Portimão – Free Practice & Qualifying Practice 1.
Friday, 21st September 2012.

Weather conditions: Sunny with light clouds.
Temperature: Air: 26 – 29 °C, Track: 40 – 42 °C
Number of riders participating: 23 from 13 teams
Fastest lap Free Practice: Tom Sykes (Kawasaki Racing Team) 1:44.343 min
Fastest lap Qualifying Practice 1: Marco Melandri (BMW Motorrad Motorsport) 1:43.196 min

Team BMW Motorrad Motorsport secured provisional pole position for Sunday's races at Portimão. The Portuguese track welcomed the teams with sunny and hot conditions. BMW Motorrad factory rider Marco Melandri (ITA) set the fastest time in today's first qualifying practice. His team-mate Leon Haslam (GBR) rounded up the successful Friday for the squad. He qualified for the provisional second row, finishing the session in fifth on his BMW S 1000 RR. Despite the good results, the team is well aware that there is still a lot of work to do to best prepare for the races. Michel Fabrizio and Ayrton Badovini (both ITA) of the BMW Motorrad Italia GoldBet SBK Team finished the first qualifying practice in ninth and 11th respectively. Portimão hosts the 13th and penultimate round of the 2012 FIM Superbike World Championship.

Marco Melandri:
Fastest lap Free Practice: 1:44.456 min (P2)/Fastest lap Qualifying Practice 1: 1:43.196 min (P1)
"The lap time was very good, but at the moment I am still worrying about the race. We struggled a lot with chattering and the race tyre did not work so well for us. I can do one fast lap, but I cannot be consistent so we have a lot of work to do to try to make the bike smoother for the race. This morning the grip was not so good. This afternoon, when it was much warmer, the grip was better but we had more vibrations. We will now try to fix this issue but it is not easy."

Leon Haslam:
Fastest lap Free Practice: 1:44.500 min (P4)/Fastest lap Qualifying Practice 1: 1:43.921 min (P5)
"I am pretty confident. We just have a few issues which we still need to resolve; we have to make some more improvements on the chassis and work on the electronics. The track is a little bit dirty and has not that much grip but I am quite happy. We are pretty confident on the harder tyres, we just need to improve with the soft tyres. My shoulder is still a bit painful. We are working on different strappings each session but it is ten times better than in Germany so I am happy."

Andrea Dosoli (Head of Race Operations):
"Today was a good start to the event. It is definitely nice to finish the first qualifying practice in first and fifth place. We are pleased that Leon could be so fast even though he is not one hundred percent fit. But we still have to work hard despite the very good lap times. We have to improve our race pace. Marco is not happy about the front end of the bike so he will be working on that. With Leon we will try to improve the engine management but I am confident that we can make another step forward for tomorrow."

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