**24H Series powered by Hankook kicks off with the 16th staging of the endurance classic in Dubai**

**As is tradition, this season’s 24H Series powered by Hankook gets underway this weekend with the 24-hour classic in Dubai, which also forms the opening event of the 2021 international endurance racing season. At 15:00 local time on 15th January, 54 cars from twelve manufacturers will line up at Dubai Autodrome, as over 250 drivers from 33 countries do battle for the prestigious victory and valuable points towards the overall standings in the GT and TCE divisions. Premium tyre maker Hankook took on the role of title sponsor and exclusive tyre supplier of the 24H series in 2014, since when it has provided all competitors with a consistently high quality for all car types, courtesy of the high-end Ventus Race tyre. The premium tyre maker’s preparations for the opening round of the 2021 season in Dubai started last November, when the slicks and wet tyres were loaded onto ships in containers and sent on the long voyage to Dubai.**

***Neu-Isenburg, Germany, 14.01.2021*** – As in previous years, the 16th edition of the endurance classic in the United Arab Emirates has proven to be a major logistical challenge for Hankook. Thousands of race tyres were loaded onto container ships and shipped to the port of Dubai, from where they were taken by truck to the racetrack in the Dubai Motorcity district. Manfred Sandbichler, Hankook Motorsport Director Europe: “Planning has to be perfect for overseas races like the one in Dubai, because you cannot correct anything later. In Europe, where the tyres are transported straight from the warehouse by truck, you have greater flexibility.”

The Ventus Race has been produced in various different sizes to fit all the models of car in the 24H Series. 30 mechanics work in the Hankook garages at Dubai Autodrome to fit the tyres onto the rims of the GT and TCE cars. “Safety takes top priority for us. The drivers must be able to rely on the Hankook race tyres in any conditions. We also place great importance on providing all the starters with the same consistently high quality with every set of tyres.”

The Hankook engineers record the tyre temperature, air pressure and camber. They analyse this data and support the race teams on-site with their accumulated knowledge. However, even the Hankook experts were powerless last January, when heavy rain caused the season-opener in Dubai to be suspended after seven hours. “We had torrential rain, I have never seen anything like it in the desert. The drivers did all they could on the Hankook wet tyre, but the pit lane and the start/finish straight were completely under water. You would have needed a boat, both at the circuit and in the city. Unfortunately, that is not something Hankook produces yet,” said Manfred Sandbichler.

The opening race in Dubai is followed by a further seven events in the 24H Series powered by Hankook. This season’s schedule for the renowned international endurance series comprises four 12-hour and four 24-hour races, which are held in seven countries on three continents. The calendar features iconic racetracks like Mugello and Portimão, which hosted Formula 1 races for the first time last year, as well as circuits that have hosted the pinnacle of motor racing for many years: Spa-Francorchamps, Barcelona and Hockenheim. It also includes the Coppa Florio race in Sicily.

Manfred Sandbichler: “The organiser, Creventic, has once again put together a great season, which reaches a worthy conclusion with the 24-hour race in Sebring in November. However, we are focussing on the opening round in Dubai, where we will provide all the teams and competitors with best support possible, courtesy of the usual high quality of our Hankook race tyre and a perfect service at the circuit. The trustful partnership with Creventic, which goes beyond pure business, plays an important role. We are able to manage many things quickly and amicably – something that is worth its weight in gold at major motorsport events.”

**About Hankook Tire**

Hankook Tire manufactures globally innovative, award winning radial tyres of proven superior quality for passenger cars, light trucks, SUVs, RVs, trucks, and buses as well as motorsports (circuit racing/rallies).

Aspiring to bring consumers the utmost excellence in product quality, technological excellence and driving satisfaction, Hankook Tire continuously invests in research and development maintaining five R&D centres and eight production facilities around the world. Bespoke tyre solutions for the European markets as well as European Original Equipment according to the requirements of leading premium car manufacturers, are developed in the company’s regional Technical Centre in Hanover/Germany. Production for the European region is taking place in the state-of-the-art manufacturing site in Rácalmás/Hungary which was inaugurated in June 2007 and is continuously being expanded. Currently around 3,000 employees produce up to 19 million tyres a year for passenger cars, SUVs and light trucks.

Hankook Tire’s European headquarters are located in Neu-Isenburg near Frankfurt am Main in Germany. The manufacturer operates further branches in Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, UK and Ukraine. Hankook products are sold directly through regional distributors in other local markets. Hankook Tire employs approximately 20,000 people worldwide and are selling their products in over 180 countries. Internationally leading car manufacturers rely on tyres made by Hankook for their original equipment. Approximately 34 percent of the company's global sales are generated within the European and CIS-Region. Hankook Tire has been represented in the renowned Dow Jones Sustainability Index World (DJSI World) since 2016.

For more information please visit [www.hankooktire-mediacenter.com](http://www.hankooktire-mediacenter.com) or [www.hankooktire.com](http://www.hankooktire.com)

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