

## HAYDEN WINS, ELIAS CRASHES IN SATURDAY SHOOTOUT

Story: MotoAmerica/Photos: MSA

Roger Hayden made it through three starts to earn his third win of the 2017 MotoAmerica Superbike Championship, the Yoshimura Suzuki rider holding off the advances of Monster Energy/Yamalube/Yamaha Factory Racing's Josh Herrin to win by 0.700 of a second in the Honda Championship of Alabama presented by Broaster Genuine Chicken at Barber Motorsports Park.

After earning his seventh pole position of the season earlier in the day during Superpole, Hayden nailed the holeshot to lead the first part of the race, only to see a red flag on the second lap when Sylvain Barrier and Josh Hayes crashed in separate incidents.

Hayden grabbed the holeshot again on the restart, but was again shown the red flag when David Anthony crashed in turn one with his Fly Racing/Motul/ADR Motorsports Kawasaki and the Airfence catching fire.

The third time was the charm, however, and Hayden was never headed in recording his third victory of the season.

"It's a little difficult to stay focused when we have multiple restarts like we did today," said Hayden. "After the first red flag it seemed like the tires took a drop, which they seemed to do after each restart. It was really slick and easy to make a mistake out there, especially with Josh (Herrin) pushing me. There were a few wet spots and it's always difficult to be the guy in the lead pushing the pace when it gets like that. Everything has been working well on the bike and I feel comfortable leading the race now."

Herrin, who is filling in on the factory Yamaha for the injured Cameron Beaubier, piled the pressure on Hayden for the duration, surviving a near crash with two laps to go to finish second.

"I can't thank the guys on the team enough as they've been working above and beyond to get me comfortable on the bike," said Herrin. "I could tell as soon as we pulled the bike out of the truck yesterday that it was going to work a lot better for me. We've been constantly changing things in between sessions. The race was pretty crazy today with the red flags and it made it difficult putting the tires through so many heat cycles. I was able to get a decent jump on the third start and drove around the outside of Toni (Elias) and was able to open a little bit of a gap on him. Roger (Hayden) pulled out on us with five laps to go and then I had a surge and was able to reel him back in. I had a big moment in the final laps by tucking the front

and was really lucky to save that from a crash."

Third place went to Yamalube/Westby Racing's Mathew Scholtz, the South African earning his first Motul Superbike podium of the season while also winning his ninth Bazzaz Superstock 1000 win of the year. Scholtz wrapped up the Bazzaz Superstock 1000 Championship last weekend with a victory at New Jersey Motorsports Park.

"It definitely helps to not think about the championship and just focus on riding my own pace," said Scholtz. "I was able to hang onto the Superbike guys for about 10 laps today, but maybe I can improve my consistency some towards the end of the race. Bobby (Fong) showed it's possible to get on the podium with the Superbike guys earlier in the season and I'm just really happy to be up here."

A day after destroying his Genuine Broaster Chicken Honda, Jake Gagne bounced back to finish fourth in the race. Gagne held off the constant barrage of attacks by TOBC Racing's Danny Eslick to beat the Oklahoman by .286 of a second after his crew pulled an all nighter to get the CBR1000RR repaired.

Not far behind Eslick came Cycle World Suzuki's Hayden Gillim with Gillim winning the Suzuki battle with fellow Kentuckian Jake Lewis on the M4 ECSTAR Suzuki. Team WD-40/Scheibe Racing's Jason DiSalvo, Hudson Motorcycles/Helmet Sounds' Bryce Prince and Quicksilver Latus Motors Kawasaki's Bobby Fong rounded out the top 10.

In addition to Barrier, Hayes and Anthony, newly crowned MotoAmerica Superbike Champion Toni Elias was also a crasher, the Spaniard losing the front of his Yoshimura Suzuki on the eighth lap while running third behind Hayden and Herrin.

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1ST WIN FOR MATT



START OF A BEAUTIFUL SUNDAY AT BARBER MOTORSPORTS PARK



KTM MISHAP SATURDAY ON FINAL LAP



TONY ELIAS-2017 SUPERSTOCKCHAMP GOES DOWN IN SATURDAY RACE



RED FLAG DUE TO SPRINKLES



DOWNPOUR AND DOWN GOES #11