



Ford GT thunder

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The Ford WEC team is based at Greatworth, just a few miles from the Silverstone circuit where the first round of the 2017 WEC series kicked off. Ford's plan in 2017 is of course to keep the Blue Oval flag flying high, and if the first two races of the season are anything to go by, the Ford GT thunder will just keep rumbling on.



#67, Ford GT, Ford Chip Ganassi Team UK, driven by Marino Franchitti, Andy Priaulx, Harry Tincknell at the FIA WEC 6-Hours of Nurburgring, 22/07/2016,

In 2016, Ford's first full season back in action with their new GT, the team scooped the big one when they won the Le Mans GTE Pro class. Although this victory carried double points, Ford finished third in the GT Manufacturers' Championship that year. Dave Pericak, Ford Performance global director, put it this way, "With a respectable first season behind us, we are in great shape to start the second WEC season at Silverstone. The GTE Pro class is going to be intense, but we have the team ready for battle. We know the competition has been preparing as well, so get ready for some amazing racing."



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#66, Ford GT, Ford Chip Ganassi Team UK, driven by Stefan Mucke and Olivier Pla in the 6-Hours of Bahrain, 17/11/2016,

If 2016 was treated as a year of learning for the Blue Oval team, they started 2017 with purpose when they scored a victory at the season's opening race at Silverstone. Andy Priaulx, Harry Tincknell and Pipo Derani converted their pole position into a hard-fought victory in the #67, but their #66 sister car was wrong-footed by a safety car session and finished fourth.



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#66, Ford GT, Ford Chip Ganassi Team UK, driven by Stefan Mucke, Olivier Pla, Billy Johnson during the FIA WEC 6-Hours of Silverstone 2017 on 14.04.2017

The Spa 6-Hour race was the scene of Ford's first podium finish in 2016, and they went on to victory the following month at Le Mans that year. This year, the two Fords finished third and fourth in class, with the first four class finishers being on the same final lap, so the competition in the GTE Pro class was intense.



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#67, Ford Chip Ganassi Team UK, Ford GT, Harry Tincknell, Luis Felipe Derani, driven by Andy Priaulx, FIA WEC 2017 6 Hours of Silverstone, Silverstone International Circuit, 16/04/2017,

The Ford Chip Ganassi Racing team will run its full Le Mans squads in the WEC this year. As mentioned, Billy Johnson, Stefan Mücke and Olivier Pla will be in the #66 Ford GT for the first three races of the season, while Luis Felipe 'Pipo' Derani, Andy Priaulx and Harry Tincknell are in the #67 Ford GT. The winners of the Rolex 24 At Daytona, Joey Hand, Dirk Müller and Sébastien Bourdais will defend their 2016 Le Mans victory in the #68 Ford GT. Ryan Briscoe, Richard Westbrook and Scott Dixon will be piloting the #69 Ford GT.



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#67, Ford Chip Ganassi Team UK, Ford GT, driven by Andy Priaulx, Harry Tincknell, Luis Felipe Derani at WEC 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps 2017, Spa-Francorchamps race circuit, on 04.05.2017

“We have a clear goal for 2017 and that is to win the championship,” said Stefan Mücke. “A good result at Le Mans is important for that but really every race is important. I love racing in the WEC. Of course, we have that amazing, intense week at Le Mans but we also get to race at some fantastic tracks all over the world.”



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#67, Ford Chip Ganassi Team UK, Ford GT, driven by, Andy Priaulx, Harry Tincknell, Luis Felipe Derani, FIA WEC 6hrs of Spa 2017, 04/05/2017,

“We’ve had a busy winter as we competed at Daytona and Sebring, alongside our regular test and development programme,” said George Howard-Chappell, WEC Team Principal. “To most the Ford GT will look the same as it did in 2016 as we are tied by the regulations on what we can and can’t change. As you can imagine though with any professional race team, whatever we can change has been changed. The results started to come for us in the latter part of last season with the wins at Fuji and Shanghai. I’m expecting the racing to be as close as ever this year so we will all have to fight for every inch of track.”



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#66, Ford Chip Ganassi Team UK, Ford GT, driven by Stefan Mucke, Olivier Pla, Billy Johnson at WEC 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps 2017, Spa-Francorchamps race circuit, on 04.05.2017

Nothing in racing is ever certain, but one thing you can be sure of is that with four Ford GTs on the track at this year's Le Mans race, there is going to be at least one on the podium after 24 hours...maybe more!! The Ford GT thunder will continue to rumble, so stay tuned for all the action...

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Images by: Virtual Motorpix/Glen Smale & John Mountney

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