

August 29, 2024

<FIM Grand Prix World Championship MotoGP> Somkiat Chantra to Become First Thai Rider to Participate Full-time in MotoGP

TOKYO, Japan, August 29, 2024 - Somkiat Chantra, currently competing in the FIM^{*1} Grand Prix World Championship Moto2 class with IDEMITSU Honda Team Asia, will be promoted to the MotoGP class to race with Honda LCR from the 2025 season. This move will make Chantra the first Thai rider to compete full-time in the premier class.

*1 FIM: Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme



Somkiat Chantra



Somkiat Chantra in action

Chantra made a sensational debut by winning Race 1 in the opening round of the Shell Advance Asia Talent Cup^{*2} in 2015, finishing 2nd in the overall rankings that year, and claimed the riders' title the following year. He moved to the FIM CEV Repsol Moto3 Junior World Championship in 2017, and made a wildcard entry at his home race in the FIM Grand Prix World Championship Moto3 class Thailand Grand Prix in 2018. In 2019, he moved to the Moto2 class to race with IDEMITSU Honda Team Asia, claiming his first victory in the 2022 Grand Prix of Indonesia, becoming the first Thai rider to win in the Moto2 class. He continued to progress in the highly competitive class, winning the 2023 Grand Prix of Japan, and this season is ranked 10th overall, as of the end of the Round 11, Austria.

With Chantra's promotion to the MotoGP class, Honda's rider development program, which aims to nurture Asian riders to compete in the top category through the IDEMITSU Asia Talent Cup and Honda Team Asia (Moto2 / Moto3 classes), is now bearing fruit. So far, Takaaki Nakagami has moved up from IDEMITSU Honda Team Asia in the Moto2 class, to race for Honda LCR in the MotoGP class.

*2 The current IDEMITSU Asia Talent Cup is a project launched in 2014 to nurture young Asian riders, and is operated by Dorna Sports, S.L., organizer of the FIM Grand Prix World Championship.

■ Somkiat Chantra

“I’m excited to join the LCR team. Stepping into MotoGP has always been my dream, and I will finally make it true. I want to thank all the sponsors and people who have supported me from the beginning of my career until now. For the next season, I’m committed to learning, giving my maximum, and enjoying this new adventure. It will be difficult, but I will give my best.”

■ Lucio Cecchinello | Honda LCR Team Principal and CEO

“Alongside HRC, we believe that it’s time to welcome a great Asian talent such as Somkiat Chantra, as we think he deserves an opportunity at the highest level of the two-wheel competition. Through his years in Moto2, he’s shown potential and the skills to grow and become a strong rider in MotoGP. LCR and Honda will provide him with the best to support him over the different phases of this new project.”

■ Koji Watanabe, President of Honda Racing Corporation

“We are very pleased to announce Somkiat Chantra’s promotion to the MotoGP class, and we believe that Honda’s long-standing efforts to bring riders from Asia to the world stage will bear fruit and contribute greatly to the promotion of motorsports in the region in the future. We hope that Honda riders will continue to excel in the premier class and become Grand Prix riders that many young people will look up to.”

■ About Somkiat Chantra

Birth date: December 15, 1998 (25 years old)

Birthplace: Thailand

Career highlights:

2015: Asia Talent Cup	2nd
2016: Asia Talent Cup	Champion
2017: FIM CEV Repsol Moto3 Junior World Championship	11th
2018: FIM CEV Repsol Moto3 Junior World Championship	8th
2019: FIM Grand Prix World Championship Moto2	21st
2020: FIM Grand Prix World Championship Moto2	25th
2021: FIM Grand Prix World Championship Moto2	18th
2022: FIM Grand Prix World Championship Moto2	10th
2023: FIM Grand Prix World Championship Moto2	6th
2024: FIM Grand Prix World Championship Moto2	10th ^{*3}

^{*3} As of the end of Round 11, Austrian motorcycle Grand Prix, on August 18, 2024

■ About Honda LCR

Team Principal and CEO: Lucio Cecchinello

Established: 1996

Team headquarters: Principality of Monaco