



Moscow – Races. Sunday, 26th August 2012.

Weather conditions: Cloudy with light rain in the morning, sunny in the afternoon.
Temperature: Air: 18 – 21 °C, Track: 18 – 37 °C
Number of riders participating: 21 from 12 teams
Fastest lap Race 1: Leon Haslam (BMW Motorrad Motorsport) 1:36.729 min
Fastest lap Race 2: Marco Melandri (BMW Motorrad Motorsport) 1:35.794 min

Team BMW Motorrad Motorsport has reason to celebrate again: at the first ever Russian round of the FIM Superbike World Championship, factory rider Marco Melandri (ITA) took the lead in the Rider's Classification by winning race two and finishing second in race one at "Moscow Raceway". It is another milestone, as Marco is the first BMW rider to top this classification. In the Manufacturer's Ranking, BMW further increased its lead. In addition, BMW Motorrad Motorsport claimed the fastest lap time in both races, with Leon Haslam (GBR) in heat one and Marco in race two. Nevertheless the team leaves the 11th round of the 2012 season with mixed feelings, as Leon had a difficult day. In race one he had a collision while fighting for second place, securing sixth at the flag. In race two he also had the podium in sight, when the back of his BMW S 1000 RR was hit by Max Biaggi (ITA) and both riders crashed heavily. Fortunately, Leon suffered no serious injuries.

After a rain shower in the morning the track was still damp when the grid formed for race one. It was therefore declared a wet race, but as the skies were already clearing up, both Marco and Leon went out on slicks. At the start, eventual winner Tom Sykes (GBR) took the lead, while Leon improved from fourth to second and Marco held his fifth position. Leon kept fighting at the top but ran off the track on lap five and slipped back from second to fifth. Marco was seventh at that point. As the race went on, several riders crashed, the two BMW factory riders moving up the field. On lap 17 Leon was in a podium position again, being third in front of Marco, but when Leon tried to pass second placed Chaz Davies (GBR) on lap 19, they made contact and Leon crashed. Davies had gone wide and Leon tried to take his chance to go through on the inside, but the two riders collided. Leon jumped back on his BMW S 1000 RR and rejoined in sixth position. Marco profited from the collision and took second between leader Sykes and third placed Davies. He brought his bike home in that position unthreatened while Leon finished sixth. After the podium ceremony, Marco had to go to the Clinica Mobile medical centre because a wasp had stung his left knee during the race, causing massive swelling and pain. He was treated with an injection and was ready to go for race two.

In the opening stages of the second heat, both BMW riders were part of an exciting fight for podium positions when Leon's race ended abruptly and painfully. Entering the last corner of lap ten, he was hit from behind by Biaggi and both of them crashed heavily. Leon was taken to the medical centre, as he was feeling dizzy and had severe pain in his leg. The examinations showed that he had no serious injuries. Marco meanwhile kept fighting at the very top and took the lead from Sykes on lap 15. He defended it to the chequered flag and celebrated his sixth victory of the season.

In the Riders' Championship, Marco is leading with 308.5 points, 18.5 more than second placed Biaggi. Leon is sixth with 180 points. In the Manufacturers' Standings BMW now has 361 points and has extended its lead to 26.5 points over Aprilia. BMW Motorrad Italia GoldBet SBK Team's Michel Fabrizio (ITA) finished fifth in race one but crashed in the second one. His team-mate Ayrton Badovini (ITA) was eighth and 12th.

Marco Melandri:

Result Race 1: 2nd / Gap to 1st: 00:08.878 min / Fastest Lap Race 1: 1:36.949 min

Result Race 2: 1st / Fastest Lap Race 2: 1:35.794 min

"It is an unbelievable day. To win here at the first ever round of the Championship in this country is something special and I am just very, very happy. This morning it was cloudy and raining a little bit, so it was not easy. Race one was very tough at the beginning with the slick tyre in the wet and the fact that a wasp stung my leg made it even more difficult. It was a very tough race and to finish second was like a win for me. For race two the team made a small modification to the bike and I felt very good from the first lap. Once I saw Biaggi was out I

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understood I had the chance to try to get a win and I did. I was worried a little bit about my rear tyre, but it worked perfectly with my BMW. The team once more did a great job. Thanks to everyone.

We are now leading the Rider's Championship but we take it race by race. We have no time to think about defending our lead, because six races are a lot and anything can still happen. We have to stay focused and work hard and if I have the chance to fight for a win I will try to get it. For me it is important to have fun at every race and I cannot race without trying to do my best. Overall I am so happy. We had some bad luck in the past, but now we are working very well but you never know what will happen in the last races. I also want to thank the Clinica Mobile. They helped me a lot, not only with the sting but also with the back problem I had all weekend."

Leon Haslam:

Result Race 1: 6th / Gap to 1st: 00:30.587 min / Fastest Lap Race 1: 1:36.729 min

Result Race 2: DNF / Fastest Lap Race 2: 1:36.205 min

"In race one I felt pretty comfortable. I made the start that we wanted. Conditions were quite tricky so I didn't want to push too much. Early on in the race I made a mistake and ran off the track and I dropped back a few places. I rejoined and managed to work my way back up into the top three. I got stuck behind Chaz who was a bit quicker on the straight so I had to make the move in the twisty section. He kept running quite wide in one of the turns and I made my move, but he closed the door and we collided. It was frustrating because I felt pretty comfortable and was taking it quite easy in that position and I even thought that we might have the chance to pulling Tom back in at one point but again it was not meant to be. Still I managed to get sixth place, even with the crash.

In race two I also felt pretty good. I had the same pace as Marco and Eugene who I was racing with. I was losing out at one corner which leads on to the long straight, so I found it quite difficult to pass. When Marco came through I felt as though Eugene was holding me up a little bit. Then going into the end of the back straight Max must have made a mistake and that was it - race over. It was just bad luck. It's kind of the story so far this season. I had a little bang to my head and have a sore leg, but nothing that will stop me from racing in Germany and I'll be fit and strong by then."

Bernhard Gobmeier (BMW Motorrad Motorsport Director):

"It has been a weekend of mixed feelings from day one. We had good lap times in practice, but then some difficulties in qualifying. However, it was important to start from row one and two on the grid. Due to the rain, the track conditions were difficult in race one. Marco rode a very intelligent race: He waited and attacked at the end. Position two was the maximum that was possible. Race two was fantastic as well. Marco first saved his tyres and then gave everything at the end. Unfortunately, Leon had bad luck in both races. In race one, he collided with Chaz Davies, and in race two he was hit by Max Biaggi. That was unnecessary; and otherwise Leon would have been on the podium as well. We are now leading both championships. Now we have to continue to concentrate, work steadily and hard. The season is not over yet and our lead is minimal, and a lot can happen in the remaining six races."

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