

BENNETTS BRITISH SUPERBIKE CHAMPIONSHIP**ROUND 9 – Mallory Park – 22 July 2007 – RACE REVIEW****British Superbike**

Round 9 of the 2007 Bennetts British Superbike Championship was marred this weekend with the tragic news of Team NB's Ollie Bridewell suffering a fatal crash during Friday's free practice session.

As a mark of respect for the 21-year old, the entire paddock lined up on the start/finish line to pay tribute to one of Britain's rising stars with a minute silence. In remembrance of Ollie, his starting grid position was retained and left empty for both Superbike races.

Ollie's younger brother, Tommy Bridewell returned home with his family and did not take his starting position on the Team NB Suzuki GSX-R1000. However, to honour Ollie, the rest of the Team NB team were present throughout race day.

Investigations into the tragic incident, coupled with hazardous track conditions prevented any ontrack action for the remainder of Friday. After making numerous track inspections throughout the morning, circuit staff set about the task of clearing standing water from both the track and crucial run-off areas. Finally deemed safe to ride, event organisers, MCRCB, took the decision to cancel qualifying sessions for the Saturday and the afternoon was given over to free practice for all classes.

Starting grid positions for Sunday's races would be predetermined upon championship positions coming into round 9. As a result, Virgin Media Optoma Loans Yamaha's Tommy Hill would line up 10th for the two 30-lap races.

The 1.41-mile Leicestershire circuit is notoriously difficult to pass around. With Tommy's Pirellis offering the Yamaha YZF-R1 superb grip, the Lingfield-based rider found himself in a strong position to head the second group for the entire race.

Tommy Hill put in his strongest performance of the day during race 1 to hold off the constant pressure by Cal Crutchlow and Leon Camier to claim seventh at the chequered flag. For once, the weather forecast proved to be wrong, and the riders completed the race under blue skies.

Race 2 started in a promising fashion with Tommy making up three places from his grid position of tenth, to circulate in 7th for the opening three laps. However, with first Sykes at Gerrard's, then

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Crutchlow at Edwina's taking places from the Pirelli-shod rider, Tommy was soon on the back foot and battling hard to keep his Virgin Media Optoma Loans Yamaha inside the top ten.

Tommy held firm until the safety car was deployed due a three-bike incident at Charlie's on lap 10. As race leader, Kiyonari pulled the trigger at the start of lap 13, Tommy was in a strong position to mount a charge on Crutchlow in eighth.

However, during the closing stages, the Lingfield-based rider could not keep track with the pace of the front group and would soon be taken by Rutter for 9th. As the field headed toward the climax of lap 22, Jonathan Rea ran out of luck as he crashed his Honda at the tight Bus Stop chicane. With his machine still in the track, the race was red-flagged, elevating Tommy to his second top ten finish of the day in ninth.

Superbike Cup

Marty Nutt lost valuable ground on third placed Malcolm Ashley in the Superbike Cup. After securing 13 more championship points in race 1, an unforced error by the NuttTravel.com/T+G Yamaha rider saw him collect fellow Pirelli runner Aaron Zanotti at Charlie's forcing the deployment of the safety car.

Shane Byrne on the Stobart Vent Axia Motorsport Honda shared the spoils with Championship leader Ryuichi Kiyonari.

There will now be a three week break ahead of round 10 at the North Yorkshire circuit of Croft over on 12 August.

Race 1

AIR HUMIDITY	?	AIR TEMPERATURE	?
TRACK CONDITION	Dry	TRACK TEMPERATURE	?

Race Standings

	Rider	Bike	Team	Race time
(1	Byrne	Honda CBR1000 RR	Stobart Vent Axia Motorsport	28:21.458)
7	Hill	Yamaha YZF-R1	Virgin Media Optoma Loans Yamaha	28:48.721
19	Nutt (c)	Yamaha YZF-R1	PBM Racing Ireland	1 Lap
21	Zanotti	Yamaha YZF-R1	SMT Yamaha/Zanotti Racing	1 Lap

Race 2

AIR HUMIDITY	?	AIR TEMPERATURE	?
TRACK CONDITION	Dry	TRACK TEMPERATURE	?

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Race Standings

	Rider	Bike	Team	Race time
(1	Kiyonari	Honda CBR1000 RR	HM Plant Honda	21:24.315)
9	Hill	Yamaha YZF R1	Virgin Media Optoma Loans Yamaha	21:39.796

Championship Standings

	Rider	Bike	Team	Points
(1	Kiyonari	Honda CBR1000 RR	HM Plant Honda	298)
9	Tommy Hill	Yamaha YZF R1	Virgin Media Optoma Loans Yamaha	110
14	Ollie Bridewell	Suzuki GSXR1000K6	Team NB	56
17	Tommy Bridewell	Suzuki GSXR1000K6	Team NB	27

British Supersport

AIR HUMIDITY	%	AIR TEMPERATURE	°C
TRACK CONDITION	Dry	TRACK TEMPERATURE	°

Race Report

As the riders launched from Championship positions on the grid, Dennis Hobbs stole away with the holeshot with Relentless by TAS Suzuki riders, Laverty and Lowry in hot pursuit. Virgin Media Yamaha's Billy McConnell circulated in seventh for the opening three laps, riding cautiously due to the suspended three-race ban looming over the young Australian riders head.

The fast-paced Mallory Park circuit is notoriously difficult to pass on, and it took until lap 12 for Pirelli runner, Ian Lowry to pass his team-mate for second at the tight Bus Stop chicane. Six laps later, and Lowry slid his Suzuki GSX-R600 underneath the Honda of Hobbs to take the lead at Shaw's Hairpin. Laverty, however, remained in touch with the front two and swiftly moved into second three corners later. With just his team-mate ahead, Laverty bided his time before making a dive for the lead two laps later at the Hairpin.

Now with just the Mallory Park tarmac ahead of his, the Toombridge rider quickly upped the ante putting in a string of successively fast laps to claim his fourth win and seventh podium of the season by 2.7s over Lowry.

Billy McConnell dipped under the Honda of John McGuinness into Gerrard's at the start of lap 6, moving into sixth and set about chasing down Robinson and Oulton Park race winner Ian Hutchinson. Biding his time, Billy passed the Honda taking fourth position on the entry to Shaw's Hairpin on lap 18. Despite pulling a safe gap between himself and Hutchinson, Billy was unable to reel in Hobbs for the final podium slot.

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Virgin Media Yamaha team-mate, Tom Grant did not make the best of starts. Languishing down in 11th at the end of the first lap, Tom had everything to do over the remaining laps to claw his Virgin Media Yamaha YZF-R6 back inside the top ten. Although Tom could smell the fumes from Robinson's Honda, he was unable to make the pass and as the pair crossed the finish line, just 0.01s prevented Tom from taking 9th.

Supersport Cup

Craig Fitzpatrick fell victim to the new Charlie's Chicane on the exit of Gerrar's on the first lap, paving the way for fellow Cup competitor Christian Elkin on the BBR Racing Honda to battle for Pirelli podium honours. After a race-long battle, Elkin edged out Yamaha rider Ben Wylie to claim the second step on the podium.

AIR HUMIDITY	%	AIR TEMPERATURE	°C
TRACK CONDITION	Dry	TRACK TEMPERATURE	°

Race Standings

	Rider	Bike	Team	Race time
1	Lavery	Suzuki GSX-R	Relentless by TAS	27:20.538
2	Lowry	Suzuki GSX-R	Relentless by TAS	27:23.281
3	Hobbs	Honda CBR600 RR	Padgetts Motorcycles	27:25.314
4	McConnell	Yamaha YZF-R6	Virgin Media Yamaha	27:33.473
5	Hutchinson	Honda CBR600 RR	Bike Animal Honda	27:35.273

Championship Standings

	Rider	Bike	Team	Points
1	Lavery	Suzuki GSX-R	Relentless by TAS	165
2	Lowry	Suzuki GSX-R	Relentless by TAS	133
3	Hobbs	Honda CBR600 RR	Padgetts Motorcycles	123
4	Robinson	Honda CBR600 RR	Margal/Bykerbabe	103
5	Hutchinson	Honda CBR600 RR	Bike Animal	83
6	McGuinness	Honda CBR600 RR	Padgetts Motorcycles	81
7	McConnell	Yamaha YZF-R6	Virgin Media Yamaha	75
8	Grant	Yamaha YZF-R6	Virgin Media Yamaha	59
8	Easton	Kawasaki ZXR600 RR	Isilion MSS Discovery	55
10	Westmoreland	Honda CBR600 RR	Centurion Racing	51

Virgin Media Cup

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AIR HUMIDITY	?	AIR TEMPERATURE	?
TRACK CONDITION	Dry	TRACK TEMPERATURE	?

Championship leader, BJ Toal extended his lead to 30-points over second placed Midge Smart with his fourth victory of the season in the Virgin Media Cup at Mallory Park today, 22 July.

An incident-packed race saw the safety car deployed as early as the first lap after Jay Fernandez lost control of his Yamaha YZF-R6 at Gerrard's Chicane. Brill, Cusick, Billard and Howell were also collected in the process. The unfortunate Fernandez suffered suspected broken ribs as a result of his dramatic highside.

David Paton stole the holeshot from 3rd on the grid, and led a five-bike break at the head of the field once the safety car had pulled in on lap 5. BJ Toal swiftly moved to second at the start of lap 6, before taking Paton for the lead at Shaw's Hairpin on the same lap.

A Leon Morris highside at Gerrard's Chicane saw the safety car take to the Leicestershire circuit for the second time as marshals helped the stricken rider from the tarmac. As the safety car pulled in on lap 9, BJ Toal took the bull by the horns and set about extending his lead at the front. James Webb slid under David Paton at Gerrard's on lap 10 to take 3rd position before the unlucky Scot was judged to have passed under the safety car flag and would receive a 20-second penalty along with Ronan Quarmby.

Dane Hellyer, running in a strong fifth position, collected more air miles with a spectacular highside exiting the notorious Devil's Elbow as the riders headed for the start of lap 12.

James Webb and Midge Smart reignited the double race battle from the British Round of MotoGP, swapping paint and places as the two backed into Shaw's. Smart was to claim victory over his nemesis yet again as the luckless Webb crashed down out of Edwina's, rejoining to salvage three points in 13th. However, Webb leaves Mallory Park with the new Virgin Media Cup lap record with a time of 1:00.972s posted on lap 11.

Despite running third on the track, David Paton would initially finish down in ninth due to the 20-second penalty levied on the Scot for passing while the safety car was on track. After a successful appeal, the 18-year old was reinstated in third and Ronan Quarmby in ninth. Robbie Brown took his second trip of the season to the podium, but would later be relegated back down to fourth.

Further down the field, a number of riders scored their best finishing positions of the season. Fast Bikes magazine staffer, Alastair Fagan, brought home his Yamaha in 7th while Israeli rider Yaron Salinger posted his first points of the season with a strong ride to cross the line in 11th. Josh Van Den Bos was another to bag his first points of the season scoring two points with 14th.

As the field entered the final few laps, returnee, Danny Harrison suffered a dramatic crash entering Gerrard's. With the rider laying prone in a precarious position in the gravel, the race was red-flagged handing BJ Toal his fourth win of the season.

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BJ Toal: “That was such a hard race, the Safety Car situation made it really difficult to keep my concentration. I managed to get to the front after the first safety car went in then hold onto the lead from there. It’s good to be back on the top step again.”

Race Standings

	Rider	Bike	Race time
1	Toal	Yamaha YZF-R6	17:32.496
2	Smart	Yamaha YZF-R6	17:33.191
3	Paton	Yamaha YZF-R6	17:36.557
4	Brown	Yamaha YZF-R6	17:40.151
5	Hipwell	Yamaha YZF-R6	17:44.778

Championship Standings

	Rider	Bike	Points
1	Toal	Yamaha YZF-R6	142
2	Smart	Yamaha YZF-R6	112
3	Paton	Yamaha YZF-R6	98
4	Webb	Yamaha YZF-R6	73
=5	Hipwell	Yamaha YZF-R6	65
=5	Morris	Yamaha YZF-R6	65
7	Brown	Yamaha YZF-R6	55
8	Haire	Yamaha YZF-R6	41

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