

Buriram (Thailand), March 1st, 2026

PT Grand Prix of Thailand
Michelin kicks off the 2026 MotoGP™ season with top-level performance and records shattered in Buriram

- In extreme heat conditions (track temperatures reaching 58°C), MICHELIN Power Slick tyres demonstrated performance, consistency and robustness.
- Marco Bezzecchi (Aprilia Racing) secured pole position, set the all-time lap record and the race lap record... and won the Grand Prix.
- The entire grid opted for the Soft front / Soft rear combination for Saturday's Tissot Sprint and Soft front / Medium rear for the Grand Prix, confirming the relevance of Michelin's 2026 allocation.

The 2026 FIM MotoGP™ World Championship got underway this weekend at the Chang International Circuit in Buriram, host of the PT Grand Prix of Thailand, held from 27 February to 1 March in particularly demanding thermal conditions.

From Friday onwards, performance was on display. Marco Bezzecchi (Aprilia Racing) set a new all-time lap record of 1'28.526 during Practice, despite imperfect weather conditions. Riders had the same allocation as during pre-season testing, with two front specifications (Soft and Medium) and two rear (Soft and Medium), but with a new front strategy: fewer specifications, yet increased volume (7 Soft and 7 Medium), offering greater operational flexibility.

To cope with the specific demands of Buriram — long acceleration phases, moderate grip and extreme temperatures — Michelin brought back a reinforced rear construction, identical to the one that will also be used this year again in Mandalika and Brazil. This architecture reduces operating temperature by around 15°C compared with a standard construction, a decisive advantage this weekend.

Qualifying and Tissot Sprint: the Soft–Soft combination delivers at 57°C track temperature

On Saturday morning, Marco Bezzecchi confirmed his strong form by taking pole position in 1'28.652, 0.130 seconds faster than the 2025 pole set by Marc Marquez (Ducati Lenovo Team).

In the afternoon, with track temperatures reaching 57°C (35°C ambient), the entire grid selected the Soft front / Soft rear combination for the Tissot Sprint. This unanimous choice produced a spectacular race, featuring more than ten laps of intense battle for victory.

Pedro Acosta (KTM Factory Racing) claimed the win ahead of Marc Marquez, confirming the competitiveness of the Soft-Soft package even in extreme conditions. The tyres delivered an excellent level of grip and remarkable consistency over the Sprint distance.

Grand Prix: Medium rear strategy and thermal control

On Sunday at 15:00 local time, the PT Grand Prix of Thailand started in 34°C ambient and 58°C track temperatures.

This time, all riders chose a Soft front and Medium rear tyre, prioritising stability and consistency over the 26-lap race distance.

Starting from pole position, Marco Bezzecchi led from start to finish to take a commanding victory. He also set the new race lap record in 1'30.487 (lap 5), once again confirming the performance of Michelin's 2026 allocation. His victory adds to the list of records.

Pedro Acosta, Sprint winner the previous day, produced a spectacular comeback ride to secure second place ahead of Raúl Fernández, who had run in second position for much of the race.

The total race time (39'36.270) was virtually identical to the 2019 record, highlighting both the very high pace and the consistency enabled by the tyres despite the extreme heat conditions.

It is also worth noting that during Warm Up, Marc Marquez equalled the circuit's top speed record with a peak of 341.7 km/h, confirming the tyres' ability to withstand maximum loads along Buriram's long straights.

Piero Taramasso, Two-Wheel Motorsport Competition Manager, Michelin Motorsport

"Buriram is always a major test for tyres due to the extreme temperatures and heavy acceleration loads. With track temperatures up to 58°C, thermal management was the key challenge of the weekend."

"The reinforced rear construction we selected fully met expectations, delivering stability, consistency and temperature control over the entire race distance."

"The performances achieved from Friday onwards, together with the different strategies between the Tissot Sprint and the Grand Prix, show that our solutions provide grip, consistency and genuine freedom of choice for the teams."

“Starting the season with records, a very fast race and consistent tyres in such conditions is a very positive signal for the rest of the championship.”

After this opening round held in extreme conditions, the 2026 FIM MotoGP™ World Championship now heads to the Autódromo Internacional de Goiânia – Ayrton Senna in Brazil, where the Estrella Galicia 0,0 Grand Prix of Brazil will take place from 20 to 22 March.

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