



Franco Morbidelli

Q&A

1. How was your winter break?

It was pretty good. I replenished my energy. I had some rest, and then I started moving pretty early in the winter. I did some on track motorbikes, karting, and some motocross too. I remained active on the bike and trained. I didn't go on holiday anywhere far. I wanted to spend some time at home and really appreciate and enjoy it before the whole rollercoaster starts again at the end of January.

2. How did you regroup and refocus after the 2022 season?

It's important to rest, and it's important to detach a bit from all the technical thinking and the thinking about motorcycles. We reset and restart, and with a refreshed mind and refreshed energies I'm ready to attack, consolidate what I saw at the last part of the 2022 season, and make another step. There's a lot I'm looking forward to at the start of this new season.

3. What are you taking from 2022 into 2023?

They say that when you struggle you learn the most. I've learned a lot last year, and I want to put on track what I understood last year and step it up with some positive energy that I got from the nice work I did during the winter.

4. How do you feel about the new MotoGP race weekend format?

I'm looking forward to facing this new racing format during the race weekends. I'm looking forward to testing it. I think it's going to be nice. Let's see!

5. How are you preparing for 21 GP weekends and sprint races? And do you reckon sprint races play to your strengths?

It's going to be difficult to prepare because I really don't know what to expect from the sprint races. It's a completely blank canvas for everyone, so it's difficult to understand and anticipate what will happen.

6. How do you think such a long season should be faced? What would be the strategy to follow?

The strategy is to give everything: in every practice and on every lap. Try to understand well how to extract potential from the new bike and the new features to be fast on every lap and in every session.





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7. What goals are you setting for 2023?

For 2023, as I said, it will be important to start the season with the same speed I had at the end of 2022 and, from that base, step it up and be even faster. We will try to be closer to the leaders and, if possible, fight for top positions. If that's not the case straight away, we will still work our hardest to get to the top as fast as possible.

8. What was your first thought when you saw the new 2023 M1 livery design in real life?

I really like the new bike livery! It's more aggressive and the style is a bit more modern. It gives the bike a more modern look, so, yes, I like it.

9. What is needed from you and from the team to hit the ground running in 2023?

I know everybody in the crew and in the team will be starting the upcoming tests with a lot of energy and a lot of belief in the work we'll be doing, also because of what we saw in the last stages of 2022 and the feeling we had of what we can improve in 2023. So, I know everybody in the crew is going to be really pumped up for the start of the season. And that mindset is exactly what we need. We need to start the new season with good energy and a can-do spirit.

10. Your fan base is rallying behind you, both at the track and on social media. Is there anything that you want to say to your fans.

Lately, I've been receiving a lot of messages of support, also in the comments. I was really pleased to see that. I'm giving it my best to not let down the people that believe in me. I will be trying the maximum to redeem last year's season, step it up, and give the fans some nice races and battles to enjoy this year.



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Biography

The son of a racer, Franco Morbidelli has been riding bikes since he was old enough to walk.

Morbidelli's passion for motorcycles comes from his father Livio, an Italian ex-rider who built his son his first bike when he was just two years old. When Franco was young, the Morbidelli family moved from Rome to Pesaro, near Tavullia, where Franco's racing education started in the smaller Italian categories. After two years of success, it led to a season of racing in Spain in the Cuna de Campeones series.

His next step was to move up to the European Superstock 600 Championship, winning the title in 2013. Morbidelli's good results in that series opened the door for three wildcard rides in the Moto2 World Championship (also in 2013) at the San Marino, Japanese, and Valencia Grand Prix.

The following season he was offered a full-time spot in the series, making gradual progress before finishing fourth in 2016 and then, after taking eight wins and twelve podiums, being crowned Moto2 World Champion in 2017.

Following his inaugural year in MotoGP in 2018, Franco joined the ambitious Petronas Yamaha SRT for 2019 and showed his talent again with the Malaysian squad, achieving his personal best finish of fifth place four times and qualifying on the front row for three races.

In 2020, Franco delivered exceptional results. Whilst his early season performance potential was masked slightly by some technical issues, he came back strong in the latter part of the season to deliver three race wins and take second in the overall rider standings, finishing as Top Independent Rider.

2021 would have been Franco's third season with Petronas Yamaha SRT, but it was cut short due to a knee injury, a lengthy rehabilitation process, and ultimately the Italian's step-up to the Yamaha Factory team. The number-21 rider made his return to action and debuted on the Monster Energy Yamaha MotoGP M1 at the San Marino GP, his much-beloved home circuit. Though the final five races of the season were physically demanding for the, at the time, still recovering Italian, he made good progress on the Factory bike as he prepared for his first full Factory Yamaha season.



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In 2022, Morbidelli was back to a 100% fitness level. However, the ride was not as easy going as Franco had hoped. He spent the first half of the season searching for something to make the bike suit his riding style, with a best finish of seventh place at the Indonesian GP in torrential rain. Showing relentless determination, Morbido remained dedicated to finding improvements in the second half of the season but this time adapting his riding style to the bike. A eureka moment came at the Malaysian GP and Valencian GP when he found form again, giving Morbidelli confidence that he will be able to hit the ground running at the start of the 2023 season.



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Racing Career

First Grand Prix: San Marino GP 2013 (Moto2)

First Grand Prix Win: Qatar GP 2017 (Moto2)

Grand Prix Wins: 11 (3x MotoGP, 8x Moto2)

Podiums: 27 (6x MotoGP, 21x Moto2)

Pole Positions: 8 (2x MotoGP, 6x Moto2)

Fastest Laps: 14 (1x MotoGP, 13x Moto2)

World Championship Titles: 1 (2017 Moto2 World Champion)

2022 MotoGP World Championship
19th – 36 points

2021 MotoGP World Championship
17th – 47 points

2020 MotoGP World Championship
2nd – 158 points - Vice Champion, Top Independent Rider

2019 MotoGP World Championship
10th – 115 points

2018 MotoGP World Championship
15th – 50 points

2017 Moto2 World Championship
1st – 308 points - World Champion

2016 Moto2 World Championship
4th – 213 points

2015 Moto2 World Championship
10th – 90 points

2014 Moto2 World Championship
11th – 75 points

2013 Moto2 World Championship
31st – only 3 races

