



PRESS RELEASE

MOTORSPORT

Boulogne-Billancourt – 28 March 2021

## **MICHELIN'S NEW MOTOGP™ TYRES MAKE THEIR RECORD-BREAKING DEBUT IN QATAR**

- Maverick Viñales (Monster Energy Yamaha MotoGP) wins the first race of the season, setting a new race lap record of **1'54.624**
- Francesco Bagnaia (Ducati Lenovo Team) sets new all-time Losail circuit lap record of **1'52.772**
- Johann Zarco (Pramac Racing) hits 362.4 km/h in qualifying – the all-time fastest speed on a MotoGP bike

Michelin's 2021 MotoGP Power Slick tyre range made a memorable debut at the Barwa Grand Prix of Qatar, which was won by Maverick Viñales, by giving riders the performance edge needed to set three new records during the race and qualifying at the Losail International Circuit.

Ducati Lenovo Team rider Francesco Bagnaia used the grip of his Soft MICHELIN Power Slick tyres to great effect during the second qualifying session on Saturday evening to set a stunning lap time of **1'52.772**, beating the previous lap record by more than half a second. This improved lap pace wasn't just restricted to Bagnaia, as the top eight riders in Q2 also beat the previous lap record which was held by Marc Marquez (Repsol Honda Team).

During the same Q2 session, Pramac Racing rider Johann Zarco used a mix of corner exit speed and engine power to hit a maximum speed of 362.4 km/h on his Ducati Desmosedici. This added 10.4 km/h to the previous highest speed at the circuit set by Marc Marquez in 2019 (352.0 km/h) and beat the previous highest ever speed on a MotoGP bike, set at Mugello by Andrea Dovizioso also in 2019 (356.7 km/h).

The third record was set during the fourth lap of the race when Maverick Viñales set a new circuit race lap record of **1'54.624**, beating the previous record of **1'54.927** set in 2016 by Jorge Lorenzo.

Following the test sessions here in early March, the four free practice sessions, qualifying and warm-up, all MotoGP riders selected the MICHELIN Power Slick Soft tyres for the race. These tyres are mono compound at the front and dual asymmetric at the rear, with a harder compound on the right side of the tread. Throughout testing the teams were able to fine-tune the settings of their bikes and the riders were able to validate this option in terms of grip and cornering control, and perform consistency tests, the results of which were conclusive.



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Speaking about the performance of the tyres during the weekend, **Piero Taramasso**, Michelin Motorsport Two-Wheel Manager, said: “During the winter break our engineers worked hard to improve the consistency and versatility of our tyres without compromising performance, and the results we have achieved here are a testament to this work.

“The Soft MICHELIN Power Slicks used by all the riders gave very strong grip throughout the 22-lap race, despite difficult track conditions caused by the amount of sand deposited on it by the strong winds around the circuit. Such a slippery track inevitably has a negative impact on the consistency of the tyres, which are subjected to higher friction levels on the rough asphalt. This phenomenon had a limited impact on the lap times and the more careful riders managed their tyres during the final laps. We are looking forward to the next race, the Tissot Grand Prix of Doha, which will take place here on 4 April, to confirm the qualities of the 2021 Michelin tyres.”

Michelin, the leading mobility company, is dedicated to enhancing its clients' mobility, sustainably; designing and distributing the most suitable tires, services and solutions for its clients' needs; providing digital services, maps and guides to help enrich trips and travels and make them unique experiences; and developing high-technology materials that serve a variety of industries. Headquartered in Clermont-Ferrand, France, Michelin is present in 170 countries, has 123,600 employees and operates 71 tire production facilities which together produced around 170 million tires in 2020. ([www.michelin.com](http://www.michelin.com))

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