

MISSION H24

Press Release



RICHARD MILLE



Le Mans, Wednesday 8th June 2022

MissionH24: 290,8 km/h, speed record on Les Hunaudières!



Today, Wednesday 8th June at 13:49 the MissionH24 programme's electric-hydrogen prototype set a speed record of 290,8 km/h on the Les Hunaudières straight. The ACO's official timing system registered a speed of 290,8 km/h as the car passed the timing equipment before braking for the first chicane in track conditions that make its performance all the more significant. The future is moving fast for the pioneer project led by the ACO and GreenGT accompanied by their partners.

13:47 - When Stephane Richelmi set off in the H24 for the record attempt that MissionH24 decided to carry out this Wednesday on the Le Mans circuit, he knew that his attempt might not achieve its aims. A few minutes earlier, in the dying moments of the first practice session for the Road to Le Mans in which he was taking part in his electric-hydrogen prototype amid the other competitors with conventional propulsion, the weather suddenly took a turn for the worse. The sky grew dark and it began to rain on the big Le Mans circuit in the Sarthe at the worst possible moment for MissionH24.

The marshals' posts relayed the news to Race Control that it was starting to rain. H24 Racing had a quick meeting. "Do we go for it or not?" Looks were exchanged, another glance at the weather data and the information from the circuit. No room for emotion, just calculated audacity.

The points for controlling the instant speed chosen to capture the performance were installed between Tertre Rouge and the first chicane on Les Hunaudières. It wasn't raining in this zone or in the previous corners apart from just a few drops so the car could be sent out. But it had to be done immediately. Richelmi had to set out on a tour of the circuit that was like part of a qualifying lap, but without a warming-up lap as the zone in which the speed was being registered was 3,7 km from the start. So he would have a shorter distance to bring his slick tyres up to temperature as the sequence reserved for MissionH24 in the day's schedule allowed for only one attempt.

13:49 - At the moment when no. H24 left the speed trap in which the speed had been registered, the screens at the Le Mans circuit showed 290,8 km/h. But Richelmi's speedometer in the car read 292,8 km/h. He continued to accelerate beyond the timed section just before the braking zone for the first chicane and 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 very 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!

Stephane Richelmi, driver of the H24

"We took to the track at the only moment when we could still run on slicks and give this performance some meaning. This record, a speed of 290,8 km/h for the timing equipment in the test zone, and 292,8 km/h for us according to our onboard data is a really stunning performance. All the more so as I set out on tyres that were starting to cool down accentuated by the track that was covered by a film of water as it was starting to rain. An extra lap with warmer tyres that would be quicker and we'd have broken the 300 km/h barrier. We'll do that next time at Le Mans!"

Meet The Team!
Come and visit H24Racing in the paddock of Maison Blanche. Free of access!

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 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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