

Road Race
Newsflash

Strong Performance For KRT Riders In Final 2012 Tests

Tom Sykes and Loris Baz made the most of a three-day test at new SBK venue Jerez before the winter test ban kicks in, with Sykes again setting impressive times and Baz making real progress once more.

Three good days of weather helped the team to develop their chassis package, with evaluation of many components starting early and continuing from the beginning to the end of the test sessions. The dry track and consistent tarmac condition allowed Sykes to make his first real test at this track, having only done a few laps of Jerez earlier in his career in wet conditions.

Despite his initial lack of true circuit experience Sykes scorched around the Jerez circuit in the south of Spain in his usual fast but consistent style, producing good single lap times and a strong race pace as well. He set a best lap of 1'40.4 seconds on a race tyre during the final morning.

The upward development path of 19-year-old Baz also continued once more with the French rider showing good pace and an ability to learn as he pushed his way to a best lap of 1'41.4. Loris also did final day race simulations, which provided very positive results.

The winter testing ban, which applies to all SBK teams, will lift in mid-January with more tests in Spain coming along for the KRT team before they head off to the first round in Australia in late February.

Tom Sykes: "Today was very productive and I did 89 laps, which is about four race distances, so needless to say I will sleep well tonight! I am happy because we know what we need to do and we have taken a lot of information from this test. Monday was my first dry day here at Jerez because I had only been able to do ten wet laps before. I am still finding a few little secrets so I am happy because many other riders have been here many times, especially the ex-GP riders. Our times were pretty good. I did a 1'40.4 on an SC1 tyre and although we went to try an SC0 tyre at the end of the day, with the low sun and so on, I thought we would give it a miss. At the end of the day this is testing and it has been a good experience. We have done some good laps, fast and consistently and we have worked on various settings on the bike."

Loris Baz: "I am happy with my lap time because I did a 1'41.4 second lap with a race tyre, an SC1, in the morning. Then we did a race simulation with good lap times. I had two small crashes on the final day but when trying out some new parts on the bike. It is part of the job sometimes. It is another new track here. Overall our winter tests have gone well. Before the final race of 2012 I was maybe 1.5 seconds behind Tom but now it is something like half a second to one second, so we have improved things a lot."

Crew Chief Sykes, Marcel Duinker: "We had three wonderful days of weather, very nice and stable. The main reason we came here is sorted and it took all of our time. Finally we can make a conclusion now and it was the main reason we were here. So some other things we will now evaluate in testing in January. The lap times that Tom showed on regular race tyres were very fast and very consistent. I am a very happy man to end the 2012 season in this way."

Crew Chief Baz, Pere Riba: "Overall the result and the lap times were good. Jerez is a very good test track because you have many kinds of corners, hard braking, and lots of different elements so it is one of the best tracks to really help you improve the bike. From the first day the lap times came quite easy for Loris and then we worked trying to improve the chassis and suspension side. We also kept working with the electronics, and at the same time we continued to give input to Loris on the best way to ride the bike. This morning he did a good time with a race tyre and also he made some long runs and was doing similar lap times to everyone except Tom. He is one step forward but it was a very positive test for us."

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