

### ***MICHELIN'S GRAND PRIX SERVES UP A CLASSIC ALONG WITH A MARQUEZ MASTERPIECE***

The Michelin® Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix from Phillip Island served up one of the greatest races in MotoGP™ history as Marc Marquez (Repsol Honda Team) took a stunning victory following a breath-taking race-long battle between eight riders.

Marquez qualified on pole yesterday for today's 27-lap race, but was beaten off the line and into the first corner by local hero Jack Miller (EG 0,0 Marc VDS). In-front of his home fans the Australian kept first place until he was overtaken by Valentino Rossi (Movistar Yamaha MotoGP) on lap-five. The nine-time World Champion then held the lead for four-laps, before Johann Zarco (Monster Yamaha Tech 3), took to the front. The rookie stayed at the head of the pack for five laps, before the lead returned to Rossi, then went the way of Maverick Viñales (Movistar Yamaha MotoGP) and then finally to Marquez, in what was a titanic battle between some of the greatest racers in the world. The full-on encounter for the top positions featured the five riders that led the race at some point, plus Cal Crutchlow (LCR Honda), Andrea Iannone (Team SUZUKI ECSTAR) and Alex Rins (Team SUZUKI ECSTAR), all of whom produced some incredibly close racing and daring overtaking throughout the whole race, with manoeuvres that showed the trust the riders had in their Michelin tyres.

Weather had been an issue at Phillip Island all weekend, with cold sessions, wet practices and intermittent sunshine meaning the riders had to leave the choice of MICHELIN Power Slick tyres to the very last moment as they all tried to gauge the weather for the race. When the event got underway in bright and windy conditions, which also produced the warmest temperatures of the weekend, Marquez took the decision to go with a medium front compound slick tyre, matched with a soft rear and he managed it superbly as he took the chequered flag to secure his sixth win of the season and strengthen his championship lead. Second was Rossi, who paired front and rear medium compound tyres, whilst third-placed Viñales used the medium front and soft rear configuration. Zarco took fourth-place on the line — setting the fastest-lap of the race in the process — a result which secured the First Independent Rider position and reinforced his lead in that championship and gave him the honour of being crowned Rookie of the Year. Fifth was Crutchlow, narrowly holding off Iannone at the finish, with home-boy Miller taking seventh and Rins eighth. The top-10 was rounded out by the Red Bull KTM Factory Racing Team's Pol Espargaro and Bradley Smith respectively.

The Michelin® Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix also saw a very important announcement during the weekend's proceedings, as a press conference was called featuring the CEO of Dorna Sports, Carmelo Ezpeleta and Director of Michelin Motorsport, Pascal Couasnon. This was held to confirm an extension to the partnership which will see Michelin as the 'Official Tyre Supplier to MotoGP' for at least a further five-years, taking the Clermont-Ferrand based manufacturer to 2023 as the sole provider of race tyres for the premier-class.

Michelin now returns north of the Equator for the final of the three fly-away races, as MotoGP heads to Sepang for the Shell Malaysia Motorcycle Grand Prix on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October, a race that signals the 17<sup>th</sup> and penultimate round of the season and with the championship still to be decided it looks all set for being another thrilling event.



### **Marc Marquez — Repsol Honda Team:**

“Today’s race was amazing. It was a bit like a Moto3 race because it was a big fight until the end with lots of bikes involved. This was because the riders were saving the tyre, as most of them went with the soft option on the rear. All the guys that chose this option tried to manage because we knew it would be at the limit at the end of the race, but the Michelins managed well and then I gave as much as possible in the last five-laps and that was enough to open a gap. I felt really good all weekend and I led every session, just in FP2 I was second, but I am very happy because in wet, dry and cold conditions the tyres worked well and I felt good, so I am happy for the victory and because we increased our lead in the championship.

“Also for me the news that Michelin is carrying on for another five-years is very important for the riders and the teams and of course for Michelin. When you start in a new category with a lot of technology it takes time, but Michelin arrived so quick and at a good level. Now it is important that we have stable tyres and we always have more or less the same compounds and they are working very good. Also, the riders and manufacturers start to understand the tyres very well and now I believe we will be faster and faster.”

### **Nicolas Goubert — Deputy Director, Technical Director and Supervisor of the MotoGP Programme:**

“I don’t know where to start after a race like that. The performance of the front group was amazing and it was incredible to see such a race. The riders pushed the tyres to the limit and we saw no fade in performance as the race progressed from any of the tyres on such a demanding and abrasive track. This is always such a challenging race and it was the first time the riders had the soft rear option for a race here and they certainly put it to good use today. Throughout the weekend we had many different conditions to contend with and tyre choice was difficult today for all concerned. The track was warmer than at any other point this weekend, but the race was quite late, so the temperature could have dropped quickly and all those factors had to be considered. The Michelin technicians worked closely with all the teams to assist with the decisions on tyre selection and again it demonstrated how different riders and manufacturers can use different compounds. We now head to Malaysia where I’m sure it will be a lot warmer than here, that will also bring its own challenges, but we will certainly be up to the test.”

### **Pascal Couasnon — Director of Michelin Motorsport:**

“This has been a very busy weekend for Michelin, due to being the title sponsor here at Phillip Island and with that honour it has also given us the opportunity to announce this great news about our extension to the contract. We are delighted to be a part of MotoGP for a further five years. This is a huge compliment to the confidence that Carmelo Ezpeleta and Dorna has shown in what Michelin is achieving and fully endorses our achievements since we returned to MotoGP. These first two seasons have seen some impressive racing and we have seen tyre performance and strategy make a real contribution to the show. Michelin is pleased to have played a role in this and that has been endorsed by the decision of Dorna to extend its collaboration with Michelin as technical partner and exclusive tyre supplier until 2023.

“Michelin will use its on-going association with MotoGP to continue developing ever-safer and more competitive racing tyres and it is these innovations that will go on to benefit our road tyres. The information we gather from the premier motorcycle championship is directly linked to improving our road tyres, we are constantly striving for the best, whether it is on track with the world’s top racers or on the street, Michelin is dedicated to offering the finest tyres for the task.”

