

Fatal Superbike Race Should Have Been Canceled, Rider Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The race in which superbike rider Andrea Antonelli died at Moscow Raceway should never have started because the track was dangerously wet, leading racer Marco Melandri has been quoted as saying by Italian media.

Antonelli died from head injuries sustained in a Supersport race Sunday after he fell and was struck by another rider's bike, with the spray from the bikes making for near zero-visibility conditions.

"The Supersport race should not have happened," Melandri was quoted as saying by Italian media outlets.

Melandri won the first race of the day at Moscow Raceway in the top-tier Superbike World Championship, but said that it too should have been stopped.

"I started to raise my hand and ask for our race to be suspended two laps from the end, indicating that there was too much rain — we were going down the main straight at half throttle."

"Unfortunately the problem is an old one, and partly stems from the fact that riders are not being listened to by race control."

Melandri said superbike racing should introduce a safety commission for each race, as is the norm in rival series MotoGP.

"I hope that this horrible tragedy serves to open everyone's eyes. Riders must be better protected," he said.

Double superbike champion and fellow Italian Max Biaggi mourned Antonelli's passing. "Poor Antonelli is gone in a dramatic race," he said on Twitter. "I love this sport, but on days like this I start to hate it."

Antonelli is the first rider to die at a superbike event since Britain's Craig Jones suffered fatal head injuries in a crash at the Brands Hatch circuit in 2008.

He is the first person to die at an event at Moscow Raceway, which opened last year and was hosting superbike racing for the second time.

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