

Road Race
WSBK, Nürburgring, Germany

Sykes Boosted By Latest Race Win And Memories Of His First

Tom Sykes and Loris Baz (Kawasaki Racing Team) have each won races this season with the most recent going to Sykes at the previous round. Tom now returns to Germany, the site of his first SBK win.

The Nürburgring race is a particularly significant one in the recent history of the Kawasaki Racing Team. In 2010 the public got its first look at the latest model of Ninja ZX-10R in racebike form when it was unveiled in the Nürburgring SBK paddock. In 2011 at the classic German venue Tom Sykes took not only his first SBK race win but also the first for the Ninja ZX-10R, sweeping to a convincing wet-weather victory.

Now Sykes returns to do battle at the modern incarnation of the famous track in the Eifel mountains armed with an even sharper and more finely honed Ninja ZX-10R and the knowledge that he has scored two more race wins with it since his last visit to Germany.

The most recent Sykes victory was a dominant start-to-finish performance at Moscow Raceway in race one last time out, a result that has helped Tom remain very much in the fight for the championship itself. He is now 41 points behind new championship leader Marco Melandri and 22.5 behind second place man Max Biaggi. A possible 150 points are up for grabs for any rider who wins all six remaining races. The next rider behind Tom in the championship is Carlos Checa, who is 34 points adrift.

Loris Baz scored his first career victory in this class at a wet and treacherous Silverstone earlier this year. The French rider has shown himself fast and capable since his arrival in the team mid-season, working well with his experienced crew to jump to 13th in the rankings with three rounds and six races to go - including the forthcoming contest at the classic Nürburgring.

Located next to what is arguably the most famous purpose-built circuit in Europe, the awe-inspiring Nordschleife, the modern-day Nürburgring has a little of everything. Heavy braking into an impossibly slow first hairpin, fast corners, double apexes, long chicanes and even corners where the painted kerbstones act as mini-berms for the most confident riders. Without question the modern Eifel circuit is a tough test. Add in the often wild and inconsistent weather in this heavily forested area and you have a circuit that seldom provides predictable conditions or results.

Pedercini Team Kawasaki will field two Superbike entries as usual, with regular rider David Salom once more joined by Swedish rider Alexander Lundh. Salom took a season best sixth at the previous round in Russia and will be looking for more for the same in Germany.

Tom Sykes: "We go to Germany now and the recent form of the Ninja ZX-10R is great, so we are obviously a lot closer in the ballpark to where we need to be with the overall set-up. Germany should be good for us - going on the results we have had there in the past. We got a win last year there. OK, in wet conditions of course, but even in the dry we have been quite close to the front there, which fills me with a bit more excitement for this weekend. The current package we have now is even better and that means that we have to go to Germany with the aim of collecting lots more points. People ask me about the positions in the points rankings now and realistically it is still possible to win the championship. The goal is obviously to keep inside the top three and keep pushing."

Loris Baz: "We have the three last races at tracks I really like so I am looking for a good weekend in Germany. We will try the same as every other time, to find a good pace at the beginning of the weekend. We want to get off to a better start than we had in Moscow for sure because we had some bad luck at the beginning. I have raced 600 and 1000 Superstock bikes at the Nürburgring before so I know the track and it is very interesting. There are some fast sections and I like that, some nice corners. We will see what kind of weather we have but I do not care so much which way it is. The bike is getting better every time and all the team are doing a really good job."

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