



PRESS RELEASE

MOTORSPORT

Phillip Island (Australia), October 22, 2023

Guru by Gryfyn Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix **Michelin with J. Zarco in his first victory in MotoGP™** **during a weekend disrupted by the weather**

- Due to the pessimistic weather forecast for Sunday, the Guru by Gryfyn Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix 2023 took place on Saturday.
- Jorge Martin (Prima Pramac Racing) took pole position, recording the new all time circuit lap record of 1'27.246.
- Johann Zarco won the first race in his MotoGP career, with impeccable choice and management of his tyres.

The 16th round of the 2023 MotoGP season took place on Saturday 21 October at the Phillip Island circuit. However, the weather dictated the schedule and, due to pessimistic forecasts, Dorna Sports made the decision to bring forward the Guru by Gryfyn Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix to Saturday. The Tissot Sprint, scheduled for Sunday at 1:00 p.m. as part of a shortened sporting program, was subsequently cancelled due to heavy rain and strong winds.

To everyone's surprise, on the sun shone brightly on Friday over the 4.4 km circuit, perched looking out on the Bass Strait – a strip of sea which separates the island of Tasmania from the state of Victoria. The summer-like weather had given hope for the weekend, and FP1 took place in ideal conditions, while Practice in the afternoon allowed the riders to test their machines on a track surface heated by the sun to 50°C.

On this, the most asymmetrical track of the season, covered with particularly abrasive asphalt and seeing very little use during the year, the best tyre strategies quickly emerged: the Soft option at the rear could be used for the Tissot Sprint (13 laps) in sunny weather, while the Medium was ideal for the 27-lap Grand Prix.

On Saturday morning, the riders took advantage of FP2 to complete long runs and confirm Friday's choices, before competing in qualifying. In Q2, Jorge Martin (Prima Pramac Racing) took pole position by recording a new all-time circuit lap record in 1'27.246.

The start of the Guru by Gryfyn Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix 2023 started at 3:10 p.m. on Saturday with track temperatures of 34°C and, rare for Phillip Island, the absence of the cold wind that is typical here. Despite Michelin's recommendations and the data collected during the FP and Practice sessions, four riders gambled on the grip of the Soft rear tyres.



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Among them was pole-man Jorge Martin, currently in the running for the world title. For 25 of the 27 laps, the Spanish rider dominated the race, but in the end the Soft tyre reached its limit. The trio of Johann Zarco (Prima Pramac Racing), Francesco Bagnaia (Lenovo Ducati Team) and Fabio Di Giannantonio (Gresini Racing MotoGP) therefore closed the gap and overtook Martin, who then had to give up his fourth place a few turns later to Brad Binder (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing). The first four riders in the final classification of the race had opted for the Medium rear tyres, matched to a Medium front in the case of Zarco and Di Giannantonio, and Hard tyres for Bagnaia and Binder.

"The Medium rear tyre was the key to my victory! ", said **Johann Zarco** after the race. *"I hesitated for a while to choose the Soft to take advantage of its initial grip, but felt that would have been too risky a gamble. The track was hot and the Medium tyre was within its ideal operating window."*

On Sunday morning, the MotoGP riders woke up to pouring rain and they quickly realized that the Tissot Sprint risked taking place in precarious conditions, relying solely on the grip of their MICHELIN Power Rain tyres. Finally, half an hour before the scheduled start, due to the terrible conditions, Dorna Sports decided to cancel the race.

"As expected, the weather played a determining role throughout the weekend," said Piero Taramasso, Michelin Motorsport Two-Wheel Manager. "Due to its strong asymmetry, the configuration and the very abrasive asphalt, the Phillip Island circuit imposes specific constraints on the tyres, and to meet these requirements we brought a range of specific tyres to Australia. All three front specifications performed well over the weekend, with the choice between one compound and the other determined exclusively by rider feel and preference."

"At the rear, the Medium option was perfectly suited to Saturday's race and, like at Mandalika a week earlier, riders who gambled on tyres that would be outside their operating window were penalized late in the race. Having said that, I still find it exceptional that a Soft tyre used in 34°C on the Phillip Island circuit, delivered so much consistency during 25 of the 27 laps! Finally, I would like to congratulate Johann Zarco on his first MotoGP victory. Johann is a highly experienced rider, who has great sensitivity in understanding and managing his tyres."

The next round of the FIM MotoGP world championship, the OR Thailand Grand Prix, will take place on the Chang International Circuit from 27 to 29 October. Following Indonesia and Australia, this race completes the second of three triple-headers on the 2023 calendar.



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About Michelin

Michelin's ambition is to sustainably improve its customers' mobility. The leader in the mobility sector, Michelin designs, manufactures, and distributes the tires best suited to their requirements and uses as well as services and solutions to improve transport efficacy. Michelin also puts forward offers that allow its customers to enjoy unique moments when traveling. Michelin also develops high-technology equipment intended for multiple fields. Based in Clermont-Ferrand, Michelin is present in 175 countries, employs 132,200 people and operates 67 tire factories that, together, produced approximately 167 million tires in 2022. (www.michelin.com).

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