



Portimão – Qualifying Practice 2 & Superpole. Saturday, 8th June 2013.

Weather conditions: Overcast with rain showers.
Temperature: Air: 17 – 19 °C, Track: 20 – 24 °C
Number of riders participating: 19 from 12 teams
Fastest lap Qualifying Practices: Jonathan Rea (Pata Honda World Superbike) 1:42.645 min
Fastest lap Final Wet Superpole: Tom Sykes (Kawasaki Racing Team) 1:41.360 min

The BMW Motorrad GoldBet SBK Team had a day of mixed fortunes at Portimão (POR). Factory rider Marco Melandri (ITA) will start the sixth round of the 2013 FIM Superbike World Championship from the second row. In today's Superpole, which was interrupted by a rain shower, Marco finished fourth on his BMW S 1000 RR. His team-mate Chaz Davies (GBR) had a tough day. He crashed in the final stages of the free practice session, two hours before the start of the Superpole. Chaz will start from 12th place on the fourth row.

In this morning's second qualifying practice, conditions were dry but at noon, light rain started. As a consequence, the riders waited until the track had dried again to go out in the free practice session. With only a few minutes to go, Chaz lost control over the rear coming over a crest and he crashed. He suffered a cut to his right arm which was stitched up at the Clinica Mobile.

The Superpole started in dry conditions. Both Marco and Chaz did their first outing on race tyres. Then Chaz opted for his first qualifying tyre, setting the second fastest time of Superpole 1. Marco also did another outing but on race tyres, finishing sixth. For their first laps in Superpole 2, both BMW factory riders chose qualifying tyres. But during the first flying lap for the riders, the session was red flagged due to a rain shower. It was bad luck for Chaz as the red flag ended his attempt on his second and last qualifying tyre. The format of the qualifying was changed to "Wet Superpole". Therefore, instead of Superpole 2 and 3 there only was one "Final Wet Superpole" session, with a duration of 20 minutes, in which all 12 riders who had qualified for Superpole 2 took part. Marco went out firstly on race tyres, then switched to his second qualifying tyre and rode the fourth fastest time. Chaz also first went out on a race tyre, then replaced it with the then already used second qualifying tyre. He struggled to ride a consistent fast lap and finished 12th.

In the FIM Superstock 1000 Cup, Sylvain Barrier from the BMW Motorrad GoldBet STK Team will start tomorrow's race from pole-position despite the fact that the Frenchman had a massive crash at the beginning of today's second and final qualifying practice. The lap time Sylvain did with his BMW HP4 in yesterday's first qualifying practice was still good enough to secure him pole-position. His team-mate Greg Gildenhuys (RSA) qualified 15th, defying, but still being affected by, the pain of his broken left heel.

Marco Melandri:

Fastest lap Qualifying Practices: 1:42.933 min (P4) / Fastest lap FP: 1:43.293 min (P4) / Fastest lap Final Wet Superpole: 1:42.115 min (P4)

"It was a rather positive qualifying session but we are not completely ready for tomorrow. The positive thing is that, for the first time, we were able to push properly with qualifying tyres. Today we improved the rear end of the bike but regarding the front, we made a slight step backwards. The track surface is in a really bad condition and unfortunately we lose stability in the dips between the bumps. For tomorrow we need to put together the best package in order to have a good race pace. In the race it will be important to start in the best way. It is no problem to be in the second row; I just

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have to be within the leading group immediately after the start in order to compete for the front positions.”

Chaz Davies:

Fastest lap Qualifying Practices: 1:43.599 min (P9) / Fastest lap FP: 1:44.191 min (P11) / Fastest lap Final Wet Superpole: 1:43.463 min (P12)

“It’s been frustrating because before the crash I felt that the bike was better. This was part of the reason why I crashed because I carried more speed across the crest but I think it was a bit too much speed for the set-up of the bike we had at that time. The bike kind of took off over the top so it was a pretty hard crash. I have a hole in my elbow and I banged my head pretty hard so I did not feel too great before Superpole. Anyway, we made it through the first part with a decent lap time. Then we had the red flag, but that was the same for everybody. In the final session I could not make the best use of the qualifying tyre and I made a mistake in my best flying lap with it. I think the tyre was six laps old by then which is way over the hill for a qualifier. For tomorrow we need to further improve. We still need to work on the set up and find something I am comfortable with and which helps to absorb the bumps. That’s the priority for tomorrow.”

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

“Marco, for the first time today, was able to make proper use of the qualifying tyres, and this is an important step forward. He will start from fourth on the second row tomorrow and it will be important get away in the best way to be with the front runners and to compete for the top positions. Chaz crashed this morning at a speed of 180 km/h. He slightly injured his arm; it is nothing serious, but given the fact that he hit his head we were a little worried. Luckily the doctors confirmed that he was fine to participate in the Superpole. We are happy that he is quite well and that he did not suffer any major injuries. He will start from 12th tomorrow and for sure he will do his best to gain positions and have a good race.

In the Superstock class we secured the pole-position thanks to the lap time Sylvain set yesterday. Unfortunately he crashed today after two laps, but luckily he escaped OK. Greg is still not fit but he is doing the best he can.”

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

“With Marco, we have achieved our target to qualify for one of the first two rows. Unfortunately, Chaz crashed during the free practice session so we could not expect more from him. We have improved the bike, especially the rear end. It is absorbing the bumps better. We are happy about that but it is still not enough. Our competitors have a better pace than us. The difference is not huge but we still have some work to do over the night. We are losing a bit too much in the last sector where both riders are missing the proper feeling to turn in and to keep the necessary speed. We will keep our heads down and try to further improve to give both riders a decent package. We have a few ideas and we will try them in the warm-up.”

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