

**MICHELIN SEES ITS TYRES PRODUCE ANOTHER THRILLING AND CLOSE RACE UNDER THE QATARI LIGHTS**

Michelin witnessed some record-breaking performances from its MotoGP™ tyres during the weekend of the VisitQatar Grand Prix at the Losail International Circuit which culminated with Andrea Dovizioso (Mission Winnow Ducati) taking victory.

From Friday onwards the range of MICHELIN Power Slick tyres - including a new for 2019 rear soft compound and a front hard - were put through their paces and all six compounds were tested on the 5,380m circuit. With times being posted faster than previous years, Marc Marquez (Repsol Honda Team) took the outright lap record on the first day, as he posted a time of 1'53.380. This trend continued on day two, with again all the sessions showing better times than last year, as the MICHELIN Power Slicks gave the riders the confidence and grip to push to the limit, this culminated in Maverick Viñales (Monster Energy Yamaha MotoGP) setting a new pole record as he took first place on the grid for Sunday's 22-lap race.

When the lights changed to signal the beginning of the main event, a later start time than last year meant temperatures were cooler than usual, with the track recording 19°C. Dovizioso got the holeshot and led for the first four laps, before coming under threat from Alex Rins (Team SUZUKI ECSTAR). The pair swapped the lead a number of times, but by now an eight-rider battle was building at the front of the race. Riders changed positions within the group, as the MICHELIN Power Slicks performed at the highest level despite the cool track, and saw the riders post consistently fast laps. As the race drew to a close, Marquez made a last-lap attack on Dovizioso, but was unable to get the better of the Italian and the Ducati rider held on to his lead to take victory at the first race of the season. Marquez was second, with Cal Crutchlow (LCR Honda) taking third and the position of First Independent Rider. Rins was fourth, with Valentino Rossi (Monster Energy Yamaha MotoGP) in fifth. Danilo Petrucci made his debut for the Mission Winnow Ducati team today and took sixth, while pole-setter Viñales was seventh. Joan Mir (Team SUZUKI ECSTAR) took the position of top rookie with an impressive eighth. Takaaki Nakagami (LCR Honda) was ninth and Aleix Espargaro (Aprilia Racing Team Gresini) rounded out the top-ten. Fastest lap of the race went to another rookie, as Frenchman Fabio Quartararo (Petronas Yamaha SRT) recorded the best time on lap-three, after he was forced to start from pit-lane due to stalling on the line before the race, unfortunately meaning he was unable to benefit from his fine qualifying, when he took a strong fifth position.

More records were also set today, as Marquez went through the speed trap at 352.0Km/h to set highest speed ever timed on the long start/finish straight, again giving testament to the tyres, that they can put the power down on the track and produce the high speed grip the riders need, and to finish the record-breaking weekend the top-15 riders produced the closest-ever finish in history, with just over 15-seconds separating all the points scorers, again showing the consistency and grip that is given to all riders to enable them to ride within such close contention of each other.

Michelin and the paddock now make the long trip over the equator and down to South America, as the championship heads to Termas de Rio Hondo in Argentina for the next round on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March.



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### **Andrea Dovizioso - Mission Winnow Ducati:**

“I am really happy as I didn’t expect to make this kind of race. I managed the tyre in a perfect way and did a perfect strategy. At the end it was the correct strategy as I had a bit more grip than Marc to be able to answer his overtakes. The track was on the limit today, but I managed my tyres so that I had that bit extra at the end of the race.”

### **Piero Taramasso – Michelin Motorsports Two-Wheel Manager:**

“This has been a very good weekend for us and we have followed on from the pre-season tests in that same positive manner. On Friday all-six tyres were used and we saw the fastest-ever lap recorded around the track. We also had lots of fast times in the other sessions and positive feedback from the riders and the teams, as well as a new record in the qualifying. For the race, the later start time and the cooler temperatures meant that only the soft and medium front and rear compounds were an option for all the riders, but we again saw a mix with some favouring medium/medium, some with soft/soft and others with medium/soft, this demonstrates that we are supplying an allocation that all riders can use to get the best from their machines in the conditions. The pace was not as quick as we saw in practice and qualifying, but considering the cooler conditions we are pleased with the results, it also shows the strong consistency and grip of the tyres, and this was also highlighted by the first 15 being so close. We now move on to a track that is a quite a big challenge for all concerned, but we are ready for it and in a determined mind to continue with our good start to the season.”



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