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Media Information  
BMW Motorrad Motorsport  
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### **BMW Motorrad Motorsport in WorldSBK: Garrett Gerloff narrowly misses the Portimão podium.**

- **Garrett Gerloff finishes fourth in both main races in Portugal.**
- **Michael van der Mark makes a strong comeback after his injury break.**
- **Penultimate round of the 2023 FIM Superbike World Championship.**

**Portimão. BMW Motorrad Motorsport reflects on an extremely successful penultimate season event of the 2023 FIM Superbike World Championship (WorldSBK) at Portimão, Portugal. Garrett Gerloff (USA) from the Bonovo action BMW Racing Team produced outstanding results. He finished in fourth place as the top rider from an independent team in both main races and missed the podium in the second race by just one second. Michael van der Mark (NED) from the ROKiT BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team made a strong comeback with several impressive seventh-place finishes after his injury break.**

In the Superpole qualifying session on Saturday morning, van der Mark was the best BMW rider, finishing seventh. His teammate Scott Redding (GBR) secured the eleventh position, with Gerloff right beside him in twelfth. Loris Baz (FRA / Bonovo action BMW Racing Team) concluded qualifying in sixteenth place. Since an additional engine has been in use on his motorcycle since the round at MotorLand Aragón (ESP), he had to start both main Portimão races from the pit lane.

Due to a penalty for a competitor, van der Mark, Redding, and Gerloff each moved up one position on the start grid for race one on Saturday afternoon. The race once again showcased the potential of the BMW M 1000 RR. Van der Mark was running in the front group after a good start and was fifth before spending a long time in fourth place during the second half of the race. Meanwhile, Gerloff worked his way impressively up from eleventh place towards the front and jumped from sixth to fourth place in the final stages. This equalled Gerloff's best season result, and he once again claimed first place in the independent class. Van der Mark only lost a few positions towards the end and secured an important strong result, finishing seventh. Unfortunately, Redding struggled to find a good feeling with the bike during the race and crossed the finish line in 15th place. Baz fought his way up several positions after starting from the pit lane and finished in 18th place.

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In the Superpole race on Sunday morning, van der Mark confirmed his seventh place with another consistent performance. Gerloff once again charged forward from 12th place and was already in the top eight at the halfway point. However, he was pushed back in a duel and initially dropped to the 11th position. The American rider launched another comeback and fought his way up to eighth place, improving his start position for the second main race in the afternoon. Baz finished in 12th place from the 16th starting position, with Redding following closely behind him in 13th place, just hundredths of a second apart.

In the concluding second main race, Gerloff once again demonstrated his racing strength. By the 17th lap, he had worked his way up to fourth place and was setting his sights on the podium. His gap to third place narrowed to just a few tenths of a second at times. In the end, he narrowly missed out, finishing once again as the top Independent rider in fourth place, but his gap to the podium was only one second, and he was less than three seconds behind the leader. Van der Mark concluded the weekend with an 11th place. Redding had bad luck, as he was pushed off the track in turn three and ultimately finished in 14th position. Baz, in his attempt to make a comeback from the back, pushed too hard and crashed.

The season finale of WorldSBK 2023 will take place from October 27th to 29th at Jerez de la Frontera, Spain.

### **Reactions to the Portimão round.**

**Marc Bongers, BMW Motorrad Motorsport Director:** "In general, our overall summary of the weekend is very positive. Let's start with the challenging points. It was a tough weekend for Scott. He couldn't find his rhythm. We tried a lot but we have not been able to move him up the field. Loris faced a difficult starting position as he had to start from the pit lane in the main races due to an extra engine we had to incur for him. The penalty is particularly harsh here compared to other tracks because the distance to the pit lane exit is quite long. Unfortunately, he crashed in the second main race. Now, onto the very positive aspects. It was extremely gratifying to see that Michael, just as he did at Aragón, came into great form in the first race here. He had a lot of confidence from the first practice session on and genuinely enjoyed riding. Kudos to Mickey for being able to put two serious injuries behind him mentally. He knows that he still needs to work on his physical condition, but this weekend was extremely positive. Last but not least, Garrett who had already shown an incredibly strong performance in the recent races, and bringing home two fourth-place finishes in the main races here is fantastic. He was not far from the podium in the end. Certainly, the top two riders held each other up a bit, but we were less

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than three seconds behind the winner. This fills me with great confidence for the season finale and also for the winter, to then attack as a team right from the beginning next year."

**Garrett Gerloff, Bonovo action BMW Racing Team (SP: 12 / R01: 4 / SP Race: 8 / R02: 4):**

"After qualifying I didn't think that two fourth-places would be possible at all but I guess that's something I need to learn about myself, not to count myself out. Race two was the end of a really great weekend. I wasn't exactly fighting for the podium, but I was close. Until the last lap, I thought, maybe I can catch Rinaldi. In the end, I am just super happy about how the bike feels and how the whole team is working together. I can't ask for much more. I am really happy! We have only one round left in the year, but I would really love to end on a high note. It was very cool and we are making progress."

**Michael van der Mark, ROKiT BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team (SP: 7 / R01: 7 / SP Race: 7 / R02: 11):**

"I am really happy with the weekend overall. From Friday on, I straight away felt very good on the bike. We keep working on the bike but we just made small changes. I am really happy with this weekend's results. This morning P7 in the Superpole race, I was quite happy with it. I saw that I just miss some race rhythm but anyway, I was really satisfied. The field is so close and you must have a good start position. So it was P7 on the grid for race two. I had a really good start. Unfortunately in turn one, I was a bit unlucky and then I couldn't gain the places back. And honestly I struggled a bit, I just didn't feel as good as I felt before. But it's another race under our belt, we scored some good points and most of all, I enjoyed riding this weekend very much."

**Scott Redding, ROKiT BMW Motorrad WorldSBK Team (SP: 11 / R01: 15 / SP Race: 13 / R02: 14):**

"It has been a very disappointing weekend. I struggled a lot to find my rhythm and a feeling for the bike. That made it impossible to attack. The whole team has been working hard over the entire weekend and we tried a lot of different things in the sessions but we haven't been able to find the right solution. We now have a few weeks off, time for all of us to recharge after the double-header, and then we aim to come back much stronger at the season finale."

**Loris Baz, Bonovo action BMW Racing Team (SP: 16 / R01: 18 / SP Race: 12 / R02: DNF):**

"We knew that the Superpole race was going to be the only funny one, let's say. I was trying hard to get in the points, but it was not possible, but I had fun battling with the other riders in the group, so that was good. In race two, I had to start from the pitlane again. Luckily for me there was some trouble with the other guys in the first corner, so I lost less time than yesterday and I was not far behind Scott and Johnny. We were coming back and I was just trying to push really hard in order to get some points. There was nothing to lose



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for me anymore. I was pushing really hard and just over-pushed the limit in turn one. We were trying the SC2 front hard for today and maybe that was not helping over those bumps in turn one. It was a pretty big one, but I am ok. We will see. There is some time to recover and then we head to the last round."

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