

VareseNews

MV-Agusta and Yakhnich, the Italian-Russian alliance that is scaring the Japanese

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A lightning bolt from a clear sky can also provide extraordinary energy. This is what happened on Phillip Island, the debut circuit for the **Superbike and Supersport World Championships**, where (not without a good dose of surprise) **MV Agusta** scored its first World Championship victory after almost forty years. This success, obtained in the Supersport by **Jules Cluzel**, **further energised the racing team** from Varese, which, this year, is being supported, in the sports management, by the **Russian team Yakhnich**. The alliance was officially presented today (Tuesday 18 March), in the beating heart of the Italian motorcycle manufacturer, in the factory in Schiranna.

It was an opportunity to meet the three official riders involved this season (**the Italian, Corti**, in the Superbike, **the Frenchman, Cluzel**, and the **Russian, Leonov**, in the Supersport), to take stock of the year that has just started, which is already very promising, and to stress the potential of the MV-Yakhnich alliance, and **the expectations of those** in the company and in the team's pits.

"In the meantime, Jules's victory on Phillip Island brought back the **excitement I felt years ago, beside by father**," said the Chairman of MV Agusta, **Giovanni Castiglioni**. "After the positive results of last season, we thought we could do better in 2014, also thanks to the alliance with Yakhnich. Already in the first race, we were able to show our **skill and speed**, in the Supersport, thanks to a bit of luck, but we still have several improvement stages ahead of us. In the Superbike, we're further behind, also because the motorbike was **started up for the first time on 22 November**, but in six months' time, we'll be at a much more competitive level. And this championship will serve to improve the motorbike, which is what happened last year, with the Supersport."

The young Castiglioni did not hide his ambitions in this class. "I think we can aim to be **among the top three**; but for the Superbike, I'll be satisfied if we achieve the development expected."

It is now up to the riders, and to the top managers of the sports area, **Claudio Corsetti** (general manager of the Yakhnich racing department), and the American, **Brian Gillen** (technical manager of MV Agusta). "**We'd been thinking of the Italian-Russian merger for three years**," Corsetti admitted, "and so, we naturally came together for 2014. It's an interesting agreement that allows us to develop the motorbikes together, here, in the racing department in Schiranna, and it will have commercial implications, because we're also going to be putting **the racing kits** and special components **on the market**, in the next few months."

"Maybe, for the first time, we'll be able to build the engines completely, design the motorbike, and carry out all of its subsequent developments, here in Varese," Gillem said. "Our used F3s that are competing are **very close to the production bikes**, because of the very strict regulations of the Supersport, but we've managed to give great speed also to a relatively small bike, like this one."

All we have to do is follow this story, from outside, and wait for the weekend of 13 April, when there will be the second stage of the World Championships. This will be on the Aragona circuit; **the Japanese are already on a war footing, after the Russian-Varese blitz in Australia**. Cluzel and Leonov cannot count on the surprise effect, but they swear, "We've still got potential." The challenge against the Japanese giants has begun.

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