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Media Information

BMW Motorrad Motorsport

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WorldSBK at Magny-Cours: Front row of the grid for Tom Sykes; top-five in race one for Michael van der Mark.

- **Tom Sykes finishes third in Superpole on the BMW M 1000 RR to again secure a place on the front row of the grid for the BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team.**
- **Team-mate Michael van der Mark finishes fifth in race one; Sykes comes home ninth.**
- **16th place in opening race for Jonas Folger from the Bonovo MGM Racing Team.**

Magny-Cours. The FIM Superbike World Championship (WorldSBK) is at Magny-Cours (FRA) this weekend for round eight of the 2021 season. In Superpole on Saturday morning, Tom Sykes (GBR) from the BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team finished third to secure another place on the front row of the grid on his BMW M 1000 RR. In the afternoon's opening race, his team-mate Michael van der Mark (NED) finished fifth, while Sykes crossed the finish line in ninth place. Jonas Folger (GER) from the Bonovo MGM Racing Team came home 16th.

Sykes was once again one of the top riders in Superpole qualifying. The Brit briefly topped the timings, and eventually secured third place and a spot on the front row of the grid with a time of 1:35.919 minutes. Van der Mark, who was unable to take to the track in the morning's third free practice session due to a technical issue qualified ninth. Folger was 19th in qualifying.

The air temperature rose to 26 degrees Celsius for the start of the race in the afternoon, resulting in a track temperature of 40 degrees Celsius. Starting third, Sykes dropped several positions at the start, while van der Mark climbed into sixth place before falling back to ninth again. On lap three, Sykes went very wide in turn five and slotted back into the field in twelfth place. Meanwhile, van der Mark had improved to seventh and soon took sixth place. The Dutchman remained in that position until lap 17 of 21, when Alex Lowes (GBR / Kawasaki) crashed in front of him, handing van der Mark fifth place – a position he retained through to the finish. Sykes was involved in a number of battles throughout the whole race in a fiercely-competitive group of riders. After 21 laps of racing, he crossed the finish line ninth. Folger initially dropped back at the start, but made some progress through the field in the second half of the race to finish 16th.

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Quotes after race one at Magny-Cours.

Shaun Muir, Team Principal BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team: "Tom did a great job in Superpole, and we know he can do that. His lap wasn't a clean lap either so he was a bit disappointed not to get pole, but happy with a front row start. Tom's race was bit disappointing for him; he had the pace to be with Michael, but he was getting beaten up and pushed about a bit which disrupted his rhythm, so he is not happy with ninth position. Mickey had a really difficult day. We had a technical issue this morning and lost a lot of time which was valuable for us. So, to qualify in P9 was not so bad for him considering he's not mastered qualifying on the BMW M 1000 RR yet. But typical Michael van der Mark, he grits his teeth, he gets his head down and battles his way and gets stronger and stronger as the race goes on which will do his confidence the world of good. So, we can put today behind us and focus on tomorrow and hopefully have a clean warm up and go into the Superpole race and race two strong."

Michael van der Mark, BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team: "I think if you look at the result it isn't that bad, but it's a shame I lost so much time in this morning's session. In the races, I had a good feeling with the bike and we wanted to try something different in FP3, but we couldn't do so. So now in the race I am struggling a little bit and unsure whether yesterday's setting was better or not. But anyway, I am happy with the points, and I am looking forward to tomorrow's two races."

Tom Sykes, BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team: "It was another good Superpole but I am disappointed with the race today, and disappointed at not being able to race with the other bikes. Riding in the group, we struggled with the engine temperature and braking performance all through the race unfortunately. We were quicker in the turns but couldn't get close on the straights to make a pass on the brakes. So, it was a frustrating race but we will have to have another go tomorrow."

Jonas Folger, Bonovo MGM Racing: "After the really promising practice sessions, the race was really tough. I am finding it pretty difficult to get up to speed. With a full tank I had problems overtaking. It took a long time to pass one or two other riders. As soon as I was able to ride in my own style later in the race, things were much better. I hope we can find something for Sunday."

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Media Contact.

Benedikt Torka

Spokesperson BMW Motorrad Motorsport

Phone: +49 (0)151 – 601 32455

E-mail: benedikt.torka@bmwgroup.com

Media Website.

www.press.bmwgroup.com/global

BMW Motorrad Motorsport on the Web.

Website: www.motorsport.bmw-motorrad.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/bmwmotorradmotorsport