



Media Information  
BMW Motorrad Motorsport  
5<sup>th</sup> September 2020

## **Solid race Saturday for BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team at MotorLand Aragón.**

- **Fifth round of the FIM Superbike World Championship 2020 season.**
- **Fourth place for Tom Sykes in Superpole.**
- **Eugene Laverty finishes eighth after a strong recovery race; Sykes finishes tenth.**

**Alcañiz. After a difficult first race weekend in the FIM Superbike World Championship at MotorLand Aragón (ESP), the BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team recorded an upwards trend in the second part of the double-header. In Superpole on Saturday, Tom Sykes (GBR) finished in P4 with his BMW S 1000 RR. Team-mate Eugene Laverty (IRL) sparkled in the first race with a strong recovery to move up into eighth place, claiming his best race result so far with BMW. Sykes also crossed the finish line in the top ten, in tenth place.**

The racetrack near Alcañiz is hosting the WorldSBK for the second time in the space of just a few days with the fifth round of the 2020 season being held there this weekend. In Superpole on Saturday morning Sykes set the fourth-fastest time, which saw him qualifying for the second row of the grid. Laverty finished qualifying in 16<sup>th</sup> place.

In the race on Saturday afternoon, initially Sykes held his ground in the top five, but lost positions as the race went on, finishing in tenth. Meanwhile, Laverty set off on his journey up the field from 16<sup>th</sup> on the grid. On lap 14 of 20 he had reached the top ten, then on lap 16 he moved up into eighth place where he remained to the finish line.

### **Quotes after race one at MotorLand Aragón.**

**Marc Bongers, BMW Motorrad Motorsport Director:** “I’m happy with both riders finishing in the top ten. Congratulations to Eugene, who battled his way up the



field well in the race with the potential to finish in P6. It wasn't easy to roll up the field from behind; it was a good performance, but a 24 second deficit to the winner shows that we are still a long way away from where we want to be. It was good, however, to see that Eugene has gained more confidence in his motorbike and is able to battle for positions. We hope that this positive trend continues on Sunday. Tom had a good start from fourth on the grid after a very strong lap in Superpole. Looking at the first race weekend here at Aragón, this made up a lot. However, Tom lost a few positions over the first half of the race. We knew that we wouldn't be able to keep up with the pace of the best-placed riders on this track but our goal tomorrow is to pick up as many points as possible in Superpole and then in the race."

**Shaun Muir, Team Principal BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team:** "It was a good Superpole from Tom, while Eugene could not make anything out of his qualifying tyre and obviously his grid position reflected that. In the race, we got away reasonably well. Tom got a good run, made a mistake and lost three places, dropped down in a group that was kind of from six to 12<sup>th</sup>. Eugene, on the other hand, made good use of his race pace and his tyre and came through the pack, while Tom went the other way. I am happy for Eugene to get a good top-ten result. Tom on the other hand did not live up really to his expectations, got dropped back and didn't had anything to fight with. We are going to be happy with eight and tenth, going to work overnight, trying to find some mechanical grip that we can use in the race tomorrow to make up that straight-line deficit."

**Eugene Laverty:** "Actually, it has been our best race so far this year. Starting from 16<sup>th</sup> is still difficult but unfortunately at the moment we can't go faster with the bike, but at least we can keep a good rhythm in the race. It's tough from down there but I managed to come forward in the second half of the race and I used a bit of my experience to manage the bike well in the end when the tyres were slimy and the others suffered and were making mistakes while I kept smooth and came forward. It was a good race and I think we have definitely done something. For tomorrow's Superpole race I've given myself a task because it's going to be tough from P16 but I will be aiming for the top nine because that gives you a top nine grid position for race two. That is going to be my only goal for the Superpole race. And in the final race – no matter where I will be starting from – I've got to go forwards. We are trying to improve the bike further and to finish the weekend on a real high."

**Tom Sykes:** "It's a shame today as we are still riding around some limitations. In



Superpole, it's very easy to manage the BMW S 1000 RR, I feel very relaxed on the bike and where I need to be. In the races we certainly have some strong points, but we are still missing out quite big in some areas so that is difficult. For the race we had a good start, but ran into trouble with braking as I was overriding the bike, which ultimately had a knock-on effect in the remaining 12 laps. It's tricky but we are always learning. I'd rather have a difficult year this year, build up the knowledge and come back next year stronger, but for now it's hard to take. On paper and the way things feel, I know I am so much better than this. For sure, like I said, there are some really strong points on the package, just at the moment we are not able to see the full potential of the BMW S 1000 RR. There is good spirit from the boys, the whole of the BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team are trying new things and working hard so we will come back tomorrow and give it our all."

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