



Media Information  
BMW Motorrad Motorsport  
26<sup>th</sup> October 2019

## **Strong debut season for the BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team comes to a difficult conclusion in Qatar.**

- **The 2019 FIM Superbike World Championship comes to a close at the ‘Losail International Circuit’ in Doha.**
- **Two twelfth-place finishes for Tom Sykes; Markus Reiterberger takes positions 14 and 15.**
- **Marc Bongers: “Overall, we feel positive about how the season went.”**

**Doha. The debut season for the BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team and the new BMW S 1000 RR in the FIM Superbike World Championship (WorldSBK) has come to an end. On Saturday, the two final races of the year took place at the ‘Losail International Circuit’, near Doha (QAT). The finale did not go quite according to plan. Tom Sykes (GBR) recorded two twelfth-place finishes, while his team-mate Markus Reiterberger (GER) reached 15<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> positions.**

Reiterberger’s side of the garage had high hopes for another successful day after Saturday’s afternoon warm-up session. Reiterberger was in the top three for a long time with his RR and threatened to chalk up a fastest lap before finishing the session in fourth place. However, the tables turned in the Superpole race, which started at 16:00 local time. Sykes began from fourth place but fell back through the field as the race progressed and crossed the line in twelfth position. Reiterberger suffered a similar fate, finishing 15<sup>th</sup> after starting from ninth place. This meant that Sykes began the main race on Saturday evening from tenth, with Reiterberger in eleventh place.

Sykes and Reiterberger both enjoyed good starts. Sykes was in ninth place for some time but lost several positions as the race progressed before crossing the line in twelfth place. Reiterberger had to avoid another rider on the first turn and fell some way back as a result. He was, however, able to make up some positions in the closing phase, finishing the race in 14<sup>th</sup> place.



Overall, it was a positive debut season for the BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team. The team claimed four podiums, one pole position and numerous top six finishes. Sykes finished the season eighth in the riders' standings (223 points). Reiterberger claimed 14<sup>th</sup> place overall (83 points).

As one season ends, the next one begins when on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November, a press conference at the EICMA motorcycle show in Milan (ITA) will focus on the involvement of BMW Motorrad Motorsport in the WorldSBK. The main subjects will be a look back at the 2019 season and a preview of 2020. More details to follow.

## **Quotes after race two at Doha.**

**Marc Bongers, BMW Motorrad Motorsport Director:** "Of course, that was not quite how we had hoped to round off the season. However, we continue to struggle to adapt to changing conditions, as we saw in these fluctuating temperatures. That is one of the areas that we will have to work on. We were able to collect more valuable information during this weekend in Qatar, which we will be able to use during the winter break as we prepare for next season. Overall, we feel positive about how it went. From the start, we viewed 2019 as a year for learning and we did record four podiums, one pole position and many top six finishes. That is something to be pleased about and we can build on this next season. I would like to thank the entire BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team and our riders Tom Sykes and Markus Reiterberger. Everyone has been working hard since the project got going. No-one gave up after any setbacks and that ensured that this was a successful debut season. Thanks to everyone for that. Markus is now bidding farewell to the team – I would like to wish him all the best for the future."

**Shaun Muir, Team Principal BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team:** "It was a tough day today. We didn't make much progress from the first day on track on Thursday and has been a difficult weekend ever since. We felt we had some momentum from Magny Cours going into Argentina, which didn't turn out positively, and that has followed us really into Qatar where we have been chasing a set-up. Markus on paper looked like he was having a good weekend, he had good pace in race one and into the Superpole race but unfortunately could not convert that into strong positions today. Tom couldn't find the balance nor momentum so sadly we are signing off in Qatar not where we hoped to be. However, on a whole we have



achieved our targets of 2019 in what has been a successful first development season so onwards and upwards for 2020.”

**Tom Sykes:** “It’s not the way I would have liked to end the season given the results that we have had previously. We have arrived at a circuit where you are in the corner for a long time which is an area on the bike that we need to work on, so overall a very disappointing weekend to end 2019. On the whole, the new project finishing eighth in the championship is relatively good considering there are six factory bikes from different manufacturers with a lot more experience. We have had some very strong showings, we have shown the potential of the BMW S 1000 RR and the relationship with the new team has worked well. Going into the winter I would like to think that the information the team gathered can be put into development and ultimately a better starting point for next season.”

**Markus Reiterberger:** “We did adjust the bike a little for the warm-up and the session went really well for me. I was in third place for a long time and finished the session in fourth place. That felt fantastic. However, the first turn in both races put paid to my hopes a bit, although I had started well both times. In the main race, I got trapped between two riders on turn one. I had to take evasive action, which forced me to go extremely wide and cost me a few places. After that, it was a pretty lonely race for me, but in the closing stages I did manage to overtake three riders and score some points in the end. At least had some renewed impetus on my final weekend with the BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team, which helps me to feel a bit better before the break. We had a great time and I would like to thank everyone for giving me this opportunity. I wish the project every success and I hope to be able to contribute something to it again in the future.”

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