

## **Bridgestone geared up for 2012 MotoGP tests**

Following an intensive development programme over the winter break, Bridgestone is geared up for the first MotoGP group tests of 2012 as evaluation of the tyres that will be used for the upcoming season continues.

With six lap records set on Bridgestone rubber in 2011 and race times at ten of the rounds faster than in 2010, Bridgestone analysed tyre performance data and rider feedback throughout last year to develop tyres for the 2012 season that offer improved warm-up performance, enhanced rider feel and extended operating temperature range.

While the majority of teams take to Malaysia's Sepang International Circuit for their first test, some teams fielding Claiming Rule Team (CRT) bikes this year have already commenced their first shake-down of the year at Spain's Circuit Ricardo Tormo in Valencia.

Riders at the first Sepang test will have access to newly developed front tyres featuring revisions to rubber compounds and construction that were specifically developed to boost warm-up performance. Evaluation of the new front tyre will take place alongside ongoing assessment of the 2012 specification tyres that were well received by riders when debuted at last November's Valencia post-season test.

The following Bridgestone tyre compounds will be available at the upcoming Sepang and Valencia tests:

- **Sepang** – Front: Hard & Extra-Hard; Rear: Medium & Hard; Rain: Hard
- **Valencia** – Front: Soft & Medium; Rear: Medium & Hard (asymmetric); Rain: Soft

To provide on-site support at each of the tests, Bridgestone has sent technical engineers to both Spain and Malaysia. Aside from providing technical support, the engineers will focus on the acquisition of tyre data and rider feedback, all of which will be compiled and sent back to Bridgestone's Technical Centre in Japan for further analysis.

At Sepang, Bridgestone will also meet with newly appointed Safety Advisor to Dorna, Loris Capirossi, to continue their collaboration to improve rider safety. During the test, Bridgestone and Capirossi will monitor rider reaction to the 2012 specification tyres and establish a working plan for the upcoming season.

### **Tohru Ubukata - General Manager, Bridgestone Motorsport Tyre Development Department**

"Though we achieved our key objectives and numerous lap records were broken in 2011, for the upcoming season we have focused our development on further enhancing the safety aspects of our MotoGP tyres.

"To achieve this target, our technical aim for the new specification tyres was to make their grip characteristics easier to manage, improve warm-up performance and increase their operating temperature range. The positive reception our new tyres received at the Valencia post-season test showed we are well on track with development, and we have continued our progress over the winter break.

"At Sepang we will introduce new specification tyres for testing, while for the Valencia test we will continue to evaluate the tyres we debuted there last November. Apart from examining performance data during the tests, we will work closely with Safety Advisor Loris Capirossi and the riders to gauge their perception of the new tyres. This is all part of our goal to ensure optimal tyre performance for all motorcycles on the grid in 2012."

The complete MotoGP test schedule for 2012 is as follows:

- Valencia (Private test), January 30-31
- Sepang (IRTA official test), January 31 - February 2
- Jerez (Private test), February 20-22
- Sepang (IRTA official test), February 28 - March 1
- Aragon (Private test), March 8-9
- Jerez (IRTA official test), March 23-25

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