



PRESS RELEASE

MOTORSPORT

Boulogne-Billancourt – 6 March 2022

Grand Prix of Qatar

- Enea Bastianini (Gresini Racing MotoGP) wins the first race of 2022
- Bastianini sets new race lap record of 1'54.338
- New race duration record of 42'13.198

The 2022 MotoGP™ season got off to a flying start under the floodlights of the Lusail International Circuit in Doha, with Enea Bastianini taking the victory ahead of Brad Binder (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing) and Pol Espargaro (Repsol Honda Team) in second and third places respectively, in the first race of the year.

The race-pace was fast, with Bastianini setting a new race lap record of 1'54.338 on his Ducati GP21 while fighting for the lead and setting a new fastest Qatar race duration record of 42'13.198 in the process – beating the previous record by more than 10 seconds.

The top three riders used a mix of Soft or Medium front and Soft or Medium rear MICHELIN Power Slick tyres, highlighting the consistent and accessible performance of the different options in Michelin's Qatar tyre allocation.

Lining up on the grid, most of the riders went for the Soft front, and there was a 50/50 split between the Soft and Medium rear MICHELIN Power Slicks. The exceptions to the Soft front tyre choice were the KTM riders and Takaaki Nakagami (LCR Honda Idemitsu), who opted for the Medium.

On Friday, FP1 gave the riders a chance to start trying the different MICHELIN Power Slick options, and to work on machine set-up in anticipation of FP2. With FP3 taking place during the day on Saturday, this cooler evening session effectively became pre-qualifying. As a result, the riders upped the pace in the hunt for direct access to Q2, and subsequently secure a good grid position for the race.

Although it was cooler during Saturday's Free Practice 3, gusting winds meant that fast lap times were difficult to find. This meant that the qualifying places remained much the same as in the FP2 session the previous evening, with just a few riders improving their lap times. Bastianini was the stand-out performer, using his Soft front and Soft rear MICHELIN Power Slicks to make the jump into the top-10, and therefore directly into Q2.



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The Q2 session was very close, with the top 10 riders separated by just 0.47 seconds. Jorge Martin (Pramac Racing) put in the fastest lap of the weekend at 1'53.011 to take pole position for the race, with Bastianini and Marc Marquez (Repsol Honda Team) joining him on the front row.

Speaking after the race, Piero Taramasso, Michelin Motorsport Two-Wheel Manager, said: "This was a very exciting and great start to 2022, and I think it bodes well for the rest of the season. This year has seen a reduction in the number of tyre specifications available and a reduction in the allocation per rider, yet despite this initiative to improve sustainability, the lap times have improved, and the race duration was shorter than last year. In addition, the closeness of the times in the various sessions and five different manufacturers in the top six places in the race show that the different tyres continue to work very well for all manufacturers and riders – offering fast lap times and consistent grip, which is one of our key objectives to keep the racing exciting".

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