



Media Information
BMW Motorrad Motorsport
1st March 2020

BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team experiences a difficult Sunday at the Phillip Island WorldSBK season opener.

- **FIM Superbike World Championship at Phillip Island: P6 for Tom Sykes in the Superpole Race.**
- **Tenth place for Sykes in race two.**
- **Eugene Laverty has to sit out the races due to concussion.**

Phillip Island. The first Sunday of the 2020 FIM World Superbike Championship (WorldSBK) at Phillip Island (AUS) did not go as planned for the BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team. Tom Sykes (GBR) finished the morning's Superpole Race in sixth position on his BMW S 1000 RR. In race two in the afternoon, he had to settle with tenth after a technical issue. His team-mate Eugene Laverty (IRL) unfortunately suffered a concussion in a crash in the morning's warm-up and was declared unfit to race after a check at the Medical Centre.

After setting a new lap record on his RR and securing his 50th WorldSBK pole position in Saturday's Superpole qualifying, Sykes also started Sunday's Superpole Race from first position on the grid. He finished the extremely closely fought ten lap sprint in sixth position, only 1.6 seconds behind the winner. This also meant P6 on the grid for race two in the afternoon. After the start Sykes was in the mix in the leading group but his efforts and the potential of the RR remained unrewarded as on lap five, a technical issue made him drop down to 12th place. After 22 laps of racing, he took the chequered flag in tenth place.

Quotes after race two on Phillip Island.

Marc Bongers, BMW Motorrad Motorsport Director: "It has been a disappointing day. Eugene felt extremely comfortable on the bike. So he maybe was a bit over enthusiastic and unfortunately he crashed while being on a very fast lap. The positive aspect, however, is the fact that he clearly has developed a good feeling for the bike. What happened is a pity, but we are glad that he did not sustain any



severe injuries apart from concussion. Tom started the morning's race from pole position. Here we could see that power is still an issue as we are still losing on the straight. Sixth place however was not bad, especially only 1.6 seconds behind the top. The field is extremely close together this year. In race two, he unfortunately suffered a minor technical issue that forced him to quickly restart the bike. It seems, however, that in this race we also could not have maintained the pace in the final stages so we focus on the combination of riding style, chassis and tyre durability. You have to see though that Phillip Island is a challenge in this regard and this could improve at the next races."

Shaun Muir, Team Principal BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team: "First of all, on Eugene's side I feel really disappointed for him because he certainly turned a corner this morning. He felt as though we had given him a good bike and unfortunately during this morning's warm up got caught out on a fast lap at T10 and crashed. The crash was a big impact crash and as a result he was left concussed and could not continue further in the two remaining races. To Eugene's own admission he was a little exuberant to crash but we don't hold that against him, he was trying his best and we are glad he is relatively okay and will be back for Qatar. Tom really struggled today. The Superpole Race I think was a fair reflection of his speed to get P6, but he was still lacking that top speed which hurts us here. Going into the final race from sixth on the grid, he got a good start and kept in the group but unfortunately had a technical issue mid pack and was lucky not to be collected. He then reset the bike and finished tenth to take a couple of points, but the damage had been done by then as the tyre was too worn to try and catch the front group. We will build on our qualifying and free practice pace which has always been top 6 and try to convert it into good race positions in Qatar."

Tom Sykes: "It's just been one of those weekends where we have been a bit unlucky. We had an unbelievable qualifying and the pace of the BMW S 1000 RR was really impressive and I felt very comfortable on the bike. In the Superpole Race, I felt really good. There were a few incidents on track which meant I lost around 1.6 seconds which coincidentally was the same gap to the leader at the end of the race, but this was a good step forward for us. Going into the final race, we stuck to our game plan, we got a good start and I just tried to preserve the tyre a little bit. But unfortunately had a little technical issue which lost us a bit of time. It was a disappointment but I tried my best, the team tried their best and we will continue to do so for Qatar."



Eugene Laverty: “Unfortunately I had a crash in warm-up and suffered concussion so the doctors did not allow me to race. I understand their decision, even if it is not easy to accept as a rider but ultimately it is the correct one. I am very disappointed with myself for the crash as the bike was fantastic. It was the first lap of warm-up, I should have been more tentative and I was on course to take first position. I’d needed to take my time and be calmer because I missed a big opportunity for the races today. I’m sorry to the team.”

Media Contact.

Benedikt Torka

Spokesperson BMW Motorrad Motorsport

Phone: +49 (0)151 – 601 32455

E-mail: benedikt.torka@bmw.de

Ingo Lehbrink

Spokesperson BMW Group Motorsport

Phone: +49 (0)176 – 203 40224

E-mail: ingo.lehbrink@bmw.de

Benjamin Titz

Head of BMW Group Design, Innovations & Motorsports Communications

Phone: +49 (0)179 – 743 80 88

E-mail: benjamin.titz@bmw.de

Media Website.

www.press.bmwgroup.com/global

BMW Motorrad Motorsport on the Web.

Website: www.bmw-motorrad-motorsport.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/bmwgroupsports

Facebook: www.facebook.com/bmwmotorradmotorsport