

Rajiv adds points for India in crash-filled second race

Suzuka Circuit (Japan), June 30: Rains brought crashes and drama in the race 2 at Suzuka circuit. But ending the 4th round of FIM Asia Road Racing Championship (ARRC) on a high note, the solo Indian team IDEMITSU Honda Racing India riders added more points yet again.

With as many as nine riders losing traction and crashing out on Suzuka's slippery tarmac in Asia Production 250 class (AP250) Race 2; today was about maintaining lines and avoiding mistakes.

Starting 13th on grid, Rajiv made a good start and climbed to 7th position before last corner of lap 1. But then, his helmet visor started fogging up leading to near zero visibility. From there on, Rajiv gradually dropped to 16th position and pushed on to return to top 15 in lap 5, got pushed back in lap 6 but recovered. By penultimate 7th lap,

Rajiv had returned to 15th. In last lap, Rajiv spotted an opening and overtook the rider before him to finish 14th and add 2 more points to IDEMITSU Honda Racing India's kitty.

Shrugging off his 28th finish in race 1 yesterday, Senthil achieved his today's target of top 20 finish. Starting 24th on grid, Senthil increased his confidence on the slippery Suzuka tarmac and jumped 4 positions in last 2 laps to finally finish 20th.

At the front, it was once again an Indonesian hat-trick on podium. After Muklada crashed out in lap 1, Rafid who started Race 2 from pole too crashed in lap 6. With curtains down at Suzuka, IDEMITSU Honda Racing India is now ranked ninth of 20 teams with 25 points. Snapping three more points, Rajiv is in top 15 riders and rookie rider Senthil is placed 25th with two points. — *Agencies*