

MICHELIN AND MIR CONQUER MIXED CONDITIONS AT VALENCIA

Michelin's full range of MotoGP™ tyres had a thorough workout at Valencia in Spain this weekend as variable conditions culminating in warm sunshine today saw Joan Mir (Team SUZUKI ECSTAR) claim his first MotoGP victory.

This weekend has seen heavy rain, drying track conditions and finally warm sun that gave a surface temperature of 25°C on raceday. The meant that the whole range of MICHELIN Power Slicks and MICHELIN Power Rain tyres were used at some point during the weekend, with five of the six slick specifications featuring in today's 27-lap Gran Premio de Europa at the Circuit Ricardo Tormo. As the temperatures rose many riders changed tyre selection on the grid, making it an extremely busy time for the Michelin Technicians that had to assist with the decision making by supplying invaluable advice. All of the alterations led to five of the six tyres available being raced, with only the soft front remaining unused.

Mir started from fifth on the grid, but it was pole-setter Pol Espargaro (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing) that got the hole-shot and led for the early stages of the race. He was constantly under threat and on lap-two Alex Rins (Team SUZUKI ECSTAR) took the lead, with Mir following him past Espargaro two-laps later. The pace at the front was relentless as the trio pushed their Michelin tyres to the full and opened a gap to the rest of the field. On lap-17 Mir took his chance and passed his team-mate, he consistently put in fast laps with his pairing of medium compound front and rear tyres to edge away at the front and cross the line over half-of-a-second ahead of his Suzuki counterpart, as he claimed his premier MotoGP victory and increased his lead at the top of the championship standings, his first place signalled the ninth winner of the season and he became the fifth first-time victor of the season. Rins - also favouring a medium front and rear selection - was second, moving him to third in the championship and making it the first Suzuki one-two since 1982. Espargaro was next over the line with a hard front and medium rear configuration on his KTM.

Despite the lack of a crowd at Valencia, due to the current protocols, the racing provided excellent viewing for the fans at home, with battles throughout the pack. Takaaki Nakagami (LCR Honda) crossed the line in fourth, to give him the position of First Independent Rider and next to take the chequered flag was Miguel Oliveira (Red Bull KTM Tech 3), followed by Brad Binder (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing), as he produced a strong finish to the race to record the fastest circulation on lap-22. Andrea Dovizioso (Ducati Team) was eighth and also set a new Event Maximum Speed Record as he used the drive of his MICHELIN Power Slick tyres in today's race to clock 337.0 Km/h. Ninth over the line was Johann Zarco (Esponsorama Racing), with Danilo Petrucci (Ducati Team) rounding out the top-ten, as he pushed his way through from eighteenth on the grid.

Michelin and the MotoGP paddock will now remain at Valencia for what will be the penultimate race of the season next weekend, when the Circuit Ricardo Tormo plays host to the Gran Premio Motul de la Comunitat Valenciana on Sunday 15th November.



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Joan Mir - Team SUZUKI ECSTAR:

“Today we took the decision to use the medium front and we knew that the temperature was a little bit higher, so for me it was the right decision. On the brakes on the straight the hard looked to be working quite strong and I was not quite able to be like that, but with my speed in all the corners I was able to make the difference. The speed in the corners was good and the edge grip was working in a super good way and I felt really great with the tyre. I tried to manage the drop, but it was not big and the tyre was super, super impressive. Now let's see if next weekend we can make some improvements.”

Piero Taramasso – Michelin Motorsport Two-Wheel Manager:

“We have had another demanding weekend as we had to cope with many different weather conditions, but it did give us the opportunity to analyse how all the tyres performed on wet, drying and dry track surfaces. The lead-up to the race, as the temperatures rose, made tyre choice a very important decision and to see all of our guys supplying the information to all their respective riders to make sure they had the best data at hand, even if it was about a tyre that some had not tried all weekend due to the changeable conditions, was especially rewarding. This demonstrates the trust the teams and manufacturers have in our crew, even though the final decision is always with them and their riders. Again five of the six specifications were used in the race and all the wets were tried on Friday and Saturday, they all performed well and gave the riders the grip they needed no matter what the asphalt was doing. We now stay here for another race next week, hopefully the weather will be more consistent, but if not we have lots of info to work with no matter what greets us.”



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