



2026 WorldSBK Pirelli Spanish Round – Qualifying & Race 1

October 17, 2026

PRESS RELEASE

Bulega's star performance at Jerez, on Pirelli's standard-range tyres

The newly crowned Ducati World Champion and 2 other riders were the only ones to opt for the standard-range medium front compound, and this strategy helped him secure his 30th victory of the season
Herrera takes home her second women's world title

QUALIFYING			RACE 1		
	25° C	 30° C		26° C	 39° C
	BULEGA N. (DUCATI)			BULEGA N. (DUCATI)	
POLEMAN	1'36.643		WINNER		
	SC1			SC2	
FRONT			FRONT		
	SCQ			SCX	
REAR			REAR		

- **Bulega strikes 30.** Newly crowned **2026 FIM Superbike World Champion Nicolò Bulega (Ducati)** dominated also **Race1** of the **Pirelli Spanish Round**, the final **FIM Superbike World Championship** event. On his way to a record-breaking 30th win of the season, the Italian rider once again proved to have everything under control, by going against the vast majority of the grid in his tyre choice. Indeed, he was one of the 3 riders who chose the **standard-range SC2 medium front compound**. On a circuit where grip progressively decreases as temperatures rise, this choice provided greater consistency and a more stable performance as the laps went by. The other two riders who made the same choice were his teammate Iker Lecuona, who finished third, and Miguel Oliveira (BMW). Second-runner Sam Lowes (Ducati) and the rest of the riders opted for the **SC1 soft compound**. As to the rear choice, all riders were unanimous in going for the **standard-range SCX supersoft**. Bulega also set the fastest lap in 1'38.195. After 20 laps, the **race was ten seconds faster** than in 2025, with an average improvement of half a second per lap.
- **Bulega takes his 11th pole position.** A few hours earlier, **Nicolò Bulega** had once again been the **Superpole star**, setting the fastest qualifying time for the 11th time this season. With 1'36.643, he led an all-Ducati front row, ahead of Sam Lowes and teammate Iker Lecuona, missing the all-time Jerez lap record of 1'36.629 – which he set last year - by a mere 14 thousandths of a second. The only other rider besides the

Italian to dip below 1'37 was Lowes, in a qualifying session where all 22 riders opted for the **standard-range SCQ extrasoft rear compound**.

- **Arenas wins the Supersport.** Crowned World Champion a week ago at Estoril, **Albert Arenas (Yamaha)** made the perfect start to the final **WorldSSP** weekend of the season. After taking pole position with a new lap record of 1'41.084 - almost seven tenths of a second faster than Randy Krummenacher's 2019 best time - Arenas dominated Race1, finishing ahead of Alvaro Alcoba (Kawasaki) and Can Öncü (Yamaha). All riders started on **standard-range SCX supersoft rear and SC1 soft front tyre compounds**. The race was over 16 seconds faster than last year's, with an average improvement of almost one second per lap.
- **Herrera retains her WorldWCR crown.** Building on her 44-point advantage over Beatriz Neila, **Maria Herrera** only needed a 5th place in the first race of the weekend, without taking any unnecessary risk, to secure her second **FIM Women's Circuit Racing World Championship title**. **Paula Ramos won Race1** after recovering from two long-lap penalties for a jump start and making a bold move to overtake Neila on the final lap. Roberta Ponziani finished third. In **Sportbike** - another category sporting **Pirelli DIABLO™ Superbike tyres** with the **SC1 compound at both ends** - the title decision has been postponed until tomorrow's Race2. **Race1** had several dramatic twists in store: championship leader David Salvador (Kawasaki) crashed three laps from the finish line, after touching Australian rider Carter Thompson (Yamaha) at the final corner, in the fight for the lead. **Xavi Artigas (Kawasaki)** took advantage of the incident to win the race and overturn his 12-point deficit ahead of the weekend. He will now start tomorrow's title race with a 13-point lead over Salvador.



The standard-range SC2 medium front proves to be the winning choice

"Jerez circuit has always been very sensitive to temperature variations, with track grip progressively decreasing as temperatures rise. It is also demanding on tyres, with generally high wear both front and rear, meaning that a rider's ability to manage their gradual degradation can make all the difference.

In these conditions, the standard-range SC2 medium compound proved to be a competitive and winning option. And Nicolò Bulega's choice clearly went in this direction. He was one of the very few riders to opt for this solution, which provided greater consistency and stability under demanding conditions, allowing him to add a 30th victory to an already extraordinary season.

At the rear, the standard-range SCX supersoft once again proved highly competitive, even as temperatures rose. It enabled both WorldSBK and WorldSSP riders to significantly reduce their overall race times compared with last year, when air and track temperatures were much lower.

And last but not least I would like to congratulate Maria Herrera and the Terra & Vita GRT Yamaha WorldWCR team on securing the WorldWCR riders' title. Herrera has been a leader in this category for years, and by successfully defending her title – with 6 wins and 4 podiums in 11 races – she once again confirms her outstanding capabilities".