**Extreme weather stops the Hankook FFF Racing Team**

**at its first 24h race**

**After the Hankook FFF Racing Team had made a perfect start to the 49th edition of the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring by securing first place in the second qualifying session on Friday, the weather prevented the team from mounting an attack on the lead as the race progressed. Strong winds that threatened to reach hurricane strength and heavy rainfall contributed to a not-at-fault collision involving the #63 Lamborghini Huracán GT3 EVO in the opening phase, and the car had to pit for some lengthy repairs. After remaining at a standstill for more than two hours, the team decided to use the remaining time for some intensive testing under racing conditions.**

***Nürburg, Germany, 06.06.2021*** – The Hankook FFF Racing Team could hardly have made a better start to the legendary 24-hour race at the Nürburgring. Under cloudy skies, Marco Mapelli took his seat in the cockpit of the #63 Lamborghini Huracán GT3 EVO in low temperatures. The Italian driver began the 24-hour marathon at exactly 15:30 on the high-end slick Hankook Ventus Race tyres. Mapelli made a very good start, using the optimum potential of the tyres and moving up from 19th on the grid to fifth position inside just 20 minutes, despite the difficult track conditions.

However, the advent of heavy rain on many sections of the 25.378-kilometre circuit in the Eifel put a stop to this fantastic chasing performance. Mapelli had to head for the pits to switch to the wet-weather variant of the Hankook Ventus Race. The increasingly heavy downpour and standing water on the track caused some chaotic scenes throughout the field. Cars were sliding off the circuit, spinning out and colliding. The Lamborghini Huracán GT3 EVO from the Hankook FFF Racing Team did not emerge unscathed from these events and the pit stop required to repair the damage lasted more than two hours. As so much time had been lost, the team decided not to mount a risky charge during the remainder of the race. Instead, they chose to use the time left to concentrate on intensive set-up testing with the four drivers, Marco Mapelli, Franck Perera, Mirko Bortolotti and Giacomo Altoè.

Manfred Sandbichler, Hankook Motorsport Director Europe: “That is racing. Everyone on the grid at this classic event knows that plenty can happen during a 24-hour race – especially in the Eifel. Starting the race with Marco Mapelli moving up to fifth after that unbelievable chasing performance was just superb. The car and tyres worked perfectly. Unfortunately, the weather scotched all that. It was absolutely the right decision to use the remainder of the race for testing after spending such a long time in the pits. We were able to make the best out of the situation.”

Mirko Bortolotti had already made his mark during Friday’s night-time qualifying session with the Lamborghini Huracán GT3 EVO. The Lamborghini works driver completed a lap of the combination of Nordschleife and Grand Prix circuit in 8:18.575 minutes to secure the best time of the day.

**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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