

MISSION H24

Press
Release

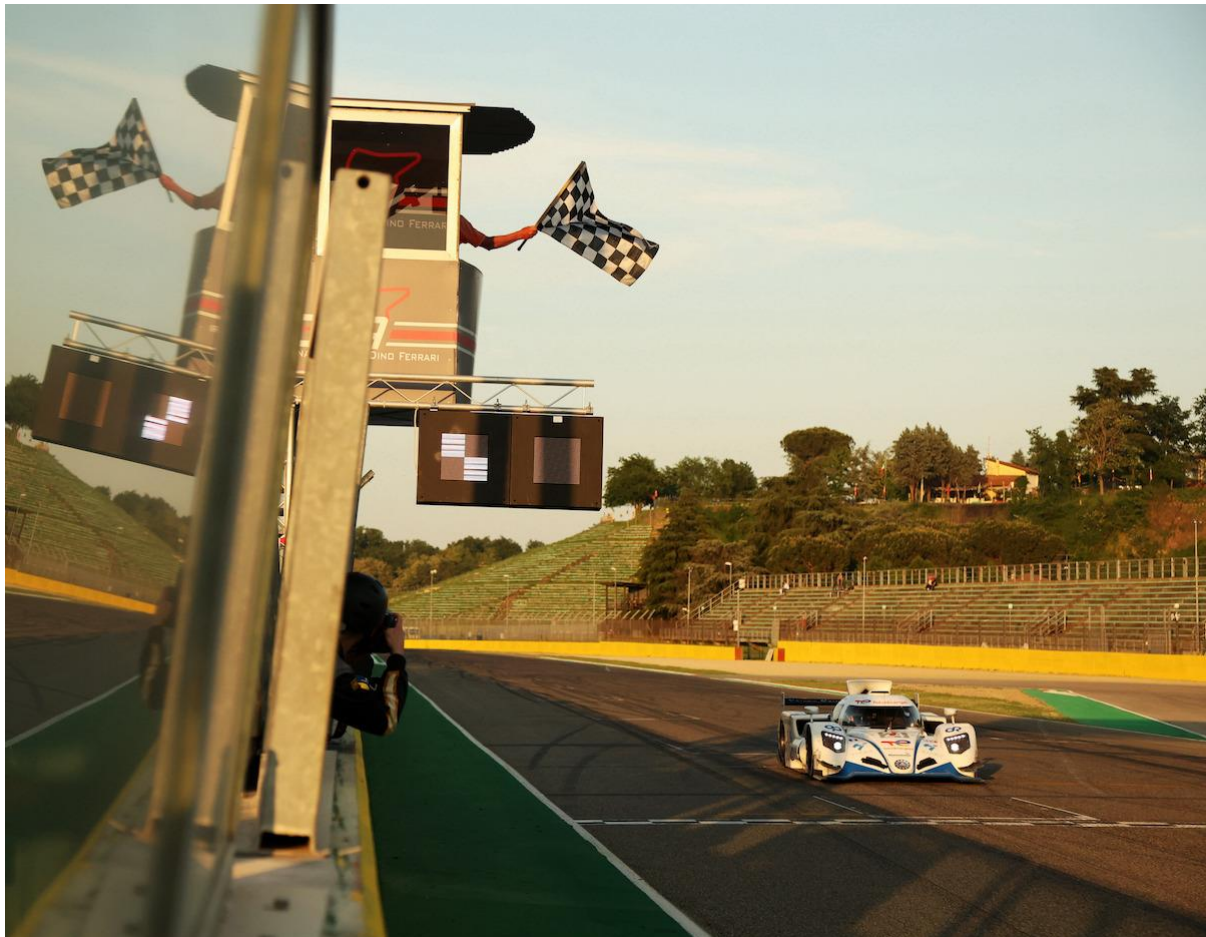


RICHARD MILLE



Imola, Autodromo Dino e Enzo Ferrari, Saturday 14th May 2022

A historic first race for MissionH24 at Imola!



19:46 Imola, Autodromo Dino e Enzo Ferrari, the H24 driven by Stéphane Richelmi takes the chequered flag in the Italian round of the Michelin Le Mans Cup - a historic first! Copyright MissionH24-JEP.

This Saturday evening on the Imola circuit, the H24 crossed the finishing line in its first race. This is a pivotal event as never before in the history of motor sport has an electric-hydrogen-powered prototype taken part in an international endurance race. It is also a crucial milestone in the MissionH24 programme as important as the first shakedown of the programme's first prototype, the LMPH2G, on the Spa-Francorchamps circuit on 18th September 2018.

110 minutes racing, 38 laps, four hydrogen refuelling stops at the TotalEnergies station, these three figures tell the story of a historic event: The first participation, which turned out to be a complete success, of an electric-hydrogen-powered vehicle in an international endurance race, the Michelin Le Mans Cup.

A unique performance that validates the road travelled since 2018 by the women and men involved in the MissionH24 programme. And which finally concretises the project developed by its founders and leaders, the Automobile Club de l'Ouest and GreenGT which, accompanied by its partners, are working on the creation of a category reserved for hydrogen prototypes in the 2025 24 Hours of Le Mans. So crossing the finishing line today was a crucial step in the achievement of this ambition.

It was such a landmark performance that after the finish the organisers of the Michelin Le Mans Cup insisted that Stéphane Richelmi, the H24Racing team's driver, should stop his H24 at the foot of the podium alongside the cars of the winning crews of the Imola race. It was a symbol and drew a big round of expert applause from the competitors in the Series to salute a performance which, as everybody here this evening knows, adds a major building block to the edifice of energy transition in motor sport and beyond, in the field of mobility.

After free practice cut short by electronic issues solved by the technical team during the night of Thursday to Friday followed by a qualifying session perturbed by numerous yellow flags, on Saturday the team focused on the main objective of this Italian first: to see the finish of the event to gather the maximum amount of technical data on the behavior of the car in very high temperatures (it was over 35°C and the temperature of the asphalt on the track exceeded 50 C°)! It was a very stressful interlude for the men and even more so for the technology. But they rose to the challenge and overcame the difficulties of a race marked by several yellow flags and safety car deployments as well as neutralisations under full course yellows!

The H24Racing's team's next rendezvous is the heats of the Road to Le Mans taking place on the big Sarthe circuit during the 24 Hours of Le Mans week.

Pierre Fillon, president of the ACO and co-president of MissionH24:

"On this 14th May 2022 at Imola, a new page in motor sport has been written. An electric-hydrogen racing prototype the H24, the MissionH24 programme's prototype entered for the Michelin Le Mans Cup in the context of the European Le Mans Series, has started an international level endurance race. Above all, this important step marks the beginning of a new era thanks to the many pieces of information we were able to gather during our first full weekend's racing. For this milestone event I have to admit my impatience and also my patience. Like everybody involved in this project I really wanted to overcome the hurdle of the first race while remaining realistic. This first event in which we competed in the experimental category had a major objective: to rack up the kilometres on the track to gather precious data that are impossible to collect in testing. The H24 is now a fully-fledged racing car and is going to continue its experience at this level."

Jean-Michel Boursesche, MissionH24 Operations Manager & H24Racing Team Principal:

"Today's performance, namely to finish an international endurance race with an electric-hydrogen-powered prototype is a real achievement and a great reward for the whole team that has invested in the MissionH24 programme, in particular the members of the race team and our partners. Our aim was not to set the fastest laps, but go as far and for as long as possible, an aim we accomplished. One day to finish first, first you have to finish! We had to tackle very aggressive weather and track conditions for our fledgling technology, and we found solutions to overcome each of the obstacles that we had to face. This first event has been a really great experience. We still have a huge amount of work to do, but the signal we sent out today is a very strong one. The technical challenge is highly complex, but we've put the right basics in place and the H24 is showing us a potential that's constantly improving."

Bernard Niclot, MissionH24 Innovations manager:

"In any technological development programme nothing can replace racing. In its emotional dimension, of course, but also and above all for the incredible learning curve that it gives a team who, despite multiple private test sessions, will always discover when racing in the pack new and different obstacles and will have crucial information. This is why H24's first race was so eagerly-awaited. More important than the lap times, what really mattered to us were the reactions of the car, of its fundamental elements, the tyres and even those of the team itself in racing conditions. A period of intense work is now beginning: the analysis and interpretation of all the data. After the homologation of the car and the first race, the H24Racing's calendar is now dedicated to a forthcoming major rendezvous, the Road to Le Mans."

Stéphane Richelmi, driver of the H24

"We've never covered so much distance or run for so long. And to do so today in such difficult circuit conditions is a remarkable performance. Both on and off the track, the team did a really enormous job. First of all in solving the new technical issues that we experienced in free practice, which meant that they had to work long after sunset and then adapting our strategy to the incidents of a very fragmented race. The succession of neutralisations due to several offs and collisions quickly made the refuelling stops and tyre changes that we'd planned completely inapplicable. But we showed a degree of reactivity well above average. I can't wait to tackle our next challenge: the two heats of the Road to Le Mans on the big 24 Hours circuit!"

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 in 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 H24Racing 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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