



Media Information
BMW Motorrad Motorsport
25th October 2019

BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team experiences a Friday with highs and lows in the Qatari desert.

- **FIM Superbike World Championship season finale at the ‘Losail International Circuit’.**
- **Markus Reiterberger finishes the first main race in eighth position with his BMW S 1000 RR.**
- **Tom Sykes retires after a crash.**

Doha. The first day of racing at the 2019 FIM Superbike World Championship (WorldSBK) season finale at the ‘Losail International Circuit’ in Qatar had highs and lows for the BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team. Markus Reiterberger (GER) secured eighth place in the first main race on his BMW S 1000 RR after having finished the Superpole within the top ten. Tom Sykes (GBR) had started the race from fourth on the grid but retired after a crash on lap two.

Superpole was held in the early evening at 5 p.m. local time, already under floodlights. Sykes managed to make good use of the faster qualifying tyre and he secured fourth place on the second row in the final stages of the session. Reiterberger continued the positive trend from the practice sessions and qualified ninth on the third row.

When the race was started at 8 p.m. local time, the air temperature was still a humid 31 degrees Celsius. Sykes stormed towards the front, into second place, but then slightly dropped back again. Entering the second lap, however, he crashed while battling and had to retire. Reiterberger also had a stunning start but lost positions in the first corner. Soon, however, he had worked his way back into the top ten. From there, he progressed further forwards, and after 17 laps he crossed the line in eighth place, directly behind a group of three that was fighting for fifth position.



Quotes after race one at Doha.

Marc Bongers, BMW Motorrad Motorsport Director: “We are happy with Markus’ performance, in any case. It was great to see that he was able to fight behind the group in the midfield. In the second half of the race, he was nearly as fast as the front riders in the two middle sectors. That is really pleasing, and one can see a kind of relief on his side of the garage. Tom had a mega start. Unfortunately he had a contact with another rider when entering the second lap and could not stop the bike anymore. That’s a pity but can happen in races. Overall, we have a good base for tomorrow and we will attack once more.”

Markus Reiterberger: “Today was really good. I am satisfied, even if I did not fully exploit to 100 per cent what was possible. We made another step for Superpole and I was even able to do a 1:57.7 with race tyres that brought me to sixth place. It was a great lap and my feeling was really good. My lap with the qualifying tyre was also great but not perfect and this already makes the difference between a few positions. But ninth place on the third row still was good. I had a great start, until the first corner. I was already in fifth place but then I shifted down one gear too few and was in third gear. This resulted in the loss of positions but soon I overtook several others and worked my way back towards the front. From then on, I kept my pace to the finish line. The fact that I was able to close the gap to the group of three in front of me at the very end confirms that we are heading in the right direction. I hope that we will make another step tomorrow, especially with the front tyre. Then I think that I can catch those three that were in front of me, at least that’s my goal. I hope to bring home two more strong results.”

Tom Sykes: “I think we maximised our performance in Superpole and got the best out of our BMW S 1000 RR. We were happy to start on the second row. We then made a couple of changes for the race. We had a good start and unfortunately then going into T1 on the second lap, it happened. I wanted to pull it down but there was another rider, so I had to pick it up and there was another rider there so unfortunately I made contact and down I went. So I am obviously very disappointed. I felt we had the set-up to put on a decent result today. We had the capability to come out with a good result today but sometimes these things happen and obviously we just look to have a strong showing tomorrow.”

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