



Donington – Races. Sunday, 13th May 2012.

Weather conditions: Sunny with some clouds.
Temperature: Air: 17 – 18 °C, Track: 31 °C
Number of riders participating: 23 from 13 teams
Fastest lap Race 1: Max Biaggi (Aprilia Racing Team) 1:28.992 min
Fastest lap Race 2: Max Biaggi (Aprilia Racing Team) 1:28.995 min

The long awaited next milestone has been achieved: Team BMW Motorrad Motorsport has climbed onto the top step on the podium. At Donington (GBR), the team not only celebrated its first victory in the FIM Superbike World Championship, but also its first 'one-two' in the series. Factory riders Marco Melandri (ITA) as winner and Leon Haslam (GBR) being second gave BMW Motorrad the perfect finish in race one in today's fifth round of the 2012 season.

It was an exciting road leading to the historic first victory in race one. Starting from second, Leon took the lead immediately by passing pole-sitter Tom Sykes (GBR). Marco maintained his third position. At the end of lap four, Sykes passed Leon again, while Marco was successfully defending attacks from Max Biaggi (ITA). On lap 12, Leon fought his way back into the lead, and when Marco passed Sykes on lap 14 for second, the two BMW riders started their nail-biting battle for victory, changing positions at the very top several times. Then, with three laps to go, Leon went wide onto the grass, slipping back to third behind Sykes. Marco was able to open a gap and get the first victory, while Leon did not give up the fight and overtook Sykes for second at the beginning of the last lap, securing the double triumph for BMW Motorrad.

Today was close to being a dream Sunday for the Bavarian team, with Leon being on his way to home victory and Marco lying in second at the last corner of the second race, but racing can be more than tough: They were denied another well-deserved triumph when an over-optimistic manoeuvre by another rider forced both to crash. From the start, they fought a breathtaking battle with Sykes, Biaggi and Jonathan Rea (GBR) for the top positions. With seven laps to go, Leon took the lead, determined to celebrate the next BMW victory on his home soil. Meanwhile Marco succeeded in the battle for second and there was just one corner to go to another 'one-two'. In this last corner, the too ambitious final attack by another rider forced Leon into a crash. Leon's bike slid across the asphalt and hit Marco's RR with the Italian's race ending in the gravel. Leon was classified 15th and Marco as retired. Rea won ahead of Biaggi and Sykes.

In the Rider's Championship, Marco is fifth with 97.5 points, followed by Leon, who is sixth with 89 points. In the Manufacturers' Standings BMW improved to second after race one, but slid back to third with 131 points after race two. BMW Motorrad Italia GoldBet SBK Team's Michel Fabrizio (ITA) was tenth and 13th, his team-mate Ayrton Badovini (ITA) 11th and sixth.

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BMW MOTORRAD 3ASY RIDE





Marco Melandri:

Result Race 1: 1st / Fastest Lap Race 1: 1:28.999 min

Result Race 2: DNF / Gap to 1st: 1 lap / Fastest Lap Race 2: 1:29.138 min

"It is an awesome feeling for me to put my name in the history books of a factory like BMW Motorrad. I could not have dreamt of this when I was young. I just want to say thank you to BMW Motorrad in Germany, to the team at the track and to everybody involved in the project. We have been working so hard and we have never been close to giving up, even when we have had some difficulties. We will keep pushing, and I am more than happy."

I am disappointed with the result of the second race. I was trying to pass Leon in the final corner, although I knew it would be difficult but I am a racer and I had to try. I ran a little wide and expected Leon to pass me back – finishing second would have been ok for me. Then Leon was hit and he crashed. His bike hit me and I crashed too. I feel sorry for both of us but that's racing. We now have to keep our heads up high and look forward to Salt Lake City where we hope to be fighting for wins again."

Leon Haslam:

Result Race 1: 2nd / Gap to 1st: 00:00.728 min / Fastest Lap Race 1: 1:29.097 min

Result Race 2: 15th / Gap to 1st: 01:20.196 min / Fastest Lap Race 2: 1:39.308 min

"What a day. I had a good pace in race one. In the end, I have to say that I am kind of disappointed with the second place. I had a big wobble out of Coppers and it actually put me on the right hand side of Marco instead of the left, and he braked a bit earlier that lap. I had nowhere to go, so I opted for the gravel. It was kind of a combination of things that caught me out but fair play to Marco. A BMW 1-2 result is just fantastic. Right now I just want to forget race 2. I feel a bit frustrated because I was going for my first win for BMW Motorrad – at my home round, but we were denied that well deserved victory. The crash was not my fault at all... Anyway, that's racing, and we're now looking forward to the next round. Hopefully we can turn things around at the next race meeting at Salt Lake City. I want to dedicate my race 1 result to Robert Fearnall, who was a close friend of the family."

Bernhard Gobmeier (BMW Motorrad Motorsport Director):

"The first race was absolutely thrilling. We saw bike-to-bike action, and our opponents gave us a hard time on the track. Marco's race was impressive: He organized his race excellently, showed great overtaking ability and consequently deserved the victory. For us it is even more satisfying to see that Leon was also able to showcase his talent. He also had great battles on the track and completed BMW Motorrad's first double victory in World Superbikes. This 1-2 is the result of the hard work of everyone involved in this project – in Munich, in Stephanskirchen and at the track. A big Thank You to our riders and the whole team."

The second race was again great – until the last corner. It is just too disappointing to see both riders crash blamelessly when leading the pack into the final corner of the race. Now we have to keep our heads up and look forward to Salt Lake City. We hope to fight for wins there as well."

BMW MOTORRAD 3ASY RIDE

