

Marquez romps to fifth MotoGP title

AFP | Motegi, Japan

Honda's Marc Marquez stormed to a nail-biting victory in Japan yesterday to capture his third straight MotoGP world championship as Ducati rival Andrea Dovizioso crashed out.

The Spanish sensation has now won five championships in motorcycling's premier class, putting him level with Australian legend Mick Doohan.

Marquez, still just 25, trails only the Italian pair of Valentino Rossi, who won the last of his seven championships in 2009, and Giacomo Agostini, whose record eighth came in 1975, in the all-time list.

"I feel really, really good," whooped Marquez after Dovizioso's late spill confirmed his eighth victory of the season.

"I already imagined that it will be (decided) here but the important thing is that when you have the first chance, you do it.

"It wasn't the best circuit to do it but I worked hard all weekend," added Marquez.

"I was able to follow Andrea and decided to attack before

the last lap. I was pushing really hard, so he made a mistake -- I'm disappointed because he deserves to be on the podium with us."

Marquez started from sixth on the grid at Motegi but quickly knifed through the field and was third by the end of the first lap.

He flirted with disaster on lap 14, however, after overtaking Dovizioso at turn nine before running wide at the next corner and spitting up dirt and dust as he battled to control a violent wobble.

That heart-in-mouth moment allowed Dovizioso to retake the lead, but Marquez continued to swarm all over the Italian, finally slashing past him with a daredevil move on lap 21 of 24.

Dovizioso, who needed to complete a pole to flag victory to keep alive his fading championship hopes, crashed out on the penultimate lap in a desperate last push, ending this year's title race.

Dance with caution

Marquez was mobbed by his team mechanics after crossing the line to seal his coronation



Repsol Honda Team Spanish rider Marc Marquez crosses the finish line copy

with three races left.

"The big boss will enjoy this," smiled Marquez after wrapping up the title at Honda's home race, before rejoining the party at his team garage he revealed afterwards had left him nursing a sore shoulder.

"The shoulder just popped

out. Luckily with the adrenalin it doesn't hurt, but I'll need to be careful not to overdo it on the dancefloor tonight!"

Fellow Honda rider Cal Crutchlow finished runner-up after Dovizioso's fall with Alex Rins (Suzuki) edging out Rossi (Yamaha) to round out the podium.

Marquez has now won seven world titles in total after also winning the 125cc championship in 2010 and the Moto2 crown in 2012.

"It's something that will go into the history books," he said.

"To have won seven at 25-years-old is an indescribable feeling that fills me with great pride."

Meanwhile, three-time world champion Jorge Lorenzo will miss next weekend's Australian race after sitting out the Japanese round with injury.

Ducati said the Spaniard, who fractured his wrist at the previous race in Thailand, will aim to return at the penultimate weekend in Malaysia at the start of November.

Lorenzo paid tribute to Marquez, who he will join at Honda next year.

English Premier League

| | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|----------------|
| Everton | 2 | - | 0 | Crystal Palace |
|---------|---|---|---|----------------|

Scottish Premiership

| | | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---------|
| Hamilton Academical | 1 | - | 4 | Rangers |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---------|

Italian Serie A

| | | | | |
|----------------|---|----|---|----------|
| Frosinone | 3 | - | 3 | Empoli |
| Bologna | 2 | - | 2 | Torino |
| Chievo | 1 | - | 5 | Atalanta |
| Parma | 0 | - | 2 | Lazio |
| Fiorentina | 0 | - | 0 | Cagliari |
| Internazionale | | v. | | Milan |

German Bundesliga

| | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Hertha BSC | 1 | - | 1 | Sport-Club Freiburg |
| Monchengladbach | 1 | - | 0 | 1. FSV Mainz 05 |

Spanish La Liga

| | | | | |
|----------------|---|----|---|-----------------|
| Rayo Vallecano | 1 | - | 2 | Getafe |
| Eibar | 1 | - | 1 | Athletic Club |
| Huesca | | v. | | Espanyol |
| Real Betis | | v. | | Real Valladolid |

French Ligue 1

| | | | | |
|-------------|---|----|---|-----------|
| Montpellier | 2 | - | 0 | Bordeaux |
| St Etienne | 1 | - | 1 | Rennes |
| Nice | | v. | | Marseille |

*Scores as of closing

Japan's Honda on target as A-League season kicks off



Melbourne Victory captain Japan's Keisuke Honda (L) is tackled by Melbourne City player Florin Berenguer-Bohrer (R) during their A-League football match in Melbourne

AFP | Sydney

Japanese superstar Keisuke Honda scored on his A-League debut in front of 40,000 fans, but it wasn't enough to secure three points in a pulsating Melbourne derby on the opening weekend of the Australian season.

The former AC Milan striker, one of the highest profile names in Asian football, powered a header past Melbourne City goalkeeper Eugene Galkovic after 28 minutes as Hondamania gripped Marvel Stadium.

But his Melbourne Victory team let the lead slip when Ritchie De Laet followed up on Lawrence Thomas' penalty save shortly before half-time, then City substitute Riley

McGree made it 2-1 with 20 minutes left.

Despite Honda being in the thick of the action, there was no way back for the reigning champions.

While disappointed with defeat, Victory coach Kevin Muscat was impressed by new signing Honda.

"He's a very, very clever footballer, the understanding that he's got with his teammates in such a short period of time, he was exciting," he said.

"It's a good starting point for us to keep building and getting better."

Elsewhere, former Bolton Wanderers striker Adam Le Fondre pounced late in the game to earn 2017 champions Sydney FC a point in a 1-1 draw against Adelaide United.

Nabil, Lea storm into last eight at ITF Juniors

TDI | Manama

Top qualifiers Youssef Nabil and Lea Rebreyend were among eight players who booked their seats yesterday for their respective Singles Main Draws in the 10th Bahrain ITF Juniors Championships 2018, being played at Bahrain Tennis Club (BTC).

Nabil, from Egypt, led Zubin Omar from Bangladesh, Alexandre Ver Hulst from France and Oliver Richards from Great Britain into the Boys' Singles Main Draw following wins in their final round of qualifying this evening.

Lea, meanwhile, from France, was joined by Andra Izabella Sirbu of Romania and Riya Matharoo and Saniya Asand, both from India, as the four qualifiers who made it into the Girls' Singles Main Draw.

Action in both singles competitions is scheduled to begin today from 9am in the morning all the way through to the evening, making for a packed programme of 28 matches in all. The official opening formalities will also be held at 5pm as part of the afternoon's sessions. All are welcome to attend and cheer for their favourite players in their matches.

Tonight, a Welcome Party for all those participating in the championships has been scheduled at Wyndham Garden Hotel in Juffair from 7.30pm onwards. All players attending the event will receive a raffle ticket for a chance to win valuable prizes at the end of the gathering.

The 10th Bahrain ITF Juniors Champi-



Saniya Masand of India in action

onships 2018 is being held under the patronage of Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa. It is supported by the Ministry of Youth and Sports Affairs (MYS) and is sponsored by Bapco and E K Kanoo.

MYS Director of Clubs Affairs Tareq Al Arabi visited BTC yesterday and gave two thumbs up for all the work done by the club in hosting the championships to the highest of international standards. Al Arabi spoke with some of the players and their parents about the competition, and was delighted to receive only positive feedback regarding all aspects of the organisation. He was received on his visit by BTC Club Manager

RESULTS

Boys' Qualifiers

Youssef Nabil (EGY) bt Archie Graham (GBR) 6-3, 6-3
Zubin Omar (BAN) bt Deepak Vayara (IND) 6-0, 6-2
Alexandre Ver Hulst (FRA) bt Harold Huens (BEL) 6-1, 6-1
Oliver Richards (GBR) bt Siddharth Jadhli (IND) 6-0, 6-1

Girls' Qualifiers

Andra Izabella Sirbu (ROU) bt Zaara Omar (USA) 6-2, 6-3
Lea Rebreyend (FRA) bt Sophie De Boer (BRN) 6-1, 6-0
Riya Matharoo (IND) bt Lia Mosimann (SUI) 6-3, 7-6 (3)
Saniya Masand (IND) bt Maryam Isa (BRN) 6-1, 6-0

Hamdi Abduljawad and BTC Administration Manager Khalid Ghuloom.

In the boys' qualifiers yesterday, Nabil had a hard-earned 6-3, 6-3 win over Archie Graham from Great Britain. The result put him through to the competition proper. Omar followed suit with a 6-0, 6-2 victory against Deepak Vayara of India.

Ver Hulst beat Harold Huens of Belgium 6-1, 6-1 to join the boys moving forward, while Richards got the better of Siddharth Jadhli of India 6-0, 6-1.

In the girls' qualifiers, Lea managed to claim a fine 6-1, 6-0 win against Sophie De Boer of Bahrain. Also victorious was Andra, who defeated Zaara Omar of the US 6-2, 6-3.

Indians Riya and Saniya had contrasting victories to book their berths in the Main Round. Riya overcame a tough challenge from Lia Mosimann from Switzerland 6-3, 7-6 (3), while Saniya beat Bahrain's other qualifying hopeful, Maryam Isa, 6-1, 6-0.

Tavernier at the double as Rangers cure travel sickness

AFP | Glasgow, United Kingdom

James Tavernier converted two penalties amid a late flurry of goals as Rangers won 4-1 at Hamilton yesterday to give manager Steven Gerrard his first away victory in the Scottish Premiership.

The Glasgow giants had not won on road in league since February and more away-day frustration beckoned when Ham-

ilton's Steven Boyd made it 1-1 with 10 minutes to go, after Ryan Kent had put Rangers ahead.

But Tavernier scored twice from the spot, Accies defender Alex Penny conceding both penalties, before Alfredo Morelos made it 4-1 deep into stoppage time. Victory lifted Rangers to fifth place, five points behind leaders Hearts.

For much of yesterday's match they were holding onto

a 1-0 lead secured four minutes before half-time. Lassana Coulibaly intercepted a Ziggy Gordon pass and played the ball to Morelos, with the Colombian in turn releasing Kent, who clipped a shot over Hamilton goalkeeper Gary Woods.

Hamilton missed a couple of gilt-edged chances before eventually levelling with 10 minutes when Boyd evaded a challenge by Jordan Rossiter be-

fore smashing a shot past Gers keeper Allan McGregor.

But minutes later Penny had conceded two clear penalties, using an arm to stop a cross from Daniel Candeiias before tripping Morelos inside the area.

Tavernier made him pay on both occasions before Morelos added to Hamilton's misery in stoppage time, rounding Woods before shooting into an unguarded net.