Beat: Automobiles

LIVE from 24H DU MANS - Mythique, Magique, Unique

LE MAN, 18-19 June 2016

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USPA NEWS - The 24 Hours of Le Mans is the world's oldest active sports car race in endurance racing, held annually since 1923 near the town of Le Mans, France. This year it was on 18-19 June 2016 at Le Mans. It is one of the most prestigious automobile races in the world and is often called the...

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The race is organized by the 'Automobile Club de l'Ouest' and runs on the Circuit de la Sarthe. Since 2012, the 24 Hours of Le Mans has been a part of the FIA World Endurance Championship. At a time when Grand Prix racing was the dominant form of motorsport throughout Europe, Le Mans was designed to present a different test. Instead of focusing on the ability of a car company to build the fastest machines, the 24 Hours of Le Mans would instead concentrate on the ability of manufacturers to build sporty yet reliable cars. This encouraged innovation in producing reliable and fuel-efficient vehicles.

THE SESSIONS TIMETABLE :

- Free Practicce (Essais Libres et Qualificatifs) : Friday June 15 at 4.00 pm (4 hours)
- Qualification 1 (Essais Qualificatifs) on Friday June 15 at 10.00 pm (2 hours)
- Qualification 2 (Suite des Essais Qualificatifs) on Thursday June 16 at 7.00 pm (2 hours) and followed by Qualifications 3 at 10.00 pm (2 hours)
- Warm Up on D Day (Jour J) on Saturday June 18 at 9.00 am (45 minutes)
- Race (Le Grand Départ) on Saturday June 18 at 3.00 pm (24 Hours)

THE RACE HAS THIS YEAR + 60 COMPETITORS

Although all cars compete at the same time, there are separate classes. A prize is awarded to the winner of each class, and to the overall winner. The number of classes has varied over the years, but there are now four. Custom-built Le Mans Prototypes (LMP) are the top two classes, LMP1 and LMP2, divided by speed, weight, and power output. From 2011, the next two classes are production-based grand tourer (GT) classes, GT Endurance Pro and GT Endurance AM. Both of these classes utilize the LM GTE, or 'Le Mans Grand Touring Endurance' regulations. Although the top class is the most likely to be the overall winner, lower classes have won on occasion due to better reliability.

There are various long-standing traditions at Le Mans, including the waving of the French tricolor to start the race. Le Mans was the venue for the first known instance of a winning driver celebrating by spraying champagne instead of drinking it. The first race was held on 26 and 27 May 1923 and has since been run annually in June with exceptions in 1956, when the race was held in July, and 1968, when it was held in September due to nationwide political turmoil in May. The race has been cancelled ten times.

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