

MISSION H24

Press Release



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MissionH24 at the 90th 24 Hours of Le Mans Many kilometers covered in the races and a speed record!



MissionH24 and its race team H24Racing leave the week of the 90th 24 Hours of Le Mans after a programme that unfolded over five very hectic days. In the wake of the team's first outing in an international race at Imola during the round of the Michelin Le Mans Cup, H24Racing decided to go the whole hog at Le Mans and take part in the complete Road to Le Mans (two free practice sessions, two qualifying sessions and two 55-minute races) as well as trying to set a speed record on the big 24 Hours of Le Mans circuit. From Tuesday to Saturday, a comprehensive look back at this operation that marks a new step in the programme laying the groundwork for the arrival of the electric-hydrogen category at the 24 Hours of Le Mans.

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Tuesday 7th June

Since 2019, the ritual hasn't changed. On the Tuesday before the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the H24Racing Racing team, which arrived the previous evening with its trucks in the Maison Blanche paddock located in the heart of the circuit, set up its technical village. The most visible part was the 170 m² awning attached to the tractor that tows the racing cars under which mechanics and engineers worked on the prototypes in this temporary workshop.

This year just one car was present, the H24. The older car, the LMPH2G, was on show in the Village-Bulles ACO H2, a space in the heart of the public zone of the 24 Hours circuit that presented the Automobile Club de l'Ouest's wide-ranging commitments to energy transition using the hydrogen solution of which MissionH24 is a key component. A third vehicle, the LMPH2G showcar, was on display in the village in the huge TotalEnergies reception venue.

At the same moment, the TotalEnergies mobile hydrogen refueling station at the entry to the pit lane was started up. The H24, entered in the experimental vehicle category, would use it to refuel during free practice and qualifying as well as in the two races.

Wednesday 8th June

The day was filled by two main tasks, the first practice sessions for the Road to Le Mans and the speed record which H24Racing decided to set. The sport management of the Automobile Club de l'Ouest scheduled the attempt at exactly 13:35, 10 minutes after the end of the first free practice session. Stéphane Richelmi, the H24 driver, used the 60 minutes of this first outing on the Le Mans circuit to prepare the setup to achieve maximum speed during the record attempt. The technical team and the simulations carried out pinpointed the zone between Terre Rouge and the first chicane as being the most suitable sector of the track to achieve this. It quickly became very clear because of the worsening weather conditions that Richelmi would not have a warm-up lap or a second attempt. All the more so as delays had accumulated and the arrival of the authorisation to allow H24 to begin the attempt was taking a long time to come through. At 13:47, the green light was finally given on the radio. It was almost too late as rain was beginning to fall, but Stéphane set off. He knew that in 3.7 km, the distance that separated the pit lane from the zone where the speed would be recorded, he had to bring the tyres up to their working temperature and reach maximum speed in front of the timing cells. At 13:49, when no. 24 left the speed trap in which the speed had been recorded the control screens on the circuit showed 290,8 km/h. On the counter of his steering wheel he read 292,8 km/h. He continued to accelerate beyond the zone and just before braking for the first chicane the car gained an extra 2 km/h. At the trackside, the engineers monitored the functioning of the prototype thanks to the telemetry systems that read the same speeds. Smiles and sighs of relief after long minutes of tension! Running on slick tyres that had not yet attained their optimal working temperature on a circuit that was starting to be covered in a thin film of water is a challenge reserved for top-line drivers. Mission accomplished!

When everybody returned to the paddock in Maison Blanche the technical debrief dealt with the record pretty quickly. Everything went off without a hitch. The car exceeded 290 km/h in highly unfavourable conditions and everybody was happy. MissionH24 had once again written a new page in the history of motor sport. Now it was time to move on from this performance and tackle a more immediate reality - getting ready for the second free practice session for Road to Le Mans and preparing for the two 55-minute races. One aim supplants another. This is how it's been with MissionH24 since its launch in 2018.

In the afternoon, the second free practice session was devoted to preparation for qualifying and tests carried out at Michelin's request. The manufacturer had prepared a new tyre, the 53, and wanted to have Richelmi's feedback and that of the H24Racing team on its behavior. The number 53 represents the percentage of recycled sustainable material used in this high-performance tyre. After three laps Stéphane and the engineers gave Michelin a very positive report. Their 53 will very soon be able to replace the TMD 46 (level of sustainable material 46%), which equipped the car up till now. **Below: Stéphane Richelmi in his cockpit before the performance Copyright MissionH24_Paul "PHD" Davidson_The Pit Stop Magazine.**



Thursday 9th June

H24Racing was confronted by several new challenges on the track. At lunchtime for the spectators, the team had to do two 20-minute qualifying sessions separated by a 15-minute gap: from 12:10 to 12:30 and then from 12:45 to 13:05. And in the evening at 18:30 the car would take part in the first of the two races of Road to Le Mans.

Qualifying presented two difficulties: it had to be done within a very narrow window leaving little time to make major setup changes on the car. And no errors were allowed in either session. If on a normal circuit a car can do several timed laps in 20 minutes, the Le Mans circuit's 13,626 km reduces the exercise to a single fast lap, two maximum per session if they're strung together. So the team decided to set a base time and then allow Richelmi to really go for it on the second attempt. This programme was respected to the letter. The first qualifying session was basically a working one. The second was dedicated to taking a calculated risk. And at 13:05, despite the session being perturbed by numerous yellow flags Stéphane set a superb time of 4m 12.434s.

At 18:30, H24Racing tackled the race with the aim, not of out-and-out performance, but to carry out a programme based on refueling strategies. There too it was mission accomplished. H24 did its own race and pitted twice to refuel at the TotalEnergies hydrogen station. **Below: the H24 during a refueling at the TotalEnergies refueling station. Image Copyright MissionH24_Paul "PHD" Davidson_The Pit Stop Magazine.**



Friday 10th June

Friday is generally a day off during the race week. It's reserved for demonstrations. MissionH24 reserved some time slots to give guests their first track outings in the LMPH2G brought from the Village-Bulles ACO H2 for this purpose. After each guest completed his lap of the 24-Hours circuit, he got out of the prototype with his head full of images and he would remember the sensations that he had just experienced thanks to Richelmi for a long time! The last guest was the chief of the Energy Observer, Victorien Erussard. He came to live the week of the 90th 24 Hours of Le Mans immersed in the H24Racing team and this lap in the passenger's seat was a very intense moment for him. When he got out of the car this exceptional long-distance sailor's eyes sparkled with the desire to get back in and set off again for some more laps!

The President of GreenGT, Christophe Ricard, was not at the trackside with the guests for the runs. As co-president of the MissionH24 programme, he was invited with the other co-president, Pierre Fillon, President of the Automobile Club de l'Ouest, to the traditional press conference hosted by the latter on the Friday immediately before the 24 Hours. Invited up onto the stage Ricard together Fillon summed up the first four years of MissionH24's existence. They underlined the fantastic advances made by the programme at the service of electric-hydrogen mobility as well as the on-going work so that on the horizon of 2025, the 24 Hours of Le Mans will be able to host a category reserved for electric-hydrogen-powered vehicles. **Below: Victorien Erussard (left) and Stéphane Richelmi (right). Image Copyright MissionH24_Paul "PHD" Davidson_The Pit Stop Magazine.**



Saturday 11th June

Two radically different operations were on MissionH24's menu this Saturday, the day of the start of the 90th 24 Hours of Le Mans. From 11:20 to 12:15, the second race of the Road to Le Mans and then at 15:42, the Lap of Honour of the H24 alone on the track exactly 18 minutes before the competitors in the 24 Hours of Le Mans were unleashed. For the race, Richelmi, the H24 engineers and the TotalEnergies engineers decided to carry out splash 'n dash refuelling stops; in other words very short stops to refuel briefly to allow the car to rejoin without losing too much time. During the nine-lap race Richelmi stopped three times at the TotalEnergies station before receiving the chequered flag. Thus ended MissionH24 team's race week programme on the big Le Mans circuit. This Road to Le Mans week can best be summed up in a few figures: 43 laps of the big Le Mans circuit, 585,918 km covered in the practice sessions and races and 10 refuelling stops. Never had a MissionH24 prototype covered so many kilometres and carried out so many refuelling stops in so few days (more than double the distance covered at Imola).

Less than two hours later, all the members of the H24Racing team accompanied the H24, which slowly positioned itself at the head of the starting grid of the 90th edition of the 24 Hours of Le Mans. They all lined up behind it. The racing prototype of the MissionH24 programme welcomed its partners as well as the members of the teams lined up herringbone style behind it ready to begin the race. At exactly 15:42 Richelmi activated the hydrogen fuel cell in the H24 for a Lap of Honour which brought the curtain down on MissionH24's week at Le Mans in a blaze of glory! **Below: around the H24 on the starting grid of the 24 Hours of Le Mans (from left to right): Richard Mille, Président of Richard Mille Watches, Christophe Ricard, Président of GreenGT and co-President of MissionH24, Christian Kopp, Président and CEO of Plastic Omnium's Clean Energy Systems division; on the other side of the car: Florent Menegaux, Président of Michelin, Philippe Rosier, CEO of Symbio, Patrick Pouyanné, Président and CEO of TotalEnergies, Pierre Fillon, Président of the Automobile Club de l'Ouest and co-President of MissionH24, and Peter Kütemann, Président of Dietsmann. In front of the H24, its two drivers: Norman Nato (left) and Stéphane Richelmi (right). Image Copyright MissionH24_Paul "PHD" Davidson_The Pit Stop Magazine.**



Note on MISSIONH24 and H24RACING:

MissionH24 is a programme jointly developed by the Automobile Club de l'Ouest, organiser of the 24 Hours of Le Mans, and GreenGT specialist in high-power electric-hydrogen solutions, in particular in vehicle propulsion. MissionH24 is preparing for the introduction of a category reserved for electric-hydrogen prototypes beyond the horizon of the 2025 24 Hours of Le Mans. MissionH24 is jointly presided by Pierre Fillon, the president of the ACO, and Christophe Ricard, the president of GreenGT. MissionH24 has created its own race team H24 Racing managed by Jean-Michel Bouresche who is also in charge of MissionH24's operations department. The programme's innovations department is run by Bernard Niclot.

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