

## KAWASAKI WINS MANUFACTURER'S CHAMPIONSHIP

On the final day of the 2020 WorldSBK season Kawasaki won the Manufacturers' Championship to add to the Riders' Championship win scored by Jonathan Rea on his KRT Ninja ZX-10RR on Saturday. Alex Lowes (KRT) gave his characteristic full commitment on day two but suffered two falls.

In the Tissot-Superpole race, held at the usual 11am time slot, Rea again had to start from 15<sup>th</sup> place on the grid but was soon up into the top five positions. He was unable to improve on this placing within the ten-lap duration of the race and finished fifth. This placed him fifth on the grid for the final race of the weekend.

Lowes had the misfortune to fall on the first lap the Tissot Superpole race and despite running strongly in race two he experienced a drop off in grip and was to eventually fall as a result. Alex ended his first KRT season in an overall sixth place in the championship.

Race two, started at a rescheduled 15.15 hours local time in Portugal, was proving promising for Rea but in attempted pass on second placed Toprak Razgatlioglu ended in contact between them, with Jonathan losing the front and crashing. He got going again to finish 14<sup>th</sup> and score two more championship points to add to his winning total.

The short eight round season delivered race wins and podiums for Rea and Lowes, plus a sixth successive title for Rea and a sixth consecutive Manufacturers' title for Kawasaki – all despite the peculiar nature of a season affected by the global Covid-19 pandemic.

### STATEMENTS:

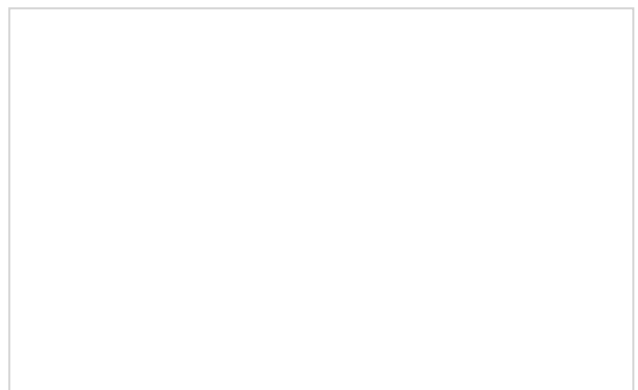
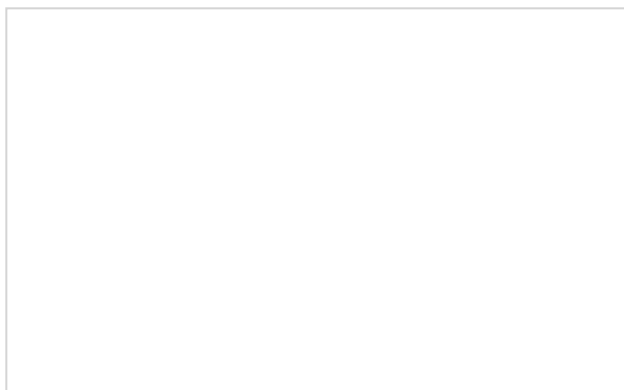
**Jonathan Rea (Kawasaki Racing Team Rider):** "I had a great pace in the beginning of the second race. I gambled with a soft front tyre that some others used yesterday and I thought, with nothing to lose, let's try it. I felt at that point in the race I had a better pace than Toprak, so I decided to try to pass but every time I tried he came around the outside or passed me in T1, where I was not so good. When the gap opened in T3 I put my bike there but there wasn't much space. He closed the door and I tucked the front. When I got up my bars were pretty bent and the brake lever was bent down but I just wanted to finish the last race of the season. I knew I was not going to score big points but I just crossed my fingers that one of the Kawasaki guys was going to score enough points to retain the Manufacturers' Championship and with Xavi Fores we did that. Massive thanks - and congratulations - to him. It proves that we still have a very good package with the Ninja ZX-10RR. I think it is a world-leading bike that inspires a lot of confidence. It has been a true big team effort this season. I know all the engineering staff of the factory will be super-proud."

**Alex Lowes (Kawasaki Racing team Rider):** "A disappointing day obviously, to have two crashes. In the final race of the day I felt really good for the first ten laps in sixth place, and then fifth when unfortunately Johnny fell. I had a good battle with Michael van der Mark. We tried the softer front tyre like Jonathan did but it was completely gone on the right hand side. I slowed the pace to try and manage the tyre and still ended up making a mistake, so this was really upsetting for me. But in general it has been a great year for Jonathan and Kawasaki so well done to them for winning the Riders' Championship and the Manufacturers' title. Unfortunately I couldn't contribute like I wanted but it doesn't really feel like the end of the season for me because I have a lot of work to do, and we

have a test tomorrow. We need to work hard to improve and I am already looking forward to 2021. A massive thank you to all the guys in KRT. It has been a pleasure to join them this year.”

**Kenji Nagahara (Managing Director, Kawasaki Motors Europe):** “On behalf of Kawasaki Motors Europe, Kawasaki Heavy Industries and every Kawasaki Branch and Private Distributor across Europe I would like to congratulate the teams for winning the Manufacturer’s title. Jonathan is an ideal ambassador for the Kawasaki brand, giving 100% every time he rides his Ninja ZX-10RR on track or when practicing at home in Northern Ireland on his KX450 motocross machine. For someone who lives his life on two wheels, Jonathan has achieved things that many people would think unachievable and that is very closely aligned with the Kawasaki philosophy of making what seems impossible, possible. Kawasaki and Jonathan have dreamed, believed and achieved and the unique achievement of six consecutive WorldSBK titles secures Jonathan a place not just in World Superbike history but as landmark moments in the global Kawasaki story. Congratulations to Jonathan, KRT, and all Kawasaki riders and team staff in the WorldSBK paddock, you have all delivered a truly memorable season in particularly challenging times.”

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