Magny-Cours – Free Practice & Qualifying Practice 1.
Friday, 05th October 2012.

Weather conditions: Sunny.
Temperature: Air: 20 – 25 °C, Track: 25 – 34 °C
Number of riders participating: 20/21 from 11/12 teams
Fastest lap Free Practice: Jonathan Rea (Honda World Superbike Team) 1:39.064 min
Fastest lap Qualifying Practice 1: Tom Sykes (Kawasaki Racing Team) 1:38.200 min

Team BMW Motorrad Motorsport had a strong but difficult start to the final round of the 2012 FIM Superbike World Championship. Factory rider Marco Melandri (ITA) finished today's first qualifying practice at Magny-Cours (FRA) third on the provisional first row. His injury, two broken ribs from his crash two weeks ago at Portimão (POR), still cause a lot of pain. His team-mate Leon Haslam (GBR) qualified eighth on the provisional second row onboard his BMW S 1000 RR. Leon hurt his right hand when he crashed at the beginning of today's first free practice on a still-damp part of the track. After some medical treatment he was able to jump back on the bike and continue his preparation work for Sunday's races. During the first qualifying practice, both factory riders were temporarily topping the time sheets. Michel Fabrizio and Ayrton Badovini (both ITA) of the BMW Motorrad Italia GoldBet SBK Team finished the first qualifying practice in sixth and 12th respectively.

Marco Melandri:
Fastest lap Free Practice: 1:39.991 min (P8)/Fastest lap Qualifying Practice 1: 1:38.742 min (P3)
"It was nice to be back on the RR, but it is not easy because every time I try to move a little bit faster on the bike it feels like I have a knife in my back. Lap by lap, when I get warmer, it gets better and I can do one or two stronger laps but then I get pain again and feel tired. It is difficult because I cannot use the leg and the back to change direction. To do one fast lap is one thing, to do the race will be difficult but it is good to be here and to be able to do one fast lap. Talking about the sporting aspects, we have been working well. We tried to improve in the areas where we were still struggling, for example we worked on further reducing the vibrations. I think we have already found some solutions to improve the bike for next year."

Leon Haslam:
Fastest lap Free Practice: 1:39.963 min (P7)/Fastest lap Qualifying Practice 1: 1:39.149 min (P8)
"This morning we had a big crash. I had to spend some time with the team doctor who had to drill a hole into my finger nail as a lot of blood had accumulated underneath it. It was my mistake; I just hit a wet patch and lost the bike. From then on we worked on race set-up, doing the normal things you do on a Friday. My finger was a little bit sore but not too bad. I could feel it throbbing and had to brake with my middle two fingers but with some more treatment it will be fine for tomorrow. We will now work on progressing with the bike's settings but we have to wait and see what the weather will be like tomorrow."

Andrea Dosoli (Head of Race Operations):
"We are proud of what our two riders have done today. Leon had a crash during the first free practice and when we saw what happened to his right hand we were worried he might not be able to continue riding but he did so, pretty fast. He never gives up as we know and appreciate him. Now Leon and his crew will work on improving the bike as he still has some issues when turning in. We also feel that tomorrow it will be easier for him because his hand will be better then. Regarding Marco we honestly have to congratulate him. He has done a great job the way he improved from lap to lap and we could see that even though he is suffering he is so motivated and working very hard. Marco and his crew have made some changes on the bike from the morning to the afternoon which went into the right direction. We try to give him a bike that allows him to go fast without being too demanding to his body. The target is to enable him to ride comfortably as the races certainly will be tough for him."

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