

2012 AT A GLANCE

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ITALY
APRIL 1
-  **3** ASSEN
THE NETHERLANDS
APRIL 22
-  **4** MONZA
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-  **5** DONINGTON
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-  **6** MILLER MOTORSPORT
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JUNE 10
-  **8** MOTORLAND ARAGON
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PORTUGAL
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FRANCE
OCTOBER 7



MELANDRI IS HAPPY WITH TEST ANSWERS

Marco Melandri hopes a successful test at Imola can get his eni FIM Superbike World Championship back on track when the campaign heads to the famous Assen circuit in Holland this weekend.

The BMW Motorrad rider has made a solid start to the 2012 campaign after making the move to the German manufacturer during the winter following Yamaha's withdrawal from the championship.

A podium at the opening race in Australia suggested the Italian rider may be able to put himself in contention for the title, but a less successful round in Italy, where he picked up a sixth and a 10th place finish after being affected by chatter issues, showed there is still much work to be done.

But the former 250cc Grand Prix champion hopes the post-race test at Imola has helped sort those problems in time to visit the track dubbed 'The Cathedral'. "I think it has been my best test day since I have been with BMW Motorrad," Melandri said.

"For the first time, we got some answers and I am very happy about that. We mainly used the same tyre specification we had in the race to understand how much we have improved compared to the Sunday, and the team did a very good job.

"I hope that the base settings of our bike will work well on a track like Assen.

"I don't know yet if we were able to 100 per cent fix the chatter, but we are sure that we have improved it. I can only be positive."

Melandri currently lies fifth in the championship standings, 29 points behind leader Carlos Checa and one behind team-mate Leon Haslam.

And team manager Andrea Dosoli shares his rider's hope that his chatter problem has been resolved, although he acknowledges that Imola and Assen are circuits with very different characteristics.

Dosoli said: "In general it is very productive to test on the same track on the Monday after the race, because you can focus on the issues you were facing during the race weekend in the same conditions.

"We think we have found a solution for Marco's issues, at least on this circuit, but we are confident that it will also work in Assen and on other race tracks during the season."

infront

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SUPERSPORT™
FIM WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Lorenzo Lanzi cannot wait for his return to the Supersport World Championship with the Prorace Honda team at Assen.

The 31-year-old, a former race-winner in the Superbike World Championship, joins up with the team after Czech rider Lukas Pesek (below) left the outfit.

Lanzi has not competed in Supersport since racing a Ducati in 2004, but is looking forward to his comeback.

Lanzi said: "World Supersport is very competitive, and it won't be easy to stay with the guys at the front, but I've been training hard during the winter."


SUPERSTOCK 1000™
FIM CUP

Ducati Superbike boss Ernesto Marinelli hopes to see improved pace from the new Panigale 1198 machine during the Superstock 1000 Cup round in Holland.

The new bike, being developed for eventual use in the Superbike class, secured a podium finish on its debut at Imola in the hands of Eddi La Marra.

But Marinelli believes there is more to come. He said: "I know the potential of the bike is definitely higher than it appeared in Imola. But I was quite pleased in race one with La Marra, and overall with La Marra's performance over the weekend."


SUPERSTOCK 600™
UEM EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

Ten Kate Honda Junior Team rider Michael van der Mark will look to build on his podium finish at Imola in the second round of the Superstock 600 European Championship at Assen.

Van der Mark, considered one of the favourites to take the title, was a solid third in the opening round as Riccardo Russo took the win. And the Dutchman is looking to improve on that in front of his home fans. "I'm very happy with the podium finish, while that is very important in the first race of a long season," he said.



ENI STEPS IN AS TITLE SPONSOR

Eni, the multi-national integrated energy company, has become title sponsor as well as official supplier of the FIM Superbike World Championship. The partnership complements eni's previous role of technical partner alongside teams, riders and manufacturers.

As a consultant to eni, the International Sports Agency brokered the agreement with Infront Sports & Media, the parent company of Superbike promoter Infront Motor Sports.

Stephan Herth, Executive Director Summer Sports at Infront Sports & Media, said: "With eni, the FIM Superbike World Championship has won a leading international brand for its title sponsor role. This partnership will benefit both partners and further escalate the profile of the series, particularly as eni – as one of the biggest energy brands worldwide – is in a prime position to globally implement its sponsorship involvement."

NEW ENGINE SPEC DELIGHTS CAMIER

The latest specification of Yoshimura engine, put into use at the official tests at Imola after the last round of the eni FIM Superbike World Championship, helped Leon Camier find a significant overall improvement in pace and consistency on his Crescent Fixi Suzuki. Camier did 57 laps, setting a best lap of 1min 47.238sec, a mark that was right on lap record pace.

His new engine spec also helped make the overall chassis and machine set-up, providing the seven-time podium finisher with a platform he now feels he can work from, and at the highest level.

Camier said: "I'm happy with the progress we made. We were able to try out lots of different things, without the pressure and stress of a race weekend, and we have made significant steps forward. We've put in a lot of laps and got a lot done in many areas. The new spec Yoshimura engine we tried is a good improvement."

HONDA DODGE THE ASSEN WEATHER

The Honda World Superbike Team was left with mixed feelings after a two-day test at Assen ahead of the third round of the eni FIM Superbike World Championship at the Dutch circuit. Unsettled weather and low track temperatures restricted the number of laps Jonathan Rea and Hiroshi Aoyama were able to complete on their 2012 Honda CBR1000RR Fireblades at the circuit only 50km north of the team's base at Nieuwleusen.

Rea said: "It's been a little bit frustrating that we weren't able to get as much work done as we wanted. It's been pretty cold and quite wet at times, so we've spent quite a lot of time sitting around. But we've worked on the front end and I've actually got a better feeling from there and an improved acceleration platform off the rear."

Aoyama added: "I am quite positive. We definitely made progress at Imola, and it was good to bring that to a circuit like Assen that I know a bit better."

XAUS SPEARHEADS RUSSIAN PROMO

Former Superbike World Championship rider and multiple winner Ruben Xaus recently made a promotional appearance at the 2012 Moto Park Exhibition in Moscow. The ever-popular Spaniard, who is now team manager for the research and development department of Rimini bike manufacturer Bimota, appeared on a stand with Vladimir Leonov's Yakhnich Motorsport WSS Yamaha R6 machine, on which the talented Russian recently finished sixth at the Imola round.

Yakhnich Motorsport is the general promoter of the eni FIM Superbike World Championship round in Russia, the first edition of which will take place on August 26 at the new Moscow Raceway track.

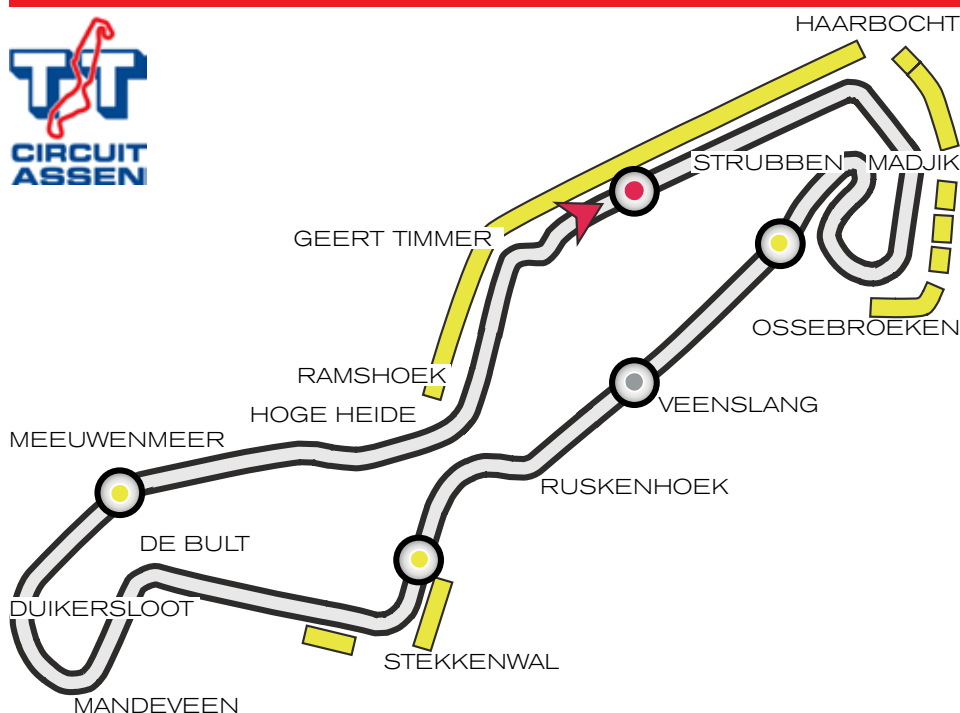
Xaus was overwhelmed by the number of visitors and, as part of the promotion of World Superbike, will also give several masterclasses in Russia, organized by Motoreview magazine in July and August on the Kazan Ring racetrack.

PADDOCK PRAYS FOR LASCORZ RECOVERY

The eni FIM Superbike World Championship heads to Assen with the whole paddock hoping Kawasaki rider Joan Lascorz makes a recovery from the serious injuries he suffered in a testing crash at Imola. The 27-year-old Spaniard crashed on the section between Tosa and Piratella and was airlifted to hospital in Bologna with serious spinal injuries. Lascorz underwent a lengthy operation to re-position his spine before being transferred to an intensive care unit at a hospital in Barcelona.

Lascorz has been brought out of an induced coma and an official statement said doctors were still assessing the chances of the rider being able to regain his movement. The statement said: "Soon the doctors will carry out an appraisal of the situation on a muscular level to get a better understanding of the rider's condition, and to be able to plan his short- and medium-term recovery programme."



CIRCUIT GUIDE: ASSEN

CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS
WORLD SUPERBIKE

1	Carlos Checa	ESP	Ducati	75
2	Max Biaggi	ITA	Aprilia	71
3	Tom Sykes	GBR	Kawasaki	69
4	Leon Haslam	GBR	BMW	47
5	Marco Melandri	ITA	BMW	46
6	Jonathan Rea	GBR	Honda	40
7	Jakub Smrz	CZE	Ducati	30
8	Eugene Laverty	IRE	Aprilia	29
9	Sylvain Guintoli	FRA	Ducati	21
10	Maxime Berger	FRA	Ducati	20
11	Lorenzo Zanetti	ITA	Ducati	18
12	Joan Lascorz	ESP	Kawasaki	17
13	Hiroshi Aoyama	JAP	Honda	15
14=	Leon Camier	GBR	Suzuki	12
14=	Niccolò Canepa	ITA	Ducati	12

WORLD SUPERSPORT

1	Fabien Foret	FRA	Kawasaki	45
2	Sam Lowes	GBR	Honda	31
3=	Kenan Sofuoglu	TUR	Kawasaki	25
3=	Ronan Quarmby	RSA	Honda	25
5	Vittorio Iannuzzo	ITA	Triumph	18

SUPERSTOCK 1000

1	Sylvain Barrier	FRA	BMW	25
2	Loris Baz	FRA	Kawasaki	20
3	Eddi La Marra	ITA	Ducati	16
4	Markus Reiterberger	GER	BMW	13
5	Bryan Staring	AUS	Kawasaki	11

LAST TIME
IMOLA 01.04.12
RACE ONE

1	C Checa	Althea Racing	38'06.26
2	T Sykes	Kawasaki Racing	@3.206
3	L Haslam	BMW Motorrad	@5.593
4	M Biaggi	Aprilia Racing	@6.519
5	E Laverty	Aprilia Racing	@24.662
6	M Melandri	BMW Motorrad	@27.261
7	J Lascorz	Kawasaki Racing	@27.384
8	L Zanetti	PATA Racing	@28.299
9	J Rea	Honda	@34.067
10	N Canepa	Red Devils Roma	@35.724
11	J Smrz	Effenbert Liberty	@36.738
12	M Berger	Effenbert Liberty	@37.257
13	J Hopkins	Crescent Fixi Suzuki	@50.418
14	L Mercado	Team Pedercini	@53.623
15	A Badovini	BMW Motorrad	@53.942
16	B McCormick	Effenbert Liberty	@54.139
17	M Aitchison	Grillini Progea	@57.944
18	H Aoyama	Honda	@1'06.233
19	D Salom	Team Pedercini	@5 laps
Ret	M Fabrizio	BMW Motorrad	@13 laps
Ret	D Giugliano	Althea Racing	@13 laps
Ret	S Guintoli	Effenbert Liberty	@20 laps
Ret	C Davies	ParkinGO MTC	@ 20 laps
Ret	L Camier	Crescent Fixi Suzuki	
Ret	L Alfonsi	Pro Ride Real Game	

RACE TWO

1	C Checa	Althea Racing	37'57.571
2	T Sykes	Kawasaki Racing	@1.935
3	L Haslam	BMW Motorrad	@2.969
4	M Biaggi	Aprilia Racing	@3.346
5	J Rea	Honda	@18.925
6	E Laverty	Aprilia Racing	@21.180
7	J Smrz	Effenbert Liberty	@21.392
8	L Camier	Crescent Fixi Suzuki	@23.797
9	J Lascorz	Kawasaki Racing	@24.219
10	M Melandri	BMW Motorrad	@25.599
11	S Guintoli	Effenbert Liberty	@25.776
12	M Berger	Effenbert Liberty	@26.004
13	L Zanetti	PATA Racing	@31.172
14	C Davies	ParkinGO MTC	@33.837
15	A Badovini	BMW Motorrad	@45.541
16	M McCormick	Effenbert Liberty	@50.807
17	D Salom	Team Pedercini	@51.083
18	M Aitchison	Grillini Progea	@57.833
Ret	D Giugliano	Althea Racing	@1 lap
Ret	N Canepa	Red Devils Roma	@4 laps
Ret	L Mercado	Team Pedercini	@7 laps
Ret	H Aoyama	Honda	@9 laps
Ret	L Alfonsi	Pro Ride Real Game	@13 laps
Ret	J Hopkins	Crescent Fixi Suzuki	@17 laps
Ret	M Fabrizio	BMW Motorrad	