

MICHELIN'S HOME GRAND PRIX BRINGS RECORDS AND A MARQUEZ MASTERPIECE

Michelin had its range of MotoGP™ tyre compounds used to impressive effect during today's HJC Helmets Grand Prix de France at its home race from a packed Le Mans as Marc Marquez (Repsol Honda Team) took his third victory in succession in this year's championship.

Following a successful weekend for the MICHELIN Power Slicks, which had witnessed the outright lap-record broken many times, before home favourite Johann Zarco (Monster Yamaha Tech 3) set the lowest time of the event in the Qualifying Practice to take Pole Position for today's 27-lap race, Michelin had seen its full range of tyres contend with some very unusual circumstances all throughout the three-days. The ultra-grippy track gave the riders the opportunity to use the tyres to their full extent, but the cool air and low track temperatures meant that every racer had to continually push to keep their chosen rubber at the optimum operating temperature. This mix of conditions meant that tyre choice was a major factor and it led to four of the six MICHELIN Power Slicks being used in today's race.

As the lights changed to signal go - after a stirring rendition of 'La Marseillaise' had been sung by most of the record-breaking 105,203 fans at trackside - Zarco was quickly off the line, but yielded the lead to the Ducati pair of Jorge Lorenzo (Ducati Team) and Andrea Dovizioso (Ducati Team). The three all challenged for the front before the tricky conditions saw both Dovizioso and Zarco crash out. Lorenzo was then pursued by Marquez for three laps, before the reigning champion challenged for and took the lead on lap-10. The Honda rider then never looked back as he set consistently fast laps using a medium front and hard rear compound tyre - the only rider to choose the hard version - on his way to his 38th premier class win.

Behind Marquez were some interesting battles as Danilo Petrucci (Alma Pramac Racing) produced a great ride to take second - and the First Independent Rider position - on his Ducati equipped with soft front and rear compound tyres. Third went to Valentino Rossi (Movistar Yamaha MotoGP) who chose a medium front compound paired with a soft rear, as all three on the podium again demonstrated the different choices by riders, as the trio had separate configurations on their respective machines from three different manufacturers.

Today's race was held in dry and sunny conditions, but cool air and the breeze kept temperatures to 18°C, with asphalt getting to the high 30s. This was the weather that had been present all weekend, so the riders had been able to prepare accordingly and the practice sessions proved invaluable to allow them to make the best tyre choices for all their respective machines. Following the podium threesome home was Jack Miller (Alma Pramac Racing), with Dani Pedrosa (Repsol Honda Team) in fifth. Sixth went to Lorenzo and Maverick Viñales (Movistar Yamaha MotoGP) took seventh. Cal Crutchlow (LCR Honda) rode to a brave eighth after spending last night in hospital following a huge high-side crash in yesterday's qualifying as he pushed hard for a better grid position. Ninth was Aleix Espargaro (Aprilia Racing Team Gresini) with his best result of the season so far and Alex Rins (Team SUZUKI ECSTAR) rounded out the top-ten.

Michelin's next stop of the round-the-world MotoGP tour is the picturesque circuit of Mugello in Italy, which will stage the sixth round of the 2018 season on Sunday 3rd June.



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Marc Marquez – Repsol Honda Team:

“I am happy to win here in France and at Michelin’s home. This is a difficult circuit for us, so I am pleased with the result. I was only rider with the hard rear tyre in the race, as everyone else used the soft, this was because the performance of the soft was very good, but I realised this morning that the hard had a little bit more for me. The approach to the race was different as it took time to get the tyre to the correct working temperature, but when it got there it was very constant and very fast. I managed the tyre well till the end, and I was able to be even faster in the last laps, but I did enough to get the victory. I am happy and will enjoy this sweet moment!”

Piero Taramasso – Michelin Motorsport Two-Wheel Manager:

“This has been another strong weekend for us. We saw the outright record broken, the race was very fast and the range of tyres we brought to our home race suited the track very well. We did not foresee the cooler air temperatures, which made the tyres cool if the riders didn’t keep pushing and this was something the technicians had to make sure all the teams were aware of, so that the guys could get maximum traction, but also ride safely. Marc produced some fast lap-times in the race and took a deserved win on the day, but Danilo and Valentino pushed him all the way. It was again pleasing to see three brands of bikes on the podium equipped with three different configurations of compounds and what was also important was that all six manufacturers were in the first eleven positions, this is a big plus for the championship and again highlights our drive to make tyres for all.”



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