



Shell Bitumen

THE BUGATTI CIRCUIT OF LE MANS STARTS AFRESH



PROJECT: BUGATTI CIRCUIT OF LE MANS

CITY/REGION: Le Mans, Pays de la Loire

COUNTRY: France



Above: The Bugatti Circuit of Le Mans fully resurfaced with Shell Cariphalte Racetrack. Image: F. Delauney

KEY FACTS

Benefits: ■ A binder capable of withstanding the demanding conditions of Moto GP races

Application: Racetrack

Product Family: Shell Cariphalte Racetrack (RT)

Client: Bugatti Circuit of Le Mans

Contractor: HRC (Subsidiary of Eurovia)

Introduction

Situated 5 km south of the city of Le Mans, the construction of the Bugatti Circuit began late in 1964 and was completed in April 1965. The circuit is 4.13km in length and features 8 turns, having been modified several times since its opening.

The circuit is capable of hosting up to 100,000 spectators and is the venue for numerous events, with over 330 days of activity per year, making it one of the busiest circuits in Europe. It is famous for hosting MotoGP races, where speed can reach in excess of 300km/h and average just over 160km/h.

About the Project

After over 12 years of heavy use, the Bugatti Circuit of Le Mans has undergone renovation to replace its top layer of asphalt. Despite the excellent structure of the existing track, the renovation was necessary because of the performance needs of the various races it hosts. Motorcycles in particular, are sensitive to the change of adhesion offered by the track throughout its lifetime.

During the renovation carried out by HRC (a subsidiary of Eurovia) from the 10th to 27th of October 2016, more than 50,000 m² of asphalt was removed and replaced. The new track will provide a better grip and a more uniform surface – crucial factors that enhance the performance of racers in competitions such as the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the Grand Prix of France Moto, the European Championship of trucks and other French competitions.

The Le Mans circuit is renowned for being a testing laboratory for next generation vehicles like the prototypes that participate in the 24 Hours of Le Mans race.

“The last time the Bugatti Circuit was completely refurbished was in 2004. The track was slightly worn, and some parts of the circuit caused discomfort to some riders. This renovation project was entrusted to the expertise of the Syndicat Mixte of the 24 Hours of Le Mans circuit. In addition to supplying its bitumen expertise, Shell is also the official fuel supplier of the 24 Hours of Le Mans, as well as for the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) and the European Le Mans Series (ELMS). This new bitumen is likely to improve the performance and safety of motorcycles and cars on the track, thus contributing to more exciting races here in Le Mans.”

Pierre Fillon, President of the Automobile Club de l'Ouest (ACO)

“The ability of the track to provide excellent grip in all weather conditions is of paramount importance. This is why we decided to use Shell Cariphalte Racetrack. It provides good adhesion to the aggregates, and offers high drainage for the circuit

Thanks to Shell we were able to develop an asphalt mix that meets our strict specifications, as well as the requirements of drivers and our high standards as the organizers of the 24 Hours of Le Mans race. Aside from Shell's high-performance bitumen solution, we also used a specific type of aggregate which has very high abrasiveness in order to meet the specifications set by tyre manufacturers”

Ghislain Robert, Technical Director of the Automobile Club de l'Ouest (ACO)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Please contact your Shell Bitumen representative or visit: www.shell.com/bitumen