

NEW PIRELLI P ZERO RA WRC HA ASPHALT TYRE MAKES ITS DEBUT IN SPAIN

- **Pirelli's latest hard compound asphalt tyre makes its debut in Spain, with a view to the 2022 season**
- **Reinforced shoulder alongside consistent performance, with the new hard compound as the main choice**
- **The newest tyre from Pirelli has been developed using asphalt experience gained in Croatia and Belgium**

Milan, October 12, 2021 – The World Rally Championship heads to the fastest asphalt of the year for the penultimate round on the calendar, the Catalunya Rally, with a brand new Pirelli tyre. Using the lessons learned from the two pure asphalt events in Croatia and Belgium this year, the new P Zero RA WRC HA hard compound has been developed as the latest evolution of Pirelli's asphalt product, with a view to the next generation of hybrid cars, having been tested by the teams in Spain recently before making its debut this weekend. The new tyres feature an innovative construction, especially on the shoulder, which has become stronger with greater resistance to impacts compared to its predecessor. Thanks as well to the support from all the teams, the development programme has been brought forward, but with the renowned performance and driveability of Pirelli's P Zero remaining unaltered.

The Pirelli tyres in Spain

P Zero RA WRC: Pirelli's asphalt tyre is available in two compounds: the brand-new hard compound tyre (P Zero RA WRC HA) will be the main choice in Spain, specifically aimed at longer stages run in dry conditions with higher temperatures. The soft tyre is also available as the option choice, for mixed dry and damp conditions, as well as cooler and more slippery stages.

P Zero RA RC2: These tyres are for the less powerful Rally 2 cars, with two choices available: hard compound (RA5) for dry conditions as well as soft compound (RA7+) for mixed or damp conditions. These tyres have many elements in common with the P Zero RA WRC for the top cars. Cinturato RWB: A dedicated rain tyre used by all categories of four-wheel drive cars for extreme wet conditions on asphalt roads, with a specific tread pattern that's particularly effective at clearing standing water to reduce aquaplaning.

Pirelli quote

Terenzio Testoni, rally activity manager: "Catalunya is one of the toughest events of the year with perhaps the toughest asphalt to master. It's a rapid event with plenty of fast corners – as well as traction and braking – which takes a lot out of the tyres. On top of that there's an additional challenge from what are normally quite high ambient temperatures as well as some abrasive surfaces: although the majority of the roads are smooth. Our latest evolution, the P Zero RA WRC HA tyre, has been designed to give the drivers a good feeling of consistency and reliability, which is particularly important on a rally like this one, when tyre strategy can

play a key role in the outcome. A smooth and studied approach tends to pay off in Spain, as a scrappy driving style can cost vital seconds. There are also some new and demanding stages that are going to be interesting to learn this year as Spain returns to an all-asphalt format. This year's Junior WRC concludes in Spain, which is a category vital to Pirelli's sporting philosophy of supporting young drivers as they make their way up the ladder."

Pirelli in numbers

Pirelli will bring around 3200 tyres to Sardinia, of which 900 will be for the top class of World Rally Cars.

For the rally, each car has an allocation of:

- 32 P Zero RA WRC HA (hard)
- 24 P Zero RA WRC (soft)
- 12 Cinturato RWB

Pirelli will also supply 2000 tyres to the other four-wheel drive cars in the event, including the WRC2 and WRC3 competitors. They each have at their disposal:

- 30 P Zero RA5 (hard)
- 22 P Zero RA7+ (soft)
- 12 Cinturato RWB

The Junior WRC, supplied by Pirelli since 2018, uses the Ford Fiesta Rally4 exclusively, and Pirelli will bring 230 tyres for them. The young drivers fighting for the title on the final round will each have:

- 18 P Zero RA5 (hard)
- 8 Zero RA7+ (soft)
- 12 Cinturato RWB

Why tyre strategy matters

The twisty public roads used for the Catalunya Rally generally feature smooth asphalt with some abrasive sections too, so a well-judged tyre strategy along with a neat driving style is important. Tyre wear is an important factor, especially if ambient temperatures are high. The drivers tend to 'cut' the corners, so this can drag stones and gravel onto the road, making the stages dirtier as more cars pass through them.

What to look out for

There's a different look to Spain this year, as after a decade of hosting a mixed-surface event, the rally is back to being one hundred per cent asphalt. Many of the stages are new, especially on Friday's opening leg, which represents the shortest but perhaps the trickiest day of action, with plenty of hairpins and downhill sections. Saturday is the longest day, ending in Salou, while Sunday's opening stages will be run in darkness. It's a crucial event for the championship, with Sebastien Ogier and Toyota able to wrap up the drivers' and manufacturers'

championships respectively. Nils Solans makes his debut in a Hyundai World Rally Car, while his brother Jan Solans (the 2019 Junior champion) drives a Citroen C3 in the RC2 class. Other local drivers to look out for include Spanish champion Pepe Lopez in a Skoda Fabia Evo.

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