

The Le Mans circuit is on the move

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Le Mans 24 Hours, 13 June 2015: The start of the race sees the lead LMP1 cars shooting ahead of the rest of the field, which is still making its way through the Ford Chicane. The starter can be seen waving the flag at the end of the Rolex platform

Every year the Le Mans 24-Hours circuit undergoes some changes, further development and maintenance works. To say that the Le Mans circuit is on the move is perhaps stretching the point slightly, but you may want to bring your calculator with you next time you are at the famous French circuit.

After the recent works aimed at making the Porsche corners safer and improving the drainage under the track, 2018 will see a track modification with the start line being moved 145 metres further up the pit straight. This measure will be applied to all the events for cars and bikes on both the Bugatti circuit as well as the Le Mans 24-Hours layout. In reality, this means that the national flag dropped by the starter of the Le Mans 24-Hours will be waved over the pole position car 145 metres further up the track than before. This is a change which, at the moment of the flying start, will enable all the cars to be lined up on the pit straight when the start is about to be given, thus avoiding the situation of having cars still negotiating the Ford chicanes when the pack is finally unleashed.



Le Mans 24 Hour, 17 June 2017: The lead LMP1 cars enter Turn 1 at the Dunlop Curve while the tail end of the field is still making its way through the Ford Chicane

For events with standing starts such as the French Motorbike Grand Prix, this modification

means that all the bikes will be lined up on the straight, giving the spectators in the grandstands opposite the pits a view of the whole field.

But the finishing line's position won't change! Thus, to calculate the distance covered by the cars/bikes, spectators will have to do the following calculation - subtract 145 metres from the number of laps covered multiplied by the length of the circuit in question.



Le Mans 24 Hour, 18/19 June 2016: The Rolex podium will still be used to celebrate the winners of the race

So, next time you are packing your gear for the Le Mans 24 Hour race, remember before you leave home to squeeze your calculator in next to the sun cream!

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