



News Release

Stage Set For Terrific Opening To 2017 WeatherTech Championship Season With 55 Cars Ready For 55th Rolex 24 At Daytona

BMW Endurance Challenge Kicks Off Landmark Weekend With 40 Entries

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (Jan. 18, 2017) – The eyes of the motorsports world will be affixed on Daytona International Speedway from Jan. 26-29, as competitors from all corners of the world and a variety of racing disciplines convene for the 55th Rolex 24 At Daytona – the season-opening race of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship on Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 28 and 29 – as well as the four-hour BMW Endurance Challenge for the IMSA Continental Tire SportsCar Challenge on Friday, Jan. 27.

International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) officials today release entry lists for both events. The Rolex 24 will see 55 competitors for the race's 55th running, a coincidental parallel occurring for the third year in a row, beginning when the 53rd running of the event featured 53 entries back in 2014. Coverage begins Saturday, Jan. 28 on FOX at 2 p.m. ET, with flag-to flag-coverage available via FOX Sports GO with FS1 authentication.

Twelve cars make up the Prototype class ranks, with Daytona Prototype international (DPi) entrants from Cadillac, Mazda and Nissan joined by a host of global LM P2 spec cars. Defending overall winner Tequila Patrón ESM will kick off its return to full season IMSA competition, taking on what is perhaps the strongest collection of driver lineups in recent history and highlighted by marquee drivers such as four-time Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series champion Jeff Gordon and IndyCar star James Hinchcliffe.

Eleven factory efforts will battle for glory in GT Le Mans (GTLM), with reigning class champion Corvette Racing returning after an exhilarating 1-2 finish in the 2016 Rolex 24. Ford Chip Ganassi Racing brings four of its breathtaking Ford GTs to the fight, as Porsche fields a pair of all-new 911 RSRs and Ferrari returns with a single entry. BMW is entering a pair of cars, one of which being the first BMW Art Car to ever race in the Rolex 24.

The largest class of the field, GT Daytona (GTD), features 27 GT3 spec race cars from nine premium automotive manufacturers, including series newcomers Acura, Lexus and Mercedes. Prototype Challenge kicks off its final season in the WeatherTech Championship with five ORECA FLM09s taking to the track.

The racing action will kick off, however, on Friday with the BMW Endurance Challenge, the first of two new four-hour enduros for the Continental Tire Challenge. The race will feature 40 cars from two classes tearing around the high banks of the World Center of Racing.

The Grand Sport (GS) class welcomes global GT4 spec cars to its ranks for 2017, with 20 cars ready to race. Manufacturers include class regulars Aston Martin, Ford and Porsche, joined by newcomer McLaren. Also featuring 20 entries, Street Tuner (ST) includes a healthy mix of cars from Audi, BMW, Mazda, MINI, Nissan and Porsche.

The BMW Endurance Challenge will stream live on IMSA.com at 12:15 p.m. ET on Jan. 27, with a telecast scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 11 at 11:30 a.m. ET on FS1.

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