

The greatest road races in the world



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News from the Joey Dunlop Foundation

2012 was another excellent year for the Joey Dunlop Foundation, culminating in the Annual Dinner where over 150 guests welcomed Linda Dunlop and John McGuinness who had jointly performed the opening ceremony of Braddan Bridge House in 2010 following its conversion to self-catering holiday accommodation for those suffering with disabilities.

Other stars from the road racing scene – Ryan Farquhar, Conor Cummins, Dan Kneen and Jeremy McWilliams – kept the gathering entertained, with John McGuinness being given the honour of drawing the winning ticket for the Annual Tombola...a shocked lady in Warrington receiving a phone call from the Morecambe Missile informing her that she was now the proud owner of a limited edition Honda Fireblade.

Before entertaining the audience with stories from his racing career, John unveiled the Tombola prize for 2013 – another Honda Fireblade, this time in Demon Vimto colours which were those sported by Joey Dunlop at TT 2000, the machine again being supplied by Clive Padgett.

A major announcement from Kevin Quirk, chairman of the JD Foundation, was that two further apartments are now planned for Braddan Bridge House, creating even more holiday accommodation on the IoM for the disabled. With this in mind, members of the committee will be attending a variety of race meetings during the coming season and several motorcycle shows as well as manning the stall in the market area at the Grandstand during TT fortnight to raise money by the sale of tombola tickets and JD Foundation merchandise.

Tombola tickets can also be obtained by phoning JDF House on 01624 677741 or by visiting the website, www.joeydunlopfoundation.com. Kevin Quirk can be contacted by these means to arrange accommodation which is available to anyone suffering with disability. The Lodge, which is divided into three apartments, is open all year around.



Estelle et Sébastien Lavorel; courtesy François Leblond



Timothee Monot; courtesy Optimark.



Denis Bouan courtesy Jean-Michel Prudon.

A Large French Colony at TT 2013

Not quite 1066, but there will certainly be an influx of competitors from our nearest continental neighbour at this year's TT. Seven sidecar crews hope to be on the starting grid, with Franck Lelias, ably assisted by English passenger, Charlie Richardson, hoping to improve on his 8th and 10th impressive positions of 2012. Seasoned competitor, former French F2 Champion François Leblond is retuning with newcomer, Cyril Roussel, now also his passenger in the French Championship, in the chair.

Everyone will be delighted to see Claude Montagnier back after last year's accident at Ginger Hall which resulted in injuries to long-term ballast, Laurent Seyeux; Francky Fouet, newcomer last year with Patrick Gefray, replaces Laurent, hopefully enabling Claude to resume his fantastic record of finishing TT races. Remy Guignard and female passenger, Frederique Poux return after one year out; they were newcomers in 2011.

Speaking of newcomers, there are three crews from France entering their first TTs this year: Estelle Leblond, daughter of Francois knows and appreciates many of the issues she'll have to deal with as she has accompanied her father and mother, Sylvie, to the TT on many occasions; at 22, she will possibly be the youngest sidecar driver, but she races at a high level, being the current French F2 2012 Champion. Her passenger, also a newcomer, is Sébastien Lavorel the current French F1 Champion passenger; the sidecar, a SGR, which took her to the national championship, is made in France by Sam Gache.

Denis and Helene Siro on their Baker outfit on which they finished 5th in the French Championship have submitted an entry as has Franck Barbier along with his passenger, Emmanuel Debroise; the pair finished 2nd in the French F1 Championship last year, but have an F2 outfit especially for the TT.

The ever popular Fabrice Miguet, a



Frank Lelias / Charlie Richardson; courtesy Gert Meulman.

veteran of 14 TTs, returns with his fast Kawasaki ZX10R for the higher capacity solo classes. Also flying the Tricolour in the paddock will be newcomer from last year, Timothée Monot entered in the Supersport races on a new MV F3, sponsored by Optimark, and a Kawasaki ER6 McInstry in the Lightweight. Timothee, bitten by the IoM racing bug, hopes to return for the inaugural Classic TT.

Seven times winner of the French Moto Tour Rally [known as the dark Dog Moto Tour] and French Supersport Champion of 2011, Denis Bouan, an official Yamaha France rider for Rally events also hopes to race at this year's TT...on a Yamaha, of course.

The MGP is now receiving much interest from overseas: French Promosport pilot, Xavier Denis will be a newcomer this year; he wants to race at the NW200 and UGP before making his TT debut, possibly next year. Jean Philippe Bodenes, who has already taken part in continental road races also intends being on the Glencrutchery Road startline along with Denis Bouan who is also hopeful of making his debut

Thanks to French TTSC Representative, Jean-Michel Prudon for supplying this information. Visit:- www.tourist-trophy.fr

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If you would like your business to become a Trade Member of the TT Supporters' Club and assist those who wish to pit their skills against the Isle of Man Mountain Course then contact our Membership Registrar, Pete Oulton. (See Page 3 for details) Your support will be greatly appreciated.

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There will be much emotion if Stefano Bonetti makes the startline for his year's TT as it will effectively be his comeback after a terrible crash at last November's Macau GP. Stefano, at the end of an epic racing season - 5th position at the NW200 along with three Bronze and one Silver Replica at the TT, had a very bad crash during practice for the far eastern event, suffering multiple broken bones. His life was effectively saved during eleven hours of surgery, but the prognosis was that he would be unlikely to race again...typical of the diehard attitude in our sport, Stefano, is now on a fast track to restore his physical condition in the hope he will be ready for TT 2013. As an optimist, he sending in his entry.

At the time of writing, he is just about ready to ride his bike again – we all hope to see our top rider at this year's TT. Stefano could be the only Italian rider at TT 2013, as Alessio Corradi's main focus this year is to win Italian Superstock Championship which he missed out on by a few points only in 2012. Fortunately, we have four pilots really interested in racing at the 2013MGP...TommasoTotti, Davide Ansaldi, Dario Cecconi, Gian Maria Gabbiani and Federico Natali.

Tommaso, whose third MGP it will be, is hoping to attract a team specialised in road racing to give him technical assistance. Davide, after a long and intensive period in the UK, IoM and Ireland last year, racing at Scarborough, Jurby, Billown, Killalane, Mid Antrim, the Ulster amongst others hopes to secure a budget to return this summer with participation in the MGP on his agenda.

Dario started his racing career in 2010 600 Open Class Italian Hill Climb Championship, with the same the following year plus a NW200 debut, achieving 40th place in the Supersport Race. Hill climbs again in 2012, a return to the NW200, with 39th position, plus a visit to the Tandragee meeting, all with the aim of securing an entry to the MGP, for which he is naturally saving up.

Gian Maria Gabbiani is a true 'racing man' – the son of former F1 Car driver, Beppe, - he has participated successfully in kart and car racing as well as off shore world championships, but is now fully committed to motorcycle road racing, hoping to gain his Mountain Course Licence in time for this year's event. Motorcycle journalist and bike tester, Federico Natali, commenced his racing career in 2007 at hill climbs and short circuits events, achieving many very good results with a lot of podiums, he, too, has got the IoM in his sights

All the best and good luck to all TT and MGP competitors

Pier Ortalda

The TT Supporters' celebrates its 40th Anniversary at TT 2013

Please visit Rose and Vera in the **Club Shop** which will be located in its now traditional position in the Market Area at the rear of the Grandstand... on sale will be souvenirs, memorabilia, badges, TT programmes... and, of course...

...you'll be able to renew your **TTSC Membership** – why not bring along a friend... the more members we get, the more we are able to assist the competitors who pit their skills against the demanding Mountain Course

Competitors who are members of the Club call into the shop to collect their **gift package** – specially designed TTSC branded hoodies, chain sprays, cable ties, duct tape, etc, the total value of each package being in excess of £45. Fire retardant overalls are available at greatly discounted prices for competitor/ mechanic members

As in previous years, competitors will collect **energy supplements / gels** from the TT Riders' Association office – the TTSC works with the TTRA, donating £1000 to this 'cause'

The Riders' Draw will be held live on Club President, Charlie Williams' Radio TT show – six prizes are up for grabs... £350, £250 and four of £100.

Information concerning the physiotherapy service organized by the Club will be available on the Island.

The **Susan Jenness Trophy** – awarded with respect to the most meritorious performance, in the eyes of the TTSC Executive Committee, by a female competitor in the TT – will be presented to **Debbie Barron**, for her fantastic efforts in last year's event. It is hoped that Mick Jenness will be on hand to present the award which is in memory of his wife, Susan who lost her life whilst marshalling a UK off-road even some years ago.

Riders in the two Supersport races will be vying for the **TTSC Trophy** – a silver tray on a plinth. Cameron Donald is currently in possession of the trophy, awarded for the lowest aggregate time across the two Supersport races.

If any Club member not visiting the Island for this year's TT, but would like an **official programme**, then Rose will be happy to post one to you – contact her on 0121 686 3799 before Tuesday 21st May.

Enjoy your TT – remember to visit us in the Club Shop.



Rose Hanks

An unsung Heroine

Anybody messing about at the back of the Grandstand during TT fortnight on a day when the racing was not occupying them, would almost certainly go into the TTSC Shop and browse the great choice of goods on sale there, the money from which goes to support the competitors.

Rose Hanks has long been a feature in the shop and the Tea Tent also known as The Ladies Haven, along with the other loyal group of women who, year after year, give their time and energy to this enterprise. What many people would not know is Rose's unique history. In 1968 she became the first woman to stand on the Winner's Rostrum at the Isle of Man TT.

A quiet, unassuming woman, Rose has a remarkable story to tell. Catching up with her recently, she told me how, since her early teens, she had been involved in a family which was motorcycle mad:

'My interest in motorcycles came about when I was young, my dad had 3 motorcycles, my brother also. I've been around bikes most of my life.'

Rose told me how she was smitten with racing in her early 20s whilst taking the opportunity to 'have a go' at being a passenger. She spoke of the support she received from family and friends at this time and that nobody tried to dissuade her from racing, being pleased to see that she was fulfilling her ambition.

'The first go I had as a passenger was on a scramble outfit on an airfield; I was hooked. I decided I wanted to passenger. In 1965 a friend, Ken West, had a sidecar outfit, the first ride I had was at a sprint, we finished 2nd.'

Rose was working as a gas welder, making hoods for sports cars. She also had a young daughter to support. Rose had been bitten by the racing bug though, and her racing career

started to take off:

'I rode passenger for Freddie Wallis for a season, but my main ambition was to ride in the TT. In 1967 I got my big break when Roy Hanks (now my husband) visited me at home and in general conversation mentioned that Norman, his eldest brother, was looking for a passenger for the season and the TT. I jumped at the chance as I knew Norman was one of the top sidecar drivers of his time along with Chris Vincent, etc'

Rose was both excited and apprehensive at the prospect: 'March 1967 was my first race meeting with Norman and I obviously wanted to create a good impression. The track was Malory Park and we were on the start line waiting for the off. It was a push start in those days and as the engine fired up Norman brought his leg over and kicked my shoulder; off the back I went. I thought to myself what a great start to the season. I got back on and we finished 2nd, not bad considering my mishap.

Later that year, at the 1967 TT, we took part in the 500cc Sidecar Race, unfortunately we had a few problems, finishing 27th.'

1968 Making History

Rose calls 1968 'my year'. It was at the 1968 TT, the first year of the 750cc Sidecar Class riding a 750cc BSA that she, returning to the TT together with Norman, came second behind Terry Vinicombe and John Flaxman.

1st place - time 1.19.07.4; speed 85.85mph. 2nd place -time 1.21.44.0; speed 83.1mph

Rose speaks eloquently of her feelings at the time. Whilst she did not think of her achievement as striking a blow for Women's Lib, she confesses that she did realise that something special had happened:

'(finishing 2nd) ... made me the first woman ever to stand on the Winner's Rostrum. It was like a dream come true. I was on cloud nine and can't remember much about it except that at the Awards' Presentation the other sidecar crews presented me with a bouquet. The same year ... I was taken to Hillberry to be presented to Prince Phillip, which was a great honour.'

She recalls the warmth and camaraderie showed to her by fellow male competitors: 'all those that finished behind were genuinely pleased for us. At the presentation Chris Vincent presented me with a lovely bouquet from the competitors. I also had a trophy for the Women's International Motorcycle Association of America.' She also remembers the generous and positive Press coverage at the time.

Rose was to go on, together with Norman, to achieve a worthy 7th place in the 1969 Sidecar TT behind the mighty BMWs. She was to race with Norman on most mainland short circuits for over 4 years.

1970s: The Hanks Experience

During the 1970s Rose married Roy Hanks and became a part of the Hanks Racing Dynasty. She remembers passengering for Roy:

'...I passengered for Roy at the TT in 1970, finishing 7th in the first race but blowing an engine in the second. It's amazing how the techniques of two drivers are so different. I was meeting Roy in the chair on lefthanders as he got over for the corner sooner than Norman used to; but remember, sidecars had front exits and you had to work from back to front very quickly. When you ride with one driver for a while you think alike and tend to know what they are going to do next.'

Rose always planned to return to the racing she loved and had been so successful at. However, after the birth of her second daughter Julie, Norman Hanks had retired and the sidecar



scene had changed. Rose never got back into the chair.

Rose's eldest daughter Karen was 'never into bikes' but younger daughter, Julie, together with husband Paul Elliott, has, as Rose sees it, 'taken over where I left off'.

In 2002 Julie and Paul rode at the TT and were best newcomers. Julie has also ridden with her father, Roy, at Darley where they won the Championship. Rose's grandchildren, twin daughters Jamie and Bobbie – Julie's children – have also grown up surrounded by motorcycles. As Rose tells it: 'They love racing and helping Roy with petrol and tyres. They have all the actions, they both warm Roy's bike up at race meetings... they can both ride motor bikes'

Both the girls, she explains, are very competitive in the sporting field: 'Jamie has 7 belts in karate and also plays football for Aston Villa Girls Academy, whilst Bobbie has medals for gymnastics and swimming.'

Rose talks about the highs and lows of being part of a racing family. The loving supportive environment in place shines through in her words: 'As sidecar people,

you have to have a good driver to get to the top, as a passenger you have to know what they are doing... you learn to know how to think the same as your driver. Lots of sidecar people are families and pair up – brothers, sisters, dads, daughters'.

Rose is rightly proud of her husband, Roy and his achievements in a long and successful sidecar racing career: 'All the family support Roy and always will 'till he retires. It's what we do.'" This writer remembers well seeing Rose in The Soup Tent/Ladies Haven, retreating to a quiet, secluded corner whilst husband Roy was out on the course, waiting for the finish and his safe return.

Rose believes that one is never too old to pursue a dream. She had the opportunity to prove this in 1998 when, acting as passenger with Roy on his 1997 winning outfit, she accompanied him on a Lap of Honour: 'Although this was classed as a parade lap and, in today's terms, not quick, it was as quick as I had lapped in the BSA days and quick enough to have qualified for today's TT. I don't think I could have managed 3 laps, not with my knees, then again, this is from my misspent youth – but it was all worth it!'

I was impressed by Rose's modest and unassuming attitude to what she had achieved. Her contribution to the women's cause is without a doubt. For Rose, this year will be her 46th year at the TT, whilst for husband Roy it will be 47 years. Her ceaseless energy now benefits the TT Supporters Club which, amongst other things, generates income to help purchase goods for the competitors:

'it is important that people join the Club...every competitor who is a member of the Club has a package of, for example, overalls, jackets, chain spray, duck tapes, cable ties and so forth. All this is sponsored by Membership fees. We also have a Riders' Draw at the TT for £1000 which is drawn on Mad Sunday'

As a TT Website on 'The Ladies in Racing' puts it: 'Rose Hanks –What a History! '

Elizabeth Marin