



## Australia – Phillip Island. Preview.

22nd – 24th February 2013  
1st of 15 race weekends

Munich/Milan, 19th February 2013. The anticipation and excitement in the BMW Motorrad GoldBet SBK Team are palpable: this coming weekend (22nd to 24th February), the FIM Superbike World Championship's winter break comes to an end in the Australian summer. The 2013 season gets underway with the opening race of the year on Phillip Island, near Melbourne. After the success of last year, BMW Motorrad's goals for this season are to establish the team as one of the top outfits and to claim as many wins and podiums as possible.

Italian Marco Melandri is now in his second season as a BMW Motorrad works rider. Last year he guided his BMW S 1000 RR to six wins, eleven podiums and four fastest race laps. He was still in with a shout of winning the World Championship title right down to the final race, and ultimately ended the season in third place overall in the Riders' Championship. His new team-mate is Britain's Chaz Davies. The 2011 Supersport world champion made his debut in the FIM Superbike World Championship last year, and immediately impressed in his first season at the highest level of production-based motorcycle racing with a win and four podiums.

The BMW Motorrad GoldBet SBK Team travelled to Australia at the start of last week. In preparation for the season-opener, the team completed a private two-day test on Phillip Island on Thursday and Friday, before taking part in the official tests at the circuit on the south coast of Australia on Monday and Tuesday. While it was sunny and very hot on Monday, weather conditions changed completely for today, Tuesday. It was cloudy and cool with a few showers of drizzle. Marco and Chaz used the test to work on the fine-tuning of their RRs, and on setting the bikes up to cope with the special demands of the Phillip Island circuit. In addition, Pirelli provided the new 17-inch-tyres allocated for the race weekend at the official test and the team tested them with regard to their performance over a race distance.

### Phillip Island from the rider's point of view:

Marco Melandri:

"The Phillip Island track is really awesome, it is challenging, fast and flowing. One thing that makes Phillip Island so special is the atmosphere – and I love these fast corners. The new tarmac is quite difficult for the tyre and for us riders it is not easy to understand how the grip is. We had two days of testing with all weather conditions. Today with the cooler temperatures the track was faster than yesterday and it was easier to ride as the wind was not so strong."

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In these two days of testing we completed a lot of work with our RR. In general I am quite happy with the bike and we have a good base for the first race weekend. But we have more work to do in two areas where we are still struggling. We still have issues with tyre wear and we need to improve that for the races. The second issue is that we're experiencing chatter, similar to last year's race weekend at Phillip Island. We are working on solving that. Unfortunately my shoulder is still causing me difficulties, and I still feel pain. I hope that I will feel better on the race weekend."

Chaz Davies:

"Phillip Island is always a challenge not only because the race track is extremely fast but it is the first race of the year and after the winter break it feels like you are going at 500 km/h into the first corner. It is a really challenging, but great circuit. I am really looking forward to racing again; it has been quite a while now.

The change of weather conditions over the past two days did not make life easy for us. I was reasonably happy with the direction we were going with the high temperatures yesterday but then today seems to have changed everything. In today's cooler conditions, I had some issues with vibrations that I did not have in the heat. We will have a look over the data and try to improve it and to understand how the bike is working in such conditions. In general we are quite well prepared and over the next two days we will analyse what we have done in testing and try to put something together."

## Phillip Island from a technical point of view:

Stephan Fischer (Technical Director BMW Motorrad Motorsport):

"We are well prepared for the season-opener. We made some important findings already during the winter tests in Jerez and the performance on the track confirmed that we have been heading in the right direction with our development work. As such, we arrived at Phillip Island with a lot of momentum and motivation. However, we will have to wait until the race weekend itself for the first real indication of where we stand compared to our rivals. During the tests, you never know exactly who is on what programme; the real performance will only be revealed over the race weekend.

The circuit at Phillip Island is one of the best you can imagine in motor racing. The view from the final left-hander, over the start/finish straight to the sea, is one of a kind. The track has been resurfaced and the surface will change as more rubber is laid down. Then we will see what qualities it really possesses. Parts of the track are very quick, but it also features technical sections, in which the emphasis is on handling. It is a circuit with a good mixture of everything, and there are a lot of potential winners. With that in mind, we are guaranteed a great and exciting start to the season. We are looking forward to racing in Phillip Island, a circuit that we have fond memories of. For the last two years we have got the season off to a good start with podiums here."

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Andrea Dosoli (Technical Director BMW Motorrad GoldBet SBK Team):

“Over the two days of official testing we had the chance to test for the first time the tyres brought by Pirelli for the race. Unfortunately yesterday it was very hot and the high temperatures had an impact on tyre life. Then today, we seemed to be in a completely different season with much cooler conditions. Like many teams we are still encountering significant tyre wear and this is the biggest issue we would like to fix before Sunday’s races. We collected a lot of data and both crews tested a wide range of settings in terms of the chassis and the weight distribution in order to improve the tyre life. The next two days will be fundamental for us as we will go through the data and plan our programme for Friday’s practice. In general, we are looking forward to the first race. After a long winter of preparation, we are confident that we are able to fight with the top guys with both of our riders.”

## Phillip Island from a sporting point of view:

Serafino Foti (Sport Director BMW Motorrad GoldBet SBK Team):

“During the private and the official tests the team worked very hard to evaluate many components and to find the best settings for the bike. Unfortunately, many external variables made the work of the riders and the team not easy: the new tarmac of the race track, the new 17-inch tyres and the unstable weather conditions. Marco struggled a lot with his right shoulder. Now our main concern for the weekend is to find a medical therapy that enables him to ride the two races without too much pain. Luckily after Phillip Island we have one and a half months to recover his shoulder. Chaz improved his feeling with the RR, even if he did not make all the steps he expected himself.”

## Phillip Island from Pirelli’s point of view:

The first round of 2013 at Phillip Island marks an era-making milestone because of the switch from 16.5-inch tyres to the new 17-inch tyres. Over the winter and during the last season, Pirelli engineers worked tirelessly, completely redesigning the new tyres which now have new profiles and sides, as well as a larger tread contact surface. These tyres ensure a reduction in movement and improved stability and handling in turns, as well as the ability to maintain performance throughout the race. The compound range was also redesigned from scratch based on the new structure of the 17 inch tyres and now the new blends are softer, more versatile and offer higher performance.

Phillip Island has always been one of the most demanding tracks on the Superbike calendar for tyres, which are subjected to strong and constant thermal-mechanical stress, especially on the left side. In December, the whole track was resurfaced. This will no doubt play a key role this year in terms of the tyres which will have to take on new asphalt which has never before been raced on. The track also has various fast turns which have an intense impact on the front. Until now wear on the front had never been an issue because of the completely smooth asphalt, but with the new and much rougher surface this aspect could play a determining role. Obviously Pirelli engineers have worked toward preventing these problems by designing development solutions which will be able to handle the critical issues on the Phillip Island circuit.

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For the Superbike class, Pirelli will provide four slick solutions for dry on the front and as many for the rear. These are joined by the rear qualifier and the intermediate and wet solutions. The slicks chosen by Pirelli on the front are an SC1 solution in a soft compound range and three SC2 solutions in medium compound, one of which is in the standard range and two more sturdy models which were custom designed to handle the new Australian asphalt. For the rear, Pirelli will provide the riders with a choice of four development solutions: two SC1 medium compound and two SC2 hard compound. Of the two SC2 solutions, one (the R1300) is a solution midway between the SC1 tyres and the SC2 R1301. It provides better wear resistance than the SC1 solutions and more grip than the other SC2. All of the rear solutions were developed using particular internal materials with the goal of keeping operating temperatures low in order to prevent overheating in the extreme areas of the left side tread.

## Background:

The “Phillip Island Circuit” is one of the most scenic racetracks on the World Championship calendar. The circuit is located on the island of the same name in the Australian state of Victoria, about 120 kilometres south-east of Melbourne. Phillip Island is linked to the mainland via a 640-metre long bridge. One popular tourist attraction is the “Penguin Parade”: every morning countless little penguins leave their cliff caves and make their way over the beach to the sea, before returning in the evening. Phillip Island may only have an area of 100km<sup>2</sup>, but the island does boast a long tradition of motorsport. The first car races were held there as early as 1926, whilst the inaugural motorcycle race took place in 1931. In 1956 a permanent racetrack was built on the island – the “Phillip Island Circuit”.

It is located right on the coast in an area of breath-taking scenery. The stars of the motorbike scene are regular guests here: both the MotoGP series and the Superbike World Championship, which has staged races here every year since 1990, with the exception of 1993. Nowadays, the season-opener of the Superbike World Championship is regularly held on Phillip Island, and this is the case once again in 2013. BMW Motorrad works rider Marco Melandri claimed his first podium in the series there in 2011. Last year he finished runner-up in his first race on the BMW S 1000 RR.

Phillip Island is a very fast and flowing, natural circuit, which blends into the hilly, coastal landscape with big changes in elevation and fascinating combinations of corners. The riders must apply just the right amount of gas when accelerating out of some of the fast corners, in order to avoid the wheels spinning and wheelies.

For the 2013 season, the whole track has been resurfaced. Now, the tarmac is very smooth and fast, and for this year’s race weekend, the lap times are expected to fall. The proximity to the sea brings about two challenges: gusts of wind of varying strength blowing over the coast, and unpredictable changes in the weather.

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## Facts and figures:

Circuit/Date	Phillip Island Circuit / 24th February 2013
Start time Race 1 (local/CET)	12.00 hrs / 02.00 hrs
Start time Race 2 (local/CET)	15.30 hrs / 05.30 hrs
Lap/Race distance	4.445 km / 97.790 km (22 laps)
Corners	7 left-hand and 5 right-hand corners
Winners 2012	Race 1: Max Biaggi, Aprilia Racing Team, 34.13,963 min. Race 2: Carlos Checa, Althea Racing, 34.26,728 min.
Fastest race lap 2012	Max Biaggi, Aprilia Racing Team, 1.31,785 min.
Data 2012:	Top speed: 324.6 km/h (Max Biaggi, race 1 and 2) Longest section at full throttle: 10.22 sec / 746 m Fastest corner: Turn 3, 5th gear, 245 km/h Maximum deceleration: 226 km/h – 63 km/h

Riders	Marco Melandri	Chaz Davies
Date of birth	07.08.1982	10.02.1987
Place of birth	Ravenna / Italy	Knighton / Great Britain
Nationality	Italian	British
Residence	Ravenna /Italy	Presteigne, Powys / Great Britain
Marital status	Engaged	In a relationship
Height	1.66 m	1.83 m
Weight	60 kg	70 kg
WSBK debut	2011, Phillip Island (AUS)	2012, Phillip Island (AUS)
Race starts	51	24
Pole positions	1	0
Wins	10	1
Podium finishes	26	4
Fastest race laps	7	0
Best World Championship placing	2nd (2011)	9th (2012)
WSBK points 2013	-	-

BMW Motorrad Motorsport	
WSBK debut	2009, Phillip Island (AUS)
Race starts	107
Pole positions	1
Wins	6
Podium places	23
Fastest laps	7
WSBK placings	2nd (2012), 421 points 4th (2011), 311 points 6th (2010), 201 points 6th (2009), 141 points
WSBK points 2013	-

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