Willems**  Public Relations  Tel.: +49 (0) 6102 8149 – 172  y.willems@hankookreifen.de |  |  |