

Continued from pg 1: HAYDEN WINS, ELIAS CRASHES IN SATURDAY SHOOTOUT

he top three in the championship are secure, but there is a chance that Scholtz would stake fourth in the Motul Superbike Championship from Hayes in Sunday's race. Hayes currently leads Scholtz by 16 points.

Garrett Gerloff wrapped up his second successive MotoAmerica Supersport Championship on a sunny Saturday at Barber Motorsports Park, but not before a little self-proclaimed "brain fade" forced him into an off-track excursion that left him in 16th place.

Gerloff didn't have to do much to claim the title, but he still put his head down and fought through the pack to finish third – and that was plenty to take the crown. It was the Monster Energy/Yamalube/Y.E.S./Graves Yamaha rider's 16th podium of the season, including his 10 wins, and he's the champion with Sunday's race left to run.

"The nice thing about coming into this weekend was I had no pressure except to need to finish the races," said Gerloff. "I came close to not finishing when I ran off of the track, but made the most of it. I really wanted to win the race today, not just the championship. I pushed as hard as I could once I got going because finishing off of the podium when you win the championship is not how you want to do it. I'm looking forward to the race tomorrow and after that we'll take a little break and enjoy some time off. It was nice to walk away with what we came here for and that is to win the championship."

JD Beach, meanwhile, took victory, his fifth of the season and it ended an eight-race winless streak for the 2015 MotoAmerica Supersport Champion. Beach dominated this one, winning by 9.8 seconds.

"It's never easy to win a race when you're racing against these guys," said Beach, "I knew that Garrett (Gerloff) was

going deep when he went for the pass on me and I wasn't sure if he crashed or not. With the way he's been riding this year, I knew that there was a chance he could catch back up and I just focused on lap times and kept pushing forward. I'm looking forward to the race tomorrow and finishing the season out strong."

Second place went to M4 ECSTAR Suzuki's Valentin Debise, the Frenchman's 13th podium of the season, with Gerloff third, some 11 seconds behind after passing Team H35 Honda's Benny Solis in the closing laps.

The Superstock 600 race was won by Riderz Law/Aguilar Racing's Jason Aguilar and his fifth win of the season couldn't have come at a better time. With Aguilar's championship rival Michael Gilbert finishing fifth, Aguilar will take a 17-point lead into tomorrow's season finale.

M4 medAge Suzuki's Nick McFadden finished second to Aguilar with Tuned Racing's Braeden Ortt rounding out the podium finishers.

Excel Machine Racing's Connor Blevins ended up fourth with Gilbert and his Team MG55 Yamaha rounding out the top five.

KTM RC Cup

With the battle for the 2017 MotoAmerica KTM RC Cup Championship going down the wire at Barber Motorsports Park, the battle for the title is truly winner take all. And in part one of the two-part saga, the big winner was CSV-Moto's Cory Ventura.

Ventura came out on top of an incredible battle for victory, the Californian beating Savage Racing's Sean Ungvarsky in a photo finish. More importantly for Ventura was the fact that Quarterley Racing/On Trace Development's Benjamin Smith finished third. With Ventura and Smith coming into race one tied on points, Ventura now goes to Sunday's race two

with a nine-point lead. Still, nothing is settled and Smith was just .190 of a second behind Ventura at the finish line.

Smith's teammates Draik Beauchamp and Gavin Anthony rounded out the top five finishers.

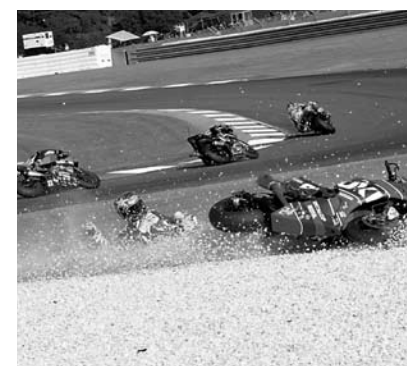
The most important non-finisher in terms of the championship was JP43 Junior Team's Alex Dumas, the French Canadian crashing out of the lead group on the eighth of 11 laps. Dumas came into race one just a point behind Ventura and Smith, but he's now 26 points behind with only 25 points up for grabs. Thus, he's been eliminated from title contention. Ditto for Jackson Blackmon, who also crashed out of the race in his effort to get to the front after starting 16th on the grid.

With his fourth win of the season, Ventura leads Smith going into tomorrow's finale, 249-240. Dumas is third with 223 points.

"It's really all on the line this weekend with the championship going down to the wire," said Ventura. "I just have to make sure I try my best again tomorrow. It was a crazy race, I honestly didn't think I had the win today. The finish was so close I couldn't really tell if I beat him (Sean Ungvarsky) until I looked up and saw the board."



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