



## Ford Aiming High for World Endurance Championship Race at Spa

- Ford Chip Ganassi Racing competing for second FIA World Endurance Championship win of the season at Spa, Belgium, following season-opening victory at Silverstone, UK
- Second round of the FIA World Endurance Championship takes place on Saturday, May 6, at fast-flowing Spa circuit

**GREATWORTH, UK, April 28, 2017** – The Ford Chip Ganassi Racing team travels to Spa, Belgium, next week for the second round of the 2017 FIA World Endurance Championship, leading both the Drivers' and Manufacturers' World Championships following a season-opening victory for the #67 Ford GT and fourth-place finish for the #66 Ford GT at Silverstone, UK.

The Ford team is aiming to maintain its momentum as all of the teams start to turn their attention to the Le Mans 24 Hours race just over a month after Spa, and the Belgian round is seen as the final rehearsal for the biggest race of the season.

Fast-flowing Spa is the perfect place to prepare for Le Mans as it features daunting corners such as the Eau Rouge and Raidillon combination that fires the cars up a steep hill, and the white-knuckle Blanchimont – a long left-hander taken at high speed.

“We had a very good start to our championship campaign at Silverstone, which was the result of a lot of hard work from all of the team,” said George Howard-Chappell, WEC Team Principal. “Spa provides its own unique challenges but we were strong there last year and it is a good circuit for the Ford GT. We need to keep our focus as we get closer to Le Mans and make sure everything in the team and with the cars is working perfectly.”

Fresh from their win at Silverstone, Harry Tincknell (GB), Andy Priaulx (GB) and Pipo Derani (BRA) are hoping that the #67 Ford GT will again be the first GTE car to pass the chequered flag.

“We’re on a high after winning the opening race of the season,” said Tincknell. “Spa was the scene of our first WEC podium last year and I am confident that if everything goes to plan we have a good chance of winning. We showed really good pace at Silverstone and Spa is another track with lots of medium and high speed corners with big braking zones that suit the Ford GT. The track is also as close as you can get to Le Mans and we know the GT is strong around there.”

In the #66 Ford GT, Stefan Mücke (GER), Olivier Pla (FRA) and Billy Johnson (USA) are keen to take their first win, and are hoping their result at Spa will be very different to last season’s Belgian race.

“We have the car and the team to win at Spa,” said Pla. “Our car is at its best at circuits with fast corners where you can really keep the speed up, so Spa will suit us. Last year’s race ended badly for us as a puncture caused Stefan (Mücke) to crash at Eau Rouge. We just

need to have a clean race. At Silverstone we were fast and we had the lead but the Safety Car turned around our fortunes. What we need is a smooth weekend with no dramas.”

Harry Tincknell is also hoping that fate will be on his side at Spa. The British driver has competed in three previous WEC races at the circuit, finishing second, first, then second last year. Tincknell hopes the trend will continue and deliver a first-place finish this time.

“I think we’re going to win this championship with consistency, so we need to score good points again at Spa,” said Tincknell. “The podium is the minimum target but I think in this championship and with Balance of Performance (performance restrictions designed to deliver close racing) that some races will suit you and some won’t. This is definitely a Ford circuit and therefore we really need to maximise points here. My target is the win like at Silverstone.”

The WEC 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps is on Saturday, May 6 at 14:30 CET.

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#### **About Ford Motor Company**

*Ford Motor Company is a global automotive and mobility company based in Dearborn, Michigan. With about 201,000 employees and 62 plants worldwide, the company’s core business includes designing, manufacturing, marketing and servicing a full line of Ford cars, trucks and SUVs, as well as Lincoln luxury vehicles. To expand its business model, Ford is aggressively pursuing emerging opportunities with investments in electrification, autonomy and mobility. Ford provides financial services through Ford Motor Credit Company. For more information regarding Ford and its products and services, please visit [www.corporate.ford.com](http://www.corporate.ford.com).*

***Ford of Europe** is responsible for producing, selling and servicing Ford brand vehicles in 50 individual markets and employs approximately 52,000 employees at its wholly owned facilities and approximately 68,000 people when joint ventures and unconsolidated businesses are included. In addition to Ford Motor Credit Company, Ford Europe operations include Ford Customer Service Division and 24 manufacturing facilities (16 wholly owned or consolidated joint venture facilities and 8 unconsolidated joint venture facilities). The first Ford cars were shipped to Europe in 1903 – the same year Ford Motor Company was founded. European production started in 1911.*

#### **About Chip Ganassi Racing Teams**

*Chip Ganassi has been a fixture in the auto racing industry for over 25 years and is considered one of the most successful as well as innovative owners the sport has anywhere in the world. Today his teams include four cars in the Verizon IndyCar Series, two cars in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series, two cars in the NASCAR XFINITY Series, two factory Ford GT’s in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, two factory Ford GT’s in the FIA World Endurance Championship and two Supercars in Red Bull Global Rallycross. Overall his teams have 18 championships and over 170 victories, including four Indianapolis 500s, a Daytona 500, a Brickyard 400, a Le Mans 24 Hours, six Rolex 24 At Daytonas and the 12 Hours of Sebring. Ganassi boasts state-of-the-art race shop facilities in Indianapolis and Concord, N.C., with a corporate office in Pittsburgh, Penn. For more information log onto: [www.chipganassiracing.com](http://www.chipganassiracing.com)*

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