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Media Information

BMW Motorrad Motorsport

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Saturday at Donington Park: the BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team secures two front row positions and records two top-five finishes.

- **Michael van der Mark and Tom Sykes claim second and third places on their BMW M 1000 RRs in Superpole at Donington Park.**
- **Fourth position for Sykes and fifth for van der Mark in the first race on Saturday afternoon.**
- **Fourth round of the 2021 FIM Superbike World Championship.**

Donington Park. The BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team gave a strong performance to start off the fourth event of the season in the 2021 FIM Superbike World Championship (WorldSBK) at Donington Park (GBR). In Superpole on Saturday morning, Michael van der Mark (NED) and Tom Sykes (GBR) claimed second and third places on their BMW M 1000 RRs to secure spots on the front row of the grid. Both riders crossed the finish line in the top five in the afternoon's first race. Sykes was in fourth and van der Mark in fifth.

The weather at Donington Park took a typically British turn on Saturday morning. Rain set in for the second free practice session in the morning and the circuit was still moist for Superpole. That did not prevent van der Mark and Sykes from recording some impressive times to keep pace with the leaders, putting both BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team BMW M 1000 RRs on the front row of the grid.

The rain had stopped by the time the race started in the afternoon and the circuit was gradually drying. Van der Mark and Sykes were able to defend second and third positions after the start lights went out. They swapped places twice in the opening stage, before settling into third (van der Mark) and fourth (Sykes) until the halfway point of the race. Both were part of a group battling for the lead on lap twelve, but then van der Mark had light contact with Alex Lowes (GBR / Kawasaki), ran wide and fell back to sixth place. Sykes initially moved into third place before crossing the line in fourth, immediately ahead of fifth-placed van der Mark, after 23 laps.

Eugene Laverty (IRL), competing for the BMW satellite team RC Squadra Corse, secured 15th place on the grid in Superpole. Laverty had moved up to twelfth by the halfway point

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of the race. He then dropped down one place in the closing stage and took the chequered flag in 13th position. Jonas Folger (GER) from the BMW satellite team Bonovo MGM Racing endured a difficult Saturday. He started from 20th place and then problems when changing gear forced him to head for the pits and retire just before the end of the race.

Quotes after race one at Donington Park.

Marc Bongers, BMW Motorrad Motorsport Director: "Overall, we are very happy after an extremely difficult Misano weekend. At the same time, we need to keep our feet on the ground as there is still quite a big gap to the very front. But for sure, second and third places in qualifying were well deserved with strong performances of both Michael and Tom in the wet. Of course, we would have hoped for a podium as the first half of the race looked like it but we just couldn't keep that. To bring home fourth and fifth is definitely satisfying. Tomorrow is another day and we start again from the front row of the grid. It looks like it will rain tomorrow but if we can repeat what we did today I would be very pleased with the weekend."

Shaun Muir, Team Principal BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team: "We were glad first of all that it was a slick race for everybody. We would rather be it be totally wet or totally dry. We were at a good level, and we could show the progress we have made with the new BMW M 1000 RR. We can't be disappointed with fourth and fifth; we equalled our best result as a team from Aragón. For sure we would have liked to go one step further but the guys gave their best. We got a lot of information that we can take into tomorrow. Obviously, we start from the same grid positions into the Superpole race and if all goes well we can get that step closer to the podium and keep progressing the development of the BMW M 1000 RR."

Tom Sykes, BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team: "I am definitely happy that the BMW M 1000 RR was working well in the full wet conditions. In that in-between condition at the beginning of the race, we just struggled to get into it. We could not get the same grip as everyone else but the bike stayed very, very consistent so we were just missing a couple of tenths. We did not have a full dry set-up. Who would have thought that the sun comes out? So we maybe missed out in that respect but fourth position is not too bad. I'm okay with that and obviously we will try to improve tomorrow."

Michael van der Mark, BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team: "Today was not bad. In Superpole, on the wet track, I felt really good and we managed to put both BMWs on the front row. That's always a good thing. For the race, the track started to slowly dry. My start was quite okay and then I was just trying to find my line. I was making a couple of

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mistakes going down to Craner Curves, going onto the wet with the slicks so I lost a lot of time there a couple of times. That was a bit of a shame but anyway, there is a lot to improve on the bike for sure for tomorrow but I think we can be satisfied with P5 today."

Eugene Laverty, RC Squadra Corse: "In the race, the conditions dried up and unfortunately, while I went with dry tyres we weren't able to change to the dry setting. So in the end I was riding with a wet suspension setting and it was impossible to do good lap times. That was the maximum I could do today, so hopefully tomorrow it is either clearly wet or clearly dry because when it is like that, there isn't time to change and it's a bit difficult for a smaller team like us. But, we start again tomorrow."

Jonas Folger, Bonovo MGM Racing: "There's not much to say today. I just didn't feel right today. Now we have to find out what caused that. We can only hope that it goes better tomorrow."

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