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Media Information

BMW Motorrad Motorsport

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Challenging start to the WorldSBK season for BMW Motorrad Motorsport at Phillip Island.

- **Opening round of the 2023 FIM Superbike World Championship at Phillip Island, Australia.**
- **Top-ten finishes for ROKiT BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team and Bonovo action BMW Racing Team.**
- **Second round of the season next weekend at Mandalika, Indonesia.**

Phillip Island. After a short but busy winter break, BMW Motorrad Motorsport kicked off the 2023 FIM Superbike World Championship with the new BMW M 1000 RR at Phillip Island, Australia. The ROKiT BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team and the Bonovo action BMW Racing Team claimed top-ten finishes, but on the whole it was a challenging weekend for both teams and the four BMW factory riders Scott Redding (GBR), Garrett Gerloff (USA), Michael van der Mark (NED) and Loris Baz (FRA). The best race result was a ninth place for Redding in the opening race on Saturday.

After the first two practice sessions were held in sunshine and high temperatures on Friday, the weather changed on Saturday. Light rain started to fall in the third free practice session, but it was dry again by Superpole. Van der Mark in twelfth place was the best of the BMW riders in an extremely tight field. Redding, Gerloff and Baz finished 13th, 16th and 18th.

The rain returned for the start of the Saturday race. Van der Mark soon climbed to ninth place, but crashed on lap two and was forced out of the race. Redding worked his way through the field and into sixth place, but dropped back to ninth in the closing stages as his rear tyre fell off a cliff. Gerloff struggled with poor visibility in the spray at the start, but then launched a fightback from 19th place that took him as high as tenth. Problems with the rear tyre forced Baz into the pits after 13 laps. He rejoined the race after a tyre change and eventually came home 18th.

It rained again on Sunday morning, but the Superpole race took place in bright sunshine. Van der Mark was again the best-placed BMW rider in tenth. Baz, Redding and Gerloff crossed the finish line 13th, 14th and 15th at the end of the ten-lap sprint. In race two on

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Sunday afternoon, the BMW racers failed to make it into the top ten. Van der Mark was twelfth again, with Redding, Gerloff and Baz picking up points in 13th, 14th and 15th place.

The WorldSBK caravan now heads straight to Indonesia, where the second round of the season will take place this weekend (3rd to 5th March) at Mandalika.

Quotes after the Phillip Island races.

Marc Bongers, BMW Motorrad Motorsport Director: "It was not an easy weekend for the two BMW teams. We already saw signs in the test on Monday and Tuesday that we would not be able to compete at the very front here. We then faced additional challenges on the race weekend itself. Firstly, the conditions were really unsettled. Secondly, we only had a limited tyre selection at our disposal. However, there were also positives. Thanks to the aerodynamic updates on the new BMW M 1000 RR, we were consistently among the best when it came to top speed. That is one area in which we have improved significantly. However, top speed alone is obviously not enough to produce good lap times. Another positive were the clear signs that Michael van der Mark is back after his injury. Plus, newcomer Garrett Gerloff is handling the bike as well as the other riders. We have seen that we have a strong quartet of riders, but also that we have a lot of work ahead of us to get the BMW M 1000 RR to the front of the field. We will now analyse what was missing here, and prepare for the next races in Indonesia."

Scott Redding, ROKiT BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team (SP: 13 / R01: 9 / SP Race: 14 / R02: 13): "It has been a difficult weekend. Mickey got off to a good start in race two, he had a clear lap. I was boxed in in the first two corners and kind of missed the run with them guys. Then it was just about getting in the rhythm and I ended up with the other two BMWs. It was just a battle between us. I was trying to push but in the end I could not get away so I just sat with them and raced, trying to maybe see what is different or what the bike is doing. Then in the end I made a pass on the two guys to finish 13th. We have a lot of work to do because we are suffering a lot. Mandalika maybe is different. We have to see. The track can make a big difference."

Garrett Gerloff, Bonovo action BMW Racing Team (SP: 16 / R01: 10 / SP Race: 15 / R02: 14): "Overall, we had some good moments for sure, but to put it in one word, probably 'humbling' is the word of the weekend. Today it was dry at least, so we had some more consistent weather. I was struggling with the wind a bit. In the Superpole race I wasn't able to make as much ground as I was hoping. The bike has so much power and it's awesome on the straight. I mean, the top speed we are able to hit is unbelievable. I just

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kind of need to manage the power a little bit better, I think and work on turning a little bit. I feel like the bike has so much potential, we really need to get our heads together and figure out what we need to do to make better around. I was happy to be with the other BMWs in our own little battle. That was nice, but we have some work to do."

Michael van der Mark, ROKiT BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team (SP: 12 / R01: DNF / SP Race: 10 / R02: 12): "This morning's Superpole race was nice. I got a little bit tangled up on the first lap and lost some positions which was a shame as I lost some time, but then I was feeling okay. P10 was not quite where I wanted to be but I was quite happy with the feeling of the bike. In race two, I had a good start and I was feeling quite comfortable on the first laps. I struggled a bit in the last two sectors of the circuit but I tried to stay calm, and for a long time I was just behind a nice group. We were catching the big group ahead of us but unfortunately I then had a massive drop in the tyre. It was a shame but we learn. I think it was really important for us to be with the other guys for the first part of the race. Now the pace is there we just need to find a way to manage the tyres better, but Phillip Island is always difficult for tyre management. Now I am looking forward to Mandalika. We are still not where we want to be but I have a quite good feeling from Phillip Island's race two."

Loris Baz, Bonovo action BMW Racing Team (SP: 18 / R01: 18 / SP Race: 13 / R02: 15): "Today was a better day than yesterday, first of all because we found the reason for our struggles on Saturday. I had an ok warm up, the Superpole race was kind of fun. I had a good start, but I made a big mistake in turn four, I went straight and regrouped last. I managed to come back though and I was feeling good. I was able to push the bike a lot within what we have, so it was quite good coming back up to P13. At this track, I knew that I had to save the tyre at the beginning, so my plan was to have a good start and then not to destroy the tyre in the first laps and that's exactly what I did. I didn't have a perfect feeling with the front and the balance of the bike in general from the beginning. With about 10 laps to the end, the battle with Scott and Garrett started, which was funny. Although fighting for 13 is not what the three of us wish for. All four BMWs have had the same pace more or less. It's just a bit sad to be so far back, but there is nobody to blame within the team. I think we all do more work than anyone in paddock, so we go back to work. Hopefully Indonesia will be a bit better. We have to make a step there."

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