



2026 WorldSBK French Round – Qualifying & Race 1

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PRESS RELEASE

Record-breaking pole on Pirelli SCQ and Race 1 victory on SCX for Bulega

At Magny-Cours, the Ducati rider uses the production supersoft tyre to secure pole position with a new lap record, before winning Race 1 on the supersoft and setting a new race lap record. Öncü (Yamaha) takes the WorldSSP victory

QUALIFYING		RACE 1	
	23° C		28° C
	30° C		44° C
	BULEGA N. (DUCATI)		BULEGA N. (DUCATI)
POLEMAN	1'34.318 (New record)	WINNER	
			
FRONT		FRONT	
			
REAR		REAR	

- Bulega in command.** Nicolò Bulega (Ducati) made the best possible start to the Magny-Cours weekend, which hosts the ninth round of the **FIM Superbike World Championship**, winning the 12-lap Race 1 after an incident involving Thomas Bridewell prompted a red flag. Starting from pole position, the championship leader claimed his 24th victory in 25 races this season, finishing ahead of teammate Iker Lecuona and fellow Ducati rider Sam Lowes. All riders on the grid chose the production **supersoft SCX rear and soft SC1 front**. Following the interruption, and with a new set of tyres fitted, Bulega needed just three laps to set a **new race lap record** of 1'35.290, before improving it a lap later to a definitive 1'35.030, **470 thousandths faster** than the record set last year by Toprak Razgatlioglu (1'35.500).
- Unbeaten in qualifying.** Bulega also dominated the morning's **Superpole**, taking his Ducati to the top of the grid for the tenth consecutive time – extending his World Superbike record. With a time of 1'34.318, set using the production **extrasoft SCQ rear compound**, the championship leader also set a new Magny-Cours **lap record**, improving the previous benchmark by **612 thousandths of a second** from the 1'34.930 set by Toprak Razgatlioglu last year. In addition to Bulega, Sam Lowes, Iker Lecuona and Yari Montella, all riding Ducatis, also broke the previous lap record in qualifying.
- Öncü stages a comeback in Supersport.** In a **WorldSSP Race 1** that saw championship leader Albert Arenas forced out in the early stages, Turkish rider **Can Öncü (Yamaha)** claimed victory with a perfect comeback from 13th on the grid. Spaniard Roberto Garcia (Yamaha) finished second, ahead of Frenchman Valentin Debise (ZXMOTO). Britain's Tom Booth-Amos (Triumph) set the **race lap record** of 1'39.868, improving Stefano Manzi's 2024 record by **339 thousandths of a second**, while the overall race time was **6.224 seconds faster than Race 1 in 2025**, representing an average improvement of 328

thousandths per lap. All 33 riders on the grid used production **Pirelli tyres, with the soft SC1 compound at the front and supersoft SCX at the rear**. Race 1 of the **WorldSPB**, the category equipped with **Pirelli DIABLO™ Superbike tyres in SC1 compound on both axles**, was won by Britain's **Fenton Seabright (Triumph)**, while Japan's **Riichi Takahira** claimed victory in the **Yamaha R3 World Cup**.



Pirelli's softer production rear tyres highly effective at Magny-Cours

"Confirming the progress seen throughout the season, this first race day of the French Round of the FIM Superbike World Championship also saw a significant overall improvement in performance compared to 2025. In the morning, with cooler temperatures, Bulega was able to make the most of the grip offered by the production extrasoft SCQ rear tyre, setting a new Magny-Cours lap record in qualifying and improving the benchmark set by Razgatlioglu last year by more than six tenths, with the E0479, then a development solution and now promoted to production specification. In addition to Bulega, three other riders also broke the previous record, confirming the excellent level of performance offered by the softest solution in the Pirelli range. It will be interesting to see how many riders choose to use this solution in tomorrow's Superpole Race, where Alex Lowes secured third place last year.

There was also significant progress, both in terms of outright lap times and performance over race distance, for the production supersoft SCX, which last year, as the E0126 development specification, had proved to be the winning solution in all three races. Bridewell's fortunately consequence-free incident led to a shortened race distance, but after the restart Bulega confirmed his excellent feeling with the SCX, improving the race lap record by almost half a second. Tomorrow it will be interesting to assess race pace over the full 21-lap distance, providing a better measure of the progress made from one year to the next, thanks to the intensive development work carried out by Pirelli engineers and the technicians of the various teams".