

Road Race
WSBK, Moscow, Russia

Brilliant Victory For Sykes As Championship Fight Tightens Up

Kawasaki Racing Team rider Tom Sykes won the first ever SBK race to be held in Russia by over eight seconds after 25-laps of the Moscow Raceway. Loris Baz had a weekend best of ninth in race 2.

Sykes, unusually, had not started from pole, but despite the first race being declared wet and one or two riders opting for wet or intermediate tyres, the team's tyre choice a soft slick front and harder rear worked perfectly and Tom led from start to finish, scoring full points. This was Tom's second race win of 2012, but the first one to go full race distance in dry conditions. The race had been declared wet at the start but a dry line was evident along the 3.931km circuit, allowing Tom to push hard from the start.

Sykes finished race two second, having led it for 14 laps, but eventual winner and new championship leader Marco Melandri headed off Tom by only 0.9756 seconds. Tom had been engrossed in a battle to keep other riders behind and leave a margin to attack Melandri near the end, but in missing his pit signals he ran out of time for a final attack. His 45 points from this round mean he has narrowed the gap to the top rider, now Melandri, to 41 points with six individual races left, including the scene of his first ever win for KRT in this championship last year, the Nürburgring.

Loris Baz was unfortunate to find his rear tyre suffer a suspected puncture after he ran off track, finishing 11th. In race two he recovered from some crashes and a subsequent lack of track time in practice to post a ninth place finish, just losing out in a rider-to-rider battle with Ayrton Badovini.

Kawasaki Team Pedercini rider David Salom was an impressive tenth in race one, Alexander Lundh 14th and David McFadden 16th. In race two Salom was 13th and Lundh 14th, with McFadden crashing out.

Tom Sykes: "This race win was better than the Monza one as we got a little bit more of a reward in points terms. I did a lot of work on tyres yesterday and we went a slightly different way from most people in race one. We worked a lot on this yesterday and that work paid off today. The bike felt great. I had a little bit of pressure on at half race distance but I was trying to save the tyre a little bit. When the gap got down to three seconds I pushed on a little more and it seemed to work. To lead start-to-finish and take the win over full race distance is very rewarding. We had a good margin at the end and it was a nice race. Quite a long race, to be honest, and it is quite a physical circuit. The lap is short but more concentration and physical input is needed compared to some other circuits. Overall we should be very satisfied. Race one was great with maximum points and race two gave us another 20 points in the bag. I got a little bit carried away battling with Eugene behind me in race two and in trying to save my tyre I did not read the pit signals. When I looked there were two laps remaining and I wanted to push on and try to pressure Marco in the last few laps. I felt I had a good package today and could have done it, but when you are riding with guys of Marco's standard you cannot leave things to the last minute. But, realistically, we are happy. A first and second, still third overall and the gap at the front tightening up. There are still a lot of points to play for."

Loris Baz: "In race one I was there just waiting on the track to dry because in those conditions there is only one line. I tried to pass one rider but another rider tried to pass me in turn 11 and he crashed and I ran wide, so think we lost some pressure in the rear tyre after that. I was sliding all around. Race two was not so bad but I could not follow any pace any higher than my own. I had three or four very hard laps where I could not have the same pace as Leon Camier and Ayrton Badovini. I always know that we can take back some difference later on and I tried hard to pass Badovini but he always passed me back. I am happy to be ninth after all we had this weekend. It did not start very well but it ended up with two finishes in the points and one top ten."

High resolution images are free to download at press.kawasaki.eu.

WSBK

Race 1

1	Tom Sykes	Kawasaki ZX 10R
2	Marco Melandri	BMW S1000 RR
3	Max Biaggi	Aprilia RSV4 Factory
4	Eugene Laverty	Aprilia RSV4 Factory
5	Michel Fabrizio	BMW S1000 RR
6	Leon Haslam	BMW S1000 RR
7	Niccolò Canepa	Ducati 1098R
8	Lorenzo Zanetti	Ducati 1098R
9	John Hopkins	Suzuki GSX-R1000
10	David Salom	Kawasaki ZX-10R

Race 2

1	Marco Melandri	BMW S1000 RR
2	Tom Sykes	Kawasaki ZX 10R
3	Chaz Davies	Aprilia RSV4 Factory
4	Carlos Checa	Ducati 1098R
5	Leon Camier	Suzuki GSX-R1000
6	Davide Giugliano	Ducati 1098R
7	Jonathan Rea	Honda CBR1000RR
8	Ayrton Badovini	BMW S1000 RR
9	Loris Baz	Kawasaki Ninja ZX-10R
10	Lorenzo Zanetti	Ducati 1098R
13	David Salom	Kawasaki ZX-10R

Standings

1	Marco Melandri	BMW S1000 RR	308.5
2	Max Biaggi	Aprilia RSV4 Factory	290
3	Tom Sykes	Kawasaki ZX 10R	267.5
4	Carlos Checa	Ducati 1098R	233.5
5	Jonathan Rea	Honda CBR1000RR	212.5
6	Leon Haslam	BMW S1000 RR	180
7	Eugene Laverty	Aprilia RSV4 Factory	173.5
8	Sylvain Guintoli	Ducati 1098R	127.5
9	Michel Fabrizio	BMW S1000 RR	119.5
10	Davide Giugliano	Ducati 1098R	116
21	David Salom	Kawasaki ZX-10R	19
22	Joan Lascorz	Kawasaki ZX-10R	17
23	Leandro Mercado	Kawasaki ZX-10R	9