



2017 preseason comes to an end for Antonelli and Bendsneyder

Niccolo Antonelli and Bo Bendsneyder closed preseason testing in Qatar in 8th and 13th position on the combined standings, respectively, as difficult weather conditions again affected the action.

03/19/2017 - Losail International Circuit, Qatar

Niccolo Antonelli and Bo Bendsneyder capped off their preseason work with a final night of testing at Losail, ending with a good feeling at the venue for the 2017 Qatar Grand Prix. Rain and strong winds prevented them from using the night to its fullest, and besides the second session, there was only a small window in the first and third sessions to get out on track. On the combined timesheet for the three nights of testing, Antonelli finished 8th -taking a significant step forward- whilst teammate Bendsneyder was 13th (4th on Sunday).

Antonelli was only able to complete 24 laps on Sunday. but finished his two sessions in the Top 10 and

set a best time of 2:08.733. Bendsneyder also demonstrated his skill in difficult conditions in Qatar, ending the night 4th with a best lap of 2:08.269. He put in a total of 22 laps. Both the first and last sessions of the day were hindered by the rain and wind.

The 2017 season will begin next Thursday, March 23rd, at the Losail International Circuit. The Red Bull KTM Ajo team riders will have two Free Practice sessions, at 6pm and 8:55pm local time.

Results – Combined Standings Day 3

1. Juanfran Guevara (KTM) 2:07.649
2. Ayumu Sasaki (Honda) 2:07.825 +0.176
3. Gabriel Rodrigo (KTM) 2:08.103 +0.454
- 4. Bo Bendsneyder (Red Bull KTM Ajo) 2:08.269 +0.620**
5. Romano Fenati (Honda) 2:08.296 +0.647
- 12. Niccolo Antonelli (Red Bull KTM Ajo) 2:08.733 +1.084**

Results – Combined Standings Days 1-2-3

1. Romano Fenati (Honda) 2:06.690
2. Jorge Martin (Honda) 2:06.729 +0.039
3. Aron Canet (Honda) 2:06.749 +0.059
4. Gabriel Rodrigo (KTM) 2:06.957 +0.267
5. Livio Loi (Honda) 2:2:07.068 +0.378
- 8. Niccolo Antonelli (Red Bull KTM Ajo) 2:07.150 +0.460**
- 13. Bo Bendsnedyer (Red Bull KTM Ajo) 2:07.339 +0.649**

Aki Ajo - Team Manager: "After testing in Valencia and Jerez this winter, it was interesting to be able to also test here in Qatar. Although the weather conditions have not been the best, I think we have found a fairly good base setup for the race in Qatar. We will continue to work here next Thursday."

#23 Niccolo Antonelli: "Overall it went quite well. Today it was very difficult to ride with the wind, but we were able to try some things out and I am happy with the result. When we went out for the last session the weather was too bad, it was impossible to turn and stay on the bike. We are fairly consistent, I feel more comfortable when cornering and I think we have improved a lot since the last test. I'm sure we can take another step forward before next Sunday's race."

#64 Bo Bendsneyder: "We had two good nights of testing. Today it has been quite windy and it has been more difficult to test things. We have not been able to reach the times we usually do here when the conditions are good, but it has been a positive day. I am looking forward to the race; I think we have a good base setup with which to start the weekend, although we have to work very hard to improve."

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Oliveira and Binder end preseason satisfied in Qatar

Red Bull KTM Ajo riders complete last official test before the Qatar GP, with Oliveira 5th overall and Binder 21st.

03/19/2017 - Losail International Circuit, Qatar

The Red Bull KTM Ajo Moto2 team concluded their preseason testing this Sunday in Qatar, with weather conditions once again affecting the action on track. This time it was the strong wind and the rain at the Losail International Circuit that prevented Miguel Oliveira and Brad Binder from going out in the last session of the evening, and they concluded the final night's work in 2nd and 21st, respectively. In the combined classification for the two nights, the Portuguese finished 5th and the South African 21st, both with good feelings on the bike and with important kilometres under their belts ahead of the season opener next week.

Oliveira ended the test among the Top 5 overall, in addition to taking a step forward with the setup of his KTM Moto2 bike. The Portuguese, who today completed a total of 30 laps, clocked a best time of 2:01.255 which allowed him to lead the first session on Sunday. Brad Binder continued to gain valuable

experience in preparation for his debut in the intermediate category; today he put in 28 laps, with a time of 2:02.592 his best at the end of the day. Both riders sat out the last session of the day, which was suspended due to the strong wind and rain at the Losail International Circuit.

The Moto2 World Championship season gets underway at the Qatari track on Thursday, March 23rd, as the Red Bull KTM Ajo Moto2 project start two free practice sessions at 18:55 and 21:50 local time.

Results – Combined Standings Day 3

1. Franco Morbidelli (Kalex) 2:00.971
- 2. Miguel Oliveira (Red Bull KTM Ajo) 2:01.255 +0.284**
3. Thomas Luthi (Kalex) 2:01.304 +0.333
4. Xavier Simeon (Kalex) 2:01.544 +0.573
5. Francesco Bagnaia (Kalex) 2:01.618 +0.647
- 21. Brad Binder (Red Bull KTM Ajo) 2:02.592 +1.621**

Results – Combined Standings Days 2-3

1. Takaaki Nakagami (Kalex) 2:00.187
2. Franco Morbidelli (Kalex) 2:00.240 +0.053
3. Alex Marquez (Kalex) 2:00.427 +0.240
4. Hafiz Syahrin (Kalex) 2:00.771 +0.584
- 5. Miguel Oliveira (Red Bull KTM Ajo) 2:00.861 +0.674**
- 21. Brad Binder (Red Bull KTM Ajo) 2:01.814 +1.627**

Aki Ajo - Team Manager: "We've had two very important days for continuing to develop the new KTM Moto2 bike. Unfortunately, the first day was canceled due to the rain and today we also had to stop a bit earlier. However, in any case we have put in some very good laps with the bike, which have been key to understanding how the bike works here in Qatar."

#41 Brad Binder: "Today went very well. At first it was a bit tough, but little by little I found my way, every time I get on the bike I'm learning something new and it makes everything a little easier for me. We have to continue working in this way. It's a shame to have lost a whole day and part of today, because it was too windy, but all-in-all, I feel we have taken a step forward this weekend. I feel much better about the bike; next week we will try to keep taking steps forward every day."

#44 Miguel Oliveira: "These nights of testing have been very positive. Above all, we have changed some things on the bike from yesterday to today that have given me a lot of confidence to progress. The times do not show that the conditions were not the best, nor do they show the work we have done, but I'm happy with how the evening went. Hopefully next week the weather will be more stable than during these three nights. From the times in testing it is a bit difficult to say who will be up at the front next weekend at the race, but we are on the right track to be one of the outstanding riders."

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