

Shanghai, China, Sunday 6th May, 2007

KONICA MINOLTA Honda taken out of the Chinese GP

KONICA MINOLTA Honda suffered their first DNF of the season so far in the Chinese GP today, following an early-race clash between Shinya Nakano and Tech 3 Yamaha's Makoto Tamada. The incident happened towards the end of the third lap at the tight hairpin after the long back straight. It appeared that Tamada missed his braking point and lost the front of his Yamaha M1 unfortunately taking Nakano down with him. Thankfully neither rider was injured in the crash. Shinya had made a solid start from 10th on the grid and had climbed to eighth on the first lap before dropping back to 10th. Casey Stoner won the race on the Bridgestone-shod Ducati from Valentino Rossi (Yamaha) and John Hopkins (Suzuki). The Australian now leads the championship by an increased margin. The first Michelin-shod Honda home was Repsol Honda's Dani Pedrosa, who won last year's race.

Gianluca Montiron – Team Manager KONICA MINOLTA Honda

"This is racing and these things happen unfortunately. After a good start Shinya was battling with Chris Vermeulen (Suzuki) and then Makoto Tamada (Yamaha) before the incident happened. It seemed as if Makoto lost the front at the last hairpin and crashed, unfortunately for us Shinya was just in front of him and got taken down. I would like to say that from our time with Makoto as our rider for many years we know he's a good, clean safe rider and this was just one of those things. We now must look ahead and we have two weeks to prepare for Le Mans. It's now important that together with our partners we can evaluate the technical situation of the Honda RC212V and hope that HRC and Michelin will have something new for us at this next race. I'm confident that Le Mans will be a much better circuit for Michelin and that our performance will increase as a result."

Shinya Nakano – Rider, KONICA MINOLTA Honda (DNF)

"Firstly I would like to say that I'm happy that neither Makoto nor myself is injured. I've banged my right hand in the crash, but it will be OK in a couple of days. Makoto and I are fine, it's a racing accident and crashes happen. It's a shame because our race set-up was the best of the weekend. I made a good start and was riding in 10th position but couldn't follow the top guys. My lap time was not so bad and I was concentrating on keeping that position to take advantage of any situation ahead, but then at the end of the back straight Tamada-san missed his braking point and clipped my rear tyre. I'm so sorry for the team that the crash happened and we couldn't get a result."

Giulio Bernardelle – Technical Director, KONICA MINOLTA Honda

"Fortunately Shinya is OK following the crash, this is the important thing. The ground temperature was a little higher today, but we kept the same settings and Shinya's comment in first two laps were identical to before in that he can't push hard in the beginning of the corner. We have learned a lot in the last two races and the situation is clear now we have to start moving forward. We are hoping to have something new from Michelin and Honda for Le Mans and the following European races to improve our race performance."

GP of China - Race results

1) Casey Stoner	Ducati	44' 12.891"
2) Valentino Rossi	Yamaha	44' 15.927"
3) John Hopkins	Suzuki	44' 19.554"
4) Dani Pedrosa	Honda	44' 26.981"
5) Marco Melandri	Honda	44' 30.167"
Shinya Nakano	Honda	DNF

For more information, please contact: KONICA MINOLTA Honda Press Office

Gianna Targi – E-mail: press@jir-mc.com Telephone: + 39 346 001 37 04

Bertie Simmonds – Telephone: +44 7899 961912


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