

**Marcel Irnie's Appeal of the WMRR Executive Board's Decision on a
Partial-Season Suspension**
Thursday, May 5th, 2011

Board Members: DAMON WELLS (SUPERBIKE REP), NICO TOMACELLI (PRESIDENT), KATIE FIELD (3RD VP), PHIL COOK (REFEREE), ERIN GUA (SECRETARY), AND MARCEL IRNIE (APPELLANT) HAVE JOINED THE CONFERENCE CALL.

@8:07PM: Appeals Board meeting called to order

NICO- Nico goes over the rules and expectations of the meeting and makes clear that he himself will not be a voting member of the appeals board, and in his place has appointed Phil Cook as a voting member of the appeals board. Nico states that he has recused himself from this appeals board because of his personal involvement in one of the incidents brought into question.

Nico goes over the details of the E-Board's decision to suspend Marcel Irnie: He has been suspended for 3 consecutive rounds, but his suspension may be shortened by 1 round by volunteering with the club.

A few things that have contributed to this decision are: Marcel cutting across the track entering turn 1 in front of other riders at the first round, the ensuing conversation between Marcel and Jeff Wieand (Race Director) where Jeff felt that Marcel had not taken the incident seriously, several rider complaints throughout the 2010 and 2011 seasons, among other reasons. Marcel has been spoken to numerous times about making contact with other riders, and leaving the racing surface-jumping the curbing in the bus stop has happened quite frequently. The E-Board feels that this suspension would give Marcel time to get into a better mindset of riding and a better state of awareness.

DAMON- Jeff Wieand had an issue with the E-Board using the term "unsportsmanlike conduct", Jeff would like to say instead that he felt more like Marcel hadn't taken the incident seriously. Jeff used the word "nonchalant".

MARCEL- On entering the track (Turn 1 incident): He made a mistake on his first ride of the year. People make mistakes; Marcel offered an example of another rider doing this. He says that when Jeff approached him, he apologized immediately and knew he had made a mistake. He points out though that other racers that same round did the same thing and were not talked to about it. Marcel acknowledged to Jeff that he would never forget again and would not repeat the mistake. He didn't feel like the conversation with Jeff was angry or emotional at all. Marcel again apologized later that day again to Jeff, and at this time Marcel's teammate Aaron Holmberg admitted to doing the same thing that earlier that day. As for the 2010 race season: He states that he did not jump the curb at all, except once where there was a "ridiculous" pass being made by another rider and he had to get out of the way. He also made contact with one rider where it was found to be nobody's fault, just racing. He doesn't feel that that these incidents should weigh in on this decision at all.

NICO- Addresses that the E-Board's decision to suspend also has to do with Marcel's lack of situational awareness, not just one or two single incidents. Raceday Staff has continuously received numerous

rider complaints about Marcel's riding. He's the only one getting continuous complaints, and is the common factor in incidents.

KATIE- Compliments Marcel's personality and points out that this decision has nothing to do with his character. She explains to Marcel why she feels we are in the current situation.

NICO- Agrees with Katie, and states that this is more about Marcel's *riding on the track*. The club very much appreciates everything he does for WMRRA, but we have to focus on rider safety, especially with the incidents from last season, and he's the only rider we have been receiving continuous complaints about. The last year and a half or so, Marcel's name keeps coming up in rider complaints, and we can't keep ignoring that. The suspension is not a reflection of any one single event, and as a board, we don't see things improving. Talking to Marcel hasn't seemed to work, because we're still getting complaints and having hazardous situations happen on the track. We can't jeopardize rider safety by ignoring complaints and unsafe situations that keep happening. To close, this decision is not based solely on the Turn 1 incident.

MARCEL- Points out his notoriety at the track, and as an example he says that he has been dubbed the "crash king" only because he's in the limelight, not because he has actually crashed a lot. He doesn't know about any complaints, because he has never heard any of them firsthand. He did clean up his act last year in terms of aggressive passes and such.

@8:30PM: ALLISTER MACKINNON (BOARD OF DIRECTORS) JOINS THE MEETING. NICO RECAPS WHAT'S HAPPENED SO FAR FOR HIS BENEFIT.

MARCEL- Says the E-Board is trying to make a choice based on opinions of last year and not specifics. Ex: Nico stating that the decision to suspend was not just because of the Turn 1 incident. He doesn't think it's fair to base this decision on opinions and feelings, but that actual evidence needs to be presented. He points out that everyone knows of him, and that's why we're not hearing complaints about any other riders on a continuous basis, because no one knows other rider's names.

PHIL- Says that a rider had discussed with him about Marcel stalling suddenly in front of the rider last season. Phil agrees that Marcel does have certain notoriety at the track. WMRRA as a club does not make it a practice to do celebrations with wheelies on the track (Phil and Marcel had talked about this previously). Phil has had very many complaints about Marcel's situational awareness; this is the common theme. However, Phil agrees with Marcel's comment on it not being fair that there aren't various specific evidences submitted for the decision-making.

ALLISTER- Commented on the "jumping the curb" incident.

PHIL- States that no matter what, jumping a curb is not a safe way to race. It is unfortunate that Marcel's transmission was not working, but that is not a *reason* to create unsafe conditions for the other riders, and for himself.

NICO- Says that unfortunately the E-Board doesn't have written documentation for every single time that a rider has come up and complained to Raceday staff, but it has happened multiple times, and

Marcel hasn't taken personal responsibility for the situations, and therefore presents a lack of accountability. There seems to be a "reason" or "justification" to sidestep why something happened for every event.

MARCEL- Says that sometimes there *are* explanations for certain things, such as him doing wheelies on the parade lap. He says that he had asked Jeff before the race if he could do it and Jeff had given his approval. Marcel says that not everything is always his fault. Says that Jeff said, "Yeah we used to do that, that's ok just don't do it around others riders or in an unsafe condition." Marcel claims there is a lack of communication between Raceday staff. Says that he is as aware as anyone else on the track and that he has never had any other incidents other than the Turn 1 incident. He has stopped making unsafe passes, and that mistakes do happen in racing. He's seen other people comment on rider's forums that Marcel actually *wants* to crash because it would make a good video.

ALLISTER- Says that in his experience, when there's a trend with a certain rider, he's found that that trend rarely cures itself. For a general example: certain employees can create small issues that aren't really a big deal in themselves, but they rarely take ownership, which turns the small issues into a big one, and he senses a bit of that with Marcel. He's been volunteering with WMRRRA for 10 years, and this is only the 2nd appeals board that has had to convene in that time. Suspending a rider is pretty darn rare, and the fact that we are even having this meeting concerns him a lot. We are here mostly because Marcel's peers don't want to race with him.

NICO- Asks if anyone has anything to add. Nobody has anything.

MARCEL- Apologizes and says that all he can do is to try to ride more respectfully and avoid problems. Says that racing is his life, and that not being able to ride would be detrimental to him. He would love to continue racing with the club.

NICO- Thanks to Marcel for taking the time to have this conversation with us.

@8:55PM: Nico adjourns Appeals Board meeting.