

Editor's Line

TT 2015 is a significant milestone in the history and development of the TT Supporters' Club in that, as Roy indicates in the 'Chairman's Remarks', there won't be a shop at the Grandstand and competitors will receive cash, not 'material gifts'. I hope members will respond to this initiative by sending renewal subscriptions directly to Membership Registrar's, Pete and Viv Oulton... competitors appreciate and deserve our support.

Recent press reports indicate there will be more fans than ever on the Island this year, particularly as a mezzanine deck has been installed on the Mannanan... potential, therefore to encourage more to join us in the TTSC.

I hope you enjoy the magazine; I always like to thank contributors – this is particularly the case on this occasion as problematic circumstances for me have meant compilation has been very much of a rush... many thanks to all who have been involved

Please feel free to make contact with me if you'd like to be involved in the 'creation' of the Winter 2015 issue, the copy date for which is Monday 5th October.

Graham Bean



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Cover: John and Jake Lowther at Union
Mills, TT 2014. Courtesy Gert Meulman.

The views expressed in this magazine are
those of contributors and not necessarily
those of the TT Supporter's Club.

From **Freya Harvey** - Social Media
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TT Supporters' Club social media pages
have updates regarding racing events.
Anyone wanting to send us information can
contact us on these pages for us to share
with followers.

Facebook - TTsupportersclub
Twitter - @TTsupporters

James Cowton excites the crowd as he leaves Sulby Bridge. Courtesy Gert Meulman.



The Future of the TT is in Good Hands... James Cowton, one of the Young Pretenders

TT start numbers were announced at the beginning of March in a press statement which suggested the top 20 seeded solo competitors were of the highest in quality ever to enter a TT meeting. Certainly no-one would disagree with that, but scanning down the list of entrants you quickly realise that there are pretenders in waiting, and young ones at that, none more so than James Cowton. Still only 23, James has already three Mountain Course meetings under his belt and after an outstanding 2014 season secured the prestigious Duke Road Racing Man of the Year Award... an amazing achievement considering the talent he was

up against.

Did he ever think he'd be in a position to achieve so much so early in his racing career? "I've only been road racing for five years so definitely did not expect to achieve this level in this short time... it's worked for me up to now!"

Five years, not long, so was it straight to the roads, or...? "Well, my dad used to ride and race bikes from a young age, so I followed in his tracks by moto crossing until I started on the tarmac in 2009 firstly with hill climbing." Success soon followed with victory in the 2010 Northern Hill Climb Championship with plenty of lap

records to go with it.” James continues, “I then moved onto road racing, short circuits for my first year on my good old Honda RVF 400, winning two club championships... but my family had been going to Oliver’s Mount for years as I basically have, so as soon as I had my licence to ride Scarborough, I did. I was lucky enough to be on the podium at my first meeting there, when someone mentioned about going to the Manx. I basically said ‘what’s that?’, so we researched it... then, one Friday night in November me and Dad put our road bike in the back of our van, caught the ferry and parked up on Douglas front. We then rode round lap after lap, then went down to the Billown Course at Castle-town, did the same and at end of the day, Dad said, ‘well?’ and I said, ‘yes, looks good to me’, these roads just make me feel right at home“.

Moving onto 2012... entries were duly submitted for the Southern 100, then the MGP... and what an impact James made on the short, 4.25 mile southern based circuit, successfully managing to qualify on pole for the 400cc Race, in which he eventu-

ally finished as runner-up. He also took his 600 machine to 10th in the Solo Championship Race, no mean achievement against larger capacity machines and experienced road racers.

Then came the Manx GP, James’ feelings for pure road racing were obviously good as he got his first Mountain Course win in the Newcomers’ on his trusty 400 Honda with a 6 minute advantage over the second place finisher at the end. This was no flash in the pan as, on his larger capacity machine – 600 Honda – he came home in 4th position in the Junior, a race won by Wayne Kirwan. James’ 111.986mph average speed was sufficient to leave such MGP stalwarts as Stephen Harper, Michael Sweeney, Andy Jackson and Alan Lawson in his wake. His best lap in his debut Manx was just short of 116mph.

A trend has been developing over recent years, that of successful MGP newcomers moving ‘up’ to the TT the following year after their Mountain Course debut. Not so James – a return to the August races was booked into the calendar and he certainly



No time to shop at Kirk Michael.
Courtesy Gert Meulman.



TTSC President, Charlie Williams gives James his well deserved reward. Courtesy Gert Meulman.

grabbed the headlines... probably best let the man himself summarise what proved to be an eventful, but not entirely satisfying racing week in terms of finishing positions. "Yes, you can say that it was eventful as, for some reason, we had the pace for sure but could not get a finish in modern stuff. It was a good job I was riding in the Classic TT on Peter Berwick's 1992 TZ 250 where I finished 2nd just over ten seconds adrift of Chris Palmer, I also had the fastest lap. The Junior was going perfectly, but then we learnt the hard way... a standard tank would not do two laps of the course at the speed I was going, so we ran out of fuel with a 26 seconds lead with only a mile to go. Then came the Super Twin Race where after one lap, I had a 30 second lead, had just broken the class lap record when the crank snapped. Then, of course, we were all fit to go for the Senior Race on Friday when the weather was so bad that all racing was cancelled.

A statement of intent now made, it was a natural progression to the TT for 2014. James expands... "Well, we did have the choice to do either meeting, but we just had to move on to the TT. I would say, basically preparation for the TT was the same as for the Manx / Classic, it's just earlier...

Was James expecting TT stardom at his first attempt? "No, certainly not; I was not expecting to do anything to shout about

except, perhaps, equal or better my previous year's times... also, because at the Manx I was at the top but when you go the TT there are lots of us who are quite capable of finishing on that podium!"

Practice went well for the young Yorkshireman, and, within a short time he had indeed lapped at faster lap speeds than previous in all classes. Satisfied? "I certainly was, as before the actual races I had taken away a good deal of self-imposed pressure which was really good for me. I was on my own 600, but my sponsors, SJP Moto and Stewart Smith, provided the 1000 stocker and 650 twin respectively. I had a great team looking after and maintaining the bikes... my dad, Fran, and my mechanic Neil, although I helped as much as I could in between doing the usual rider things. Then there was also our good friend, the evergreen Paul Owen, who, competing in his last TT meeting, helped and guided me in right direction whenever needed."

Well, the man himself might not have been expecting to 'do anything to shout about', but the organisers were as he was allocated start number 11 for the Lightweight – super twins – race, and no, he didn't disappoint... 3rd position and his first TT podium only six seconds in arrears of second placed finisher, James Hillier in a race won by Dean Harrison. Just look at who was following him in... Amor, Hamilton, Linsdell, Farquhar, as well as thirty-one other finishers. A result at a race average speed of just under 117mph, even more remarkable when considering an earlier racing incident when he parted company with his machine at the Veranda in what could have turned into a 'Conor Cummins' moment'.

James' TT result sheet was completed with a couple of DNFs, 18th in



James starts the race which gave him his best TT finish to date – 3rd in the 2014 Lightweight. Courtesy Gert Meulman.

Supersport 2 and 13th on his 2013 Honda CBR in the Superstock at an average of 122.335mph, interestingly, just over a second ahead of our very own ‘correspondent’, Ivan Lintin... these pair are quite likely to be close together both in the result sheets and on the road during the 2015 season.

James’ consistency throughout the 2014 season was remarkable, so much so he topped the Duke Road Racing Rankings with 1858 points with Ivan, runner-up [1817] and Dean Harrison, third [1799]... all potential long-term TT stars. Other stand out meetings naturally included those at Oliver’s Mount where he loves the close racing around the hairpins but, probably more so, the August trip to Northern Ireland where he took three wins at the joint Ulster GP / Dundrod 150 meetings... the Dundrod 150 National and Lightweight/Ultra-Lightweight races in both meetings on his Yamaha 250... we must also bear in mind James was a newcomer to the fast flowing Northern Ireland circuit.

Putting the Cowton rise to fame into context we must consider the other names on the Duke Road Racing roll of honour... Ryan Farquhar, Michael Dunlop, Ian Lougher and Conor Cummins, who are the only previous holders of the accolade ... James is

certainly in good company.

On to 2015... what will be James’ main aims for this season? A simple, logical reply was quickly forthcoming, “my only aim is to equal or better what I achieved the last time at that particular meeting, but yes, if I can have another mega year at all meetings, particularly at the TT that would be great. We will be competing in most classes at all meetings... Superstock, Superbike on the stocker, Supersport 600 and of course, Supertwin Lightweight class on the 650. I’m riding for DTR Danny Tomlinson Racing who is a private sponsor; it’s a new team, but with my help and contacts it will hopefully be fit to run at the top.” This is a near on certainty if last season is anything to go by... James Cowton is leading the young pretenders as they climb up the TT result sheets, ready to surpass the current top stars in the not too distant future.

A happy crowd of supporters celebrate James’ 3rd position. Courtesy Gert Meulman.





Race Programme - TT 2015

Saturday 6th June:	TT Superbike	11.00	6 laps
	Sidecar TT Race 1	14.00	3 laps
Monday 8th June:	Supersport Race 1	10.45	4 laps
	Superstock Race	14.00	4 laps
Wednesday 10th June:	TT Zero Challenge	10.45	1 lap
	Supersport Race 2	12.00	4 laps
	Sidecar Race 2	14.30	3 laps
Friday 12th June:	Lightweight TT	10.15	3 laps
	Senior TT	13.00	6 laps

Chairman & Secretary Report



As mentioned in the 2014 Winter Magazine there will not be a T.T.S.C sales outlet at the rear of the Grandstand this year. There are many reasons for this decision:

1. The main one is staffing for 16 days from 8.30 am to 9.30 pm on most days.
2. The cost of getting the stock from Birmingham to the Isle of Man.
3. The van hire for 17 days.
4. The boat bookings and finding a driver to take it, along with the cost of fuel.
5. Loading stock into the van the day before we go the TT then unloading and setting up on arrival, reloading at the end of race week then unloading the day we get back to Birmingham and finally, taking the stock up to the attic at the shop where it is stored.

As you can imagine this has made its mark on our volunteers.

What will happen at the 2015 TT

The Club will support every competitor who is a 2015 member of the Club with a cash payment of £45, to help them buy items they may need during the TT fortnight. As in previous years, we have given a substantial donation towards the cost energy of drinks available from the TTRA office.

All TTSC members are the backbone of the club, so your membership will continue to pay towards the cost of your two magazines, possibly three along with the support given to TT competitors.

During 2015 the officials of the Club will continue to consider the best way forward to service our membership. If things have gone to plan you should already have a membership form along with a 2015 TTSC sticker.

For those who normally re-join at the TT, you can now do so by post with the form contained with this magazine or via our club website before you go to the Island.

With respect to 2015 competitors... if not already a member you will be able to join the Club in the Race/Press Office during your signing on checks. Arrangements have been made for Rose (TTSC Secretary) to have a desk in the office so you can easily collect your money. For those wishing to join at any other time, Rose and others will be around the paddock most days or at the Hanks Racing awning and possibly one or two other awnings in and around the paddock.

Both Rose and I are looking forward to a good, safe and exciting 2015 TT.

On a sad note Vera Dollery, who many of you will know worked hard with Rose for many years in the TTSC tent, passed away in December. She was a very close friend and she loved to work for the Club; she will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Roy & Rose

Estelle Leblond holds the Sue Jenness Trophy aloft after receiving it from Sue's husband Mick at TT 2014. Taking a supervisory role is TTSC Chairman, Roy Hanks. Courtesy Mike Hammonds.



Outstanding performances by lady competitors... The Susan Jenness Trophy

Congratulations again go to Estelle Leblond on retaining the Susan Jenness Trophy as a result of her performance at the 2014 TT. Before we consider Estelle's achievements of last year, let's look at the origin and history behind this prestigious award.

The trophy is awarded annually to the lady competitor with the most meritorious performance at that year's TT meeting as judged by the TT Supporters' Club Executive Committee. It is presented in memory of Susan, a member of the TT Supporters' Club who lost her life in a tragic accident whilst marshalling at an off-road motorcycle event in the United Kingdom. The recipient is presented with the trophy by Susan's husband, Mick at a ceremony, usually broadcast live on Radio TT at the following year's TT meeting.

Sidecar passenger, Cat Jenkins was the first lady competitor to hold the trophy aloft as a result of her sterling efforts at the 1990 meeting in acting as ballast for Stephen Judkins in which they finished 15th and 25th, the Dave Saville / Nick Roche combination taking a double victory on their Sabre Yamaha. Cat retained the trophy the following year, not surprising as she had a 7th position accompanying Richard Crossley; she then handed the trophy – a fine silver bowl – to Terri Salone, who, along with Neil Smith lost out on 4th place in Sidecar A by a fraction of a second to the Hanks pairing of Roy and nephew, Tom.

Three wheels turned to two as Kate Parkinson became the first solo rider to take possession of the trophy after her 25th position aboard her 250 Yamaha in the 1993 Junior, which was her TT debut, although she had previously ridden with success in the Manx. Kate was the first of three lady 'soloists' to win the trophy with Sandra Barnett being the recipient for the following two years and then again in 2000 with twelve finishes in total varying from 9th to 39th; Sandra was a most versatile competitor riding on small 400cc capacity machines, on which she had her best finishing result, to 1000cc bikes; she even had an 11th position in the Singles event of 1995 on a Knotts Rotax.

We have to move on several years before Mick was able to hand the trophy over to another solo competitor – Jenny Tinmouth in 2009 with three fine results in the 'forties'; Jenny retained the trophy the following year after recording that 'near 120mph lap', a speed which remains the fastest by a female. It's appropriate here to mention someone who has never won the award, the lady who has started in more solo races around the Mountain Course than any other – Maria Costello. The trophy is judged on a year by year basis, not on high level of consistency over a period of time; sadly for Maria, she has been pipped at the post on several occasions... surely her time will come soon.

Registrars' Report

As always we would like to start by thanking all of those members who have renewed their membership so far this year; the response has been excellent considering the hard financial restraints that we are going through at this time.

You will have noticed the inclusion of a membership form with the magazine; we will be including them in both the winter and summer copies for the foreseeable future. If you don't require it, please pass it on to a friend as every new member will be appreciated.

If anyone has a change of address, could you please contact us with your new details as soon as possible using the following email address... ttsupportersclub@hotmail.co.uk.

If you have any membership enquiries could you please also contact us via the above email address putting "Membership" in the subject field so that they can be dealt with as quickly as possible.

We hope that you all have a safe and enjoyable TT2015, both competitors and spectators alike.

Viv and Pete Oulton

Sadie Childs, in accompanying husband, John, to 6th and 8th positions was the stand out performer at the '96 meeting, then the following year, the trophy was presented to a sidecar driver for the first time. Wendy Davis rode consistently well during TT fortnight of 1997, gradually increasing her lap speeds as time went by, to achieve 41st and 42nd positions in her debut year. Wendy regained the trophy two years later, with it reverting to a passenger, Kate Harrington in between, Kate ably assisting Joe Martin to a 12th place.

2002 – and the name 'Hanks' appears on the trophy, no not, Roy, but daughter Julie [Hanks-Elliot] who partnered husband, Paul to 44th and 45th places in their debut TT meeting; they were actually the highest placed newcomers in Race B. Julie takes up the story, "originally, I intended to race on the Isle of Man in 2001 and then start a family at the end of that year, but as the TT was cancelled due to the Foot and Mouth epidemic I put my plans on hold as I really wanted to compete in the TT and thought having a child would most probably put pay to those plans. We were delighted to secure two finishes, being awarded the Susan Jenness Trophy as the female making the most meritorious performance was a real bonus.

After competing in the 2002 TT, one of my main ambitions in life fulfilled, we tried for a baby, ending up with a sidecar team having twin girls in May 2003. However, I soon real-

ised that actually doing the TT didn't get it all out my system, rather it gave me a taste for it and decided that, someday I'd want to go back. In the meantime my dad suggested I keep my hand in, so I started racing at Darley Moor with him, successfully winning the 2007 and 2008 Championships."

Julie then had an offer to ride at the TT again in 2008 with Ruth Laidlow... an offer wisely accepted as two finishes was the outcome on their LCR Suzuki, with another the following year. Julie returned in 2010, but with



Keeping it in the family. Current holder of the Susan Jenness Trophy, Estelle Leblond, accompanied by dad, Francois and previous holder of the award, mum, Sylvie. Courtesy Mike Hammonds.



Double winner of the Susan Jenness Trophy, Jenny Timmouth. Courtesy Mike Hammonds.

a different driver, Matthew Dix, Julie expands, "although we did have one DNF, retiring early in the race, I was delighted with the 100.308mph average in coming home in 23rd position in Race A." No appearance on Glen-crutchery Road in 2011, then unfortunately two DNFs with Michael Lines the following year, but the pair did get a 38th place in 2013. Julie was disappointed not to qualify with her driver, Julian Cole for last year's TT.

Although Julie continues to race, as she explains, "it is becoming harder each year due to my priorities changing. My daughter Bobbie plays in defence for North Birmingham Celtic football team and Jamie plays in goals for Aston Villa U13's girls & Phoenix United U12 boys' team... as a consequence, most weekends are taken up with transporting them to football matches from Liverpool down to Somerset."

Julie did consider a change in direction at one point... "yes, I was thinking about taking up driving and did have a go at Mallory and Darley Moor, but having ridden a motor-bike since I was 13, still using one on a daily basis, I found it difficult to change my way of thinking as the gears and brakes are on the opposite sides... when you are going flat out down a straight towards a corner and you push the gear instead of the brake – not good!" It is as passenger then, that Julie returns to the Island this year, again with Julian Cole with a very good chance of regaining the trophy she first held in 2002

Returning to other recipients – 2003 saw Rachael Norbury-Lea's one year tenure, having two fine finishes – 24th and 36th, with Mick Thompson, then the following year, there

was a one-off... joint winners. Ruth Laidlow and Helen Sutherland became the first all-female crew to enter the TT, history in itself, but they were over the moon when completing the distance [49th] in the second race at an average of 85.92mph... history again. Fiona Baker-Milligan, now a regular passenger for her father, Tony, had a 14th with Mick Harvey at an average in excess of 103mph to become the female with the most meritorious performance in 2005... then it was 'enter the Leblonds'. Francois and Sylvie, the French husband and wife team, had many consistent performances since their debut year of 2003, culminating in Sylvie receiving the trophy from Mick in both 2006 and 2007... watching them ply their trade was their young daughter, Estelle, of whom we shall hear more later.

Sally Wilson's tremendous results – 10th and 11th with race averages in the 107-108mph bracket with Greg Lambert was the stand out performance of 2008, before the trophy went back to the solos and Jenny Timmouth. Fiona, now ballast to dad, Tony secured two 11ths the following year to reclaim the prestigious award before it was won by a driver for the second time only. Debbie Barron became the first Manx-born woman driver to enter and finish a sidecar TT.... Debbie's achievements are covered in greater depth elsewhere in this issue.

And so to the most recent years – 2013 saw Estelle Leblond enter the TT, doing so as a driver, taking the trophy back to France with her. Estelle was, without doubt, a most worthy winner... with passenger, Sebastien Lavorel, the French newcomer lapped at consistently high speeds during Race 1 to come home in 29th position with many seasoned drivers in her wake. Probably, more to the point, she became the first female sidecar driver to lap at over 100mph, actually averaging 100.635mph for the three lap event. An even greater achievement in the second race – 29th again, but with an average speed of 101.532mph and a fastest circuit of 102.161mph... quite remarkable.

The TT Supporter's Club is delighted to announce that Sylvie Leblond has retained her trophy for her marvellous performance in Race 1 in 2014 in which she finished 18th with an average speed of 105.16mph. Congratulation, Estelle.



£25 Million Prize Fund

Unfortunately this is not the prize fund for the 2015 TT; it is the prize fund for Wimbledon 2014. The winner of the Ladies and Gentlemen's Championship each received a staggering £1,760,000 in prize money. I do not have anything against tennis per se, it is a true sport with opponents facing each other albeit with the truncated tie break and tiresome grunting by some players. What I do take exception to is the commentary and the hyperbole of the commentators. There is absolutely nothing brave, courageous or heroic about hitting a tennis ball over a net, so why do the commentators use such rhetoric? It is completely absurd.

Do TT competitors consider themselves brave, courageous or heroic? I very much doubt it. In comparison to a tennis player they are exactly that; it takes real guts to take on the Mountain Course.

TT 2014 Champion Michael Dunlop's prize money totalled £66,000 from his five races... four wins and a third place; this is less than 4% of the amount Novak Djokovic picked up in winning Wimbledon. Who provided the greater entertainment or put their life on the line to achieve their goal? North One's ITV4 television coverage is every bit as compelling as BBC's television coverage.

Michael Dunlop earned every penny of his winnings as did all of the other competitors who were fortunate enough to win prize money. The TT has come a long way in the last ten years; I remember having a conversation (in 2000) with a member of the Tourist Board who was integral to organising the event. This person was adamant that the competitors should not be able to make a living out of racing over the Mountain Course. Thankfully he is no longer involved in the organisation and is presumably still stuck somewhere with his head in the sand!!

Well done to all who received prize money last year; only Michael Dunlop won more than a Wimbledon first round loser (£27,000) but not as much as a third round loser (£71,000).

Last year's top earners:

Solos

Michael Dunlop	£66,000
Bruce Anstey	£19,575
Guy Martin	£17,750
Dean Harrison	£15,550
Gary Johnson	£9,000
James Hillier	£7,675

Top Privateer

Ivan Lintin	£4,400
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Sidecars

Conrad Harrison	£12,250
Dave Molyneux	£10,050
John Holdon	£7,450
Tim Reeves	£4,350

Mike Hammonds



MARK HIGGINS: ON TWO WHEELS AND FOUR

Mark Higgins is one of the Isle of Man's most successful sportsmen. He won the British Rally Championship in 1997, 2005 and 2006 and has regularly competed in the World Rally Championship with a best finish of 6th in the Rally of Great Britain in 2002. As well as helping to run the family rally school in Wales, he has also been involved in stunt driving for film and TV.

Many will be familiar with Mark's attempts at the four wheel lap record of the Mountain Course in 2011 and 2014, where he lapped at over 117.5 mph, but perhaps less well known is his love of bikes. I had the opportunity to chat to Mark recently and discuss his involvement with motorsport on both two wheels and four.

Mark, obviously you were born and bred in the Isle of Man. What are your memories of growing up there, especially with regard to the TT?

When I was young, we lived in Onchan about 400 metres from Signpost Corner. The TT was a great part of growing up and ironically one of my favourite places to watch was Bray Hill, which I'm sure we will talk about later. Another favourite was Signpost itself, as it was just up the road.

In the early days most of the houses around us had teams working in the garages so we used to cycle around the estate to collect stickers and autographs. I got to meet some of the greats like Mike Hailwood and Mick Grant. As my rallying career started to

take off it was difficult to get to the TT. My last year as a spectator was 1990 which was the year that Tony Pond did his record attempt. The next time I was on The Island for TT week was for my own attempt in 2011.

I gather when you were younger you actually took part in trials riding?

Yes, in fact I started my motorsport career in schoolboy trials. My brother David and I used to go. Steve Colley and the Knights, who both would have been under 5-years-old, would also have been there with their parents. They would be racing around flat out on their little bikes.

I enjoyed the trials but wasn't great. I had a Yamaha TY80 and later a Fantic which were much bigger than I was, and were quite a handful. How bikes have changed!

Between the trials and rallying, I raced karts at Jurby Airfield managing to win four IoM championships.

I now have an ex-TAS Suzuki GSXR-K9 which I use on track days and really enjoy. I have met some great people through the bikes like Neil Hodgson and Tommy Hill. Hutchy once helped me fix my bike and I know Steve Plater through enduro, which I also enjoy, but I'm definitely much better on 4 wheels. I once had an opportunity to ride with John McGuinness, Jim Moodie (who I know well through the McRae family) and Scott Smart when we made the World's Greatest Bike DVD, so I really love my bikes.

Tell us about how the rallying started and your early days on the Isle of Man?

From starting school I only ever wanted to be a rally driver or a fighter pilot! My grandparents and mum and dad all competed at a very high local level, and the Manx National and International events were the highlight of my year. Because of funding these were the only big events that dad could afford to do, but he could still set top 3 times against the Quattros and rally legends like Ari Vatanen and Walter Rohrl. I really believe that dad could have gone much further if funded, so it was great to get the opportunity that I did in 1992 when I landed my first works drive with Vauxhall.

Before any of the big rallies I began by navigating for my late uncle, David Leece when I was 14. I competed in my first event aged 16 which was the legal age to start driving on the Isle of Man.

After leaving school, I worked below the Manx International Rally office for John Tarrant as an insurance clerk. When the drivers came over and the office was closed I would take messages for them and through this I met Roy Dixon. Roy was in the process of starting the historic rally scene on the Island and had been a works co-driver in the 60s. In short, Roy helped by supplying us with a few tyres and we won the Star of the Rally Award in 1990 (Colin McRae had won it the year before). Then Roy offered me a drive in the Lombard RAC rally which led to a deal for 1991 where we competed around the world with his support. Getting to drive against the best at the time landed me my first drive with Vauxhall.

Tell us how the Subaru lap evolved and how you came to be asked?

I had always wanted to do the lap after Tony Pond's attempt, and made an approach on several occasions, but always got a "no" from the TT organisation. Over the years several manufacturers had shown an interest but I kept hitting a brick wall, and I was told it would never happen.

Then to my surprise Subaru America, with the help of Alan Whitaker and sponsorship agreements, managed to get the permission to go ahead. My brother David was driving for Subaru America at the time and was their first choice, but he was unable to commit to



Mark Higgins seen with motorcycle legend, Neil Hodgson.

the time required to learn the course properly, and with his rallying commitments he declined. With only a month's notice I was approached and agreed instantly. Fortunately, I had been watching on-board laps for many years just in case the opportunity ever arose, so I spent the next few weeks working very hard to memorise it all again, but until you hit it fast there is nothing like it.

You live in Wales now, so did you have to do any special prep to re-familiarise yourself with the place?

I was resident on the Island until 1993, but there were still sections I was unsure of, especially from Sulby through to Ramsey.

My first recce was only during practice week because of the late notice, and I came straight off the boat onto the course. As I drove round the course in a German reg left-hand-drive Subaru I was trying to visualise the racing lines and keep to the 30mph limits! I got a good run over the Mountain, but was stopped by the police at the Bungalow. I thought this was because of my speed, but they asked if I had been drinking as they had received reports of a German drunk driver! So not a great start really.

There was a bit of a mixed reaction amongst the bike fans for the Subaru laps, especially if there were any delays. It was very popular with the locals though, many coming out specifically just to see you and going back in for the bikes! Did you get a sense of the public's reaction?

The TT obviously has such an amazing history on 2 wheels, so I did feel like I was intruding. But I do love all motorsport, and especially bikes, so I was disappointed to hear that we had upset some of the fans. I have to say that most of the feedback was

Working on the Bond film. Quantum of Solace.



very positive and although I wasn't at the speed of the riders, the thundering big car still made an impression. It was also great to see the reaction on peoples' faces on Youtube after the car went by.

Subaru were always fitted-in around the bikes and we understood 100% that if there were any weather issues or late races then we would lose a run. I also think people believed that the VIP laps were part of our lap, but this wasn't the case. They would have been there with or without us. It just so happened that it was Subaru who currently supply the vehicles which are used for course inspection and VIP laps. It may have looked like the cars were out a lot but I think that is because the VIP laps have become so popular over the years.

On a positive note, we also kept the road alive and animals away from the circuit in between races for the safety of the riders.

I'm just very grateful to Subaru and everyone at the TT to have such an amazing opportunity to drive around the best circuit in the world, and hope it didn't upset too many of the fans.

Do you think it will happen again?

I'm not sure if it will ever happen again. Maybe if a few years pass so it would be a

novelty. It would be great to have a go in a fully set up race/rally car.

How high do you think the lap speed could go?

I think with a fully set up car like Sebastian Loeb's Pikes Peak car, you could get very close to the bikes. With down force and 1000 bhp there would be a chance, but I'm still not sure if it would be faster. The main issue with the cars is the width. There are a lot of places a bike could go straight through but a car would have to corner.

Cars are always faster around corners, but because of the top speed needed against the downforce you would need for corner speed, it would be quite difficult to get to Superbike speeds.

People have mentioned how much slower than the bikes the car is, but I'm quite happy knowing there was very little left in that car after three practice laps. As we all know there isn't any other place like the Island to practice or test, so you only have three chances to get it right. The new Subaru was very good but still weighed 1.5 tons. It was the most exhilarating thing I have ever done and I feel very privileged to have been given the full course to myself.

We can't let this go without you taking us through "the moment" on Bray Hill!

Yes, the moment! In reality it all happened so quickly that it wasn't until I sat down and thought about it later that I realised how lucky we were. I don't think my hands could have gone any faster on the wheel. On the positive side, we got millions of hits on Youtube but unfortunately gained a few more grey hairs in the process.

What are your feelings now regarding the Manx Rally? The TT seems to be flourishing while the Rally's popularity has gone down and other events like Cycle Week have disappeared completely. Can you think of ways to bring the Rally back to its former glory?

It's very sad how the Manx International has suffered with the current economic climate and rule changes in the British Championship. The sport has become so expensive and the top manufacturers are not involved any more. Rallying is very expensive to film and nearly impossible to feature live, so it has lost many supporters. The production based cars also took away some of the spectacle



Obviously an expert on 2 as well as 4 wheels, Mark seen here on his Suzuki at Almeria.

and although they are still very fast and cover the ground quickly, they don't look great. Loeb has changed the sport too, as sliding is slower, but it does look good.

It may gain some popularity as the cars are starting to look and sound better again, but without the manufacturers giving support to the best drivers it's hard to see. At the minute it's simply the guys with the most money who do well.

The Manx roads are still some of the best in the world and I'm very proud to have won the event 5 times and I would love the chance to have another go.

So what's it like being James Bond?!

Haha! I'm currently working on the new

Bond film in Austria. It's been a great experience to have done the last three films. Thankfully for the viewers the masks are very good and I only have to do the driving scenes. I don't think it would work if I had to come out of the sea with speedos on!

On a serious note, it's a massive production with hundreds of people involved. It's such a big team effort and gives you a great buzz when you do a spectacular stunt and it all comes together. Often there are many vehicles involved and timing and co-ordination are so critical. It's just a shame how long it takes to make each short sequence, but it's very clever when it all comes together.

Philip Windrum

Sat 30th May:	18.20 – 18.45	Solo Newcomers' Speed Controlled Lap
	18.35 – 19.00	Sidecar Newcomers' Speed Controlled Lap
	18.50 – 19.50	Lightweight TT / Newcomers [all solo classes]
	19.55 – 20.50	Sidecar
Mon 1st June:	18.20 – 19.05	Superbike / Superstock / Supersport / Newcomers [except Lightweight]
	20.00 – 20.50	Sidecars
Tues 2nd June:	18.20 – 19.05	Superbike / Superstock / Supersport / Newcomers [except Lightweight]
	19.10 – 19.55	Supersport / Lightweight / Newcomers [all solo classes]
	20.00 – 20.50	Sidecars
Wed 3rd June:	18.20 – 19.05	Superbike / Superstock / Supersport / Newcomers [except Lightweight]
	20.00 – 20.50	Sidecars
Thur 4th June:	18.20 – 19.10	Sidecars
	19.15 – 19.55	Supersport / Lightweight / Newcomers [all solo classes]
	20.00 – 20.50	Superbike / Superstock / Supersport / Newcomers [except Lightweight]
Fri 5th June:	18.20 – 19.10	Sidecars
	19.15 – 19.50	Supersport / Lightweight / Newcomers [all solo classes]
	19.55 – 20.25	Superbike / Superstock / Supersport / Newcomers [except Lightweight]
	20.30 – 20.50	TT Zero Challenge
Sat 6th June:	16.40 – 17.40	Supersport / Lightweight
	17.45 – 18.30	TT Zero Challenge
Mon 8th June:	12.30 – 13.00	Sidecars
	16.00 – 16.30	TT Zero Challenge
Wed 10th June:	15.50 – 16.15	Senior
	16.20 – 16.45	Lightweight

Correct at time of going to press; confirmation obtained from official Race Guide.

ISLE OF MAN TT

THE PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY

100 Years of Images from the World's Greatest Road Race

BILL SNELLING
MICHAEL SCOTT

FOREWORD BY TT RACE LEGEND
JOHN MCGUINNESS



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Bill Snelling & Michael Scott

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



Stefano Bonetti and Marco Pagani at TT 2015

Good news for Italian supporters at TT 2015 as there will be the fortunes of two Italians to follow - Stefano Bonetti and Marco Pagani

Stefano, the fastest non-english speaker and 40th fastest rider of all time will again ride a pair of Kawasakis – ZX6R for the Supersports and a brand new ZX10R for the Superbike, Superstock and Senior, with the help of the RockRoadRacing Team managed by his friend Barry Rivellini.

Marco Pagani made a great first impression at last year's MGP with a stunning 5th place in Newcomers' A, followed by 7th in the Junior on his Kawasaki ZX6R with a fastest lap of 117.295mph. This made him the fastest ever Italian newcomer over the Mountain Course, in fact the 5th fastest MGP newcomer of all time.

The 33 year old truck driver from Brescia made his racing debut in 2006, achieving several outstanding results on short circuits, including the Mugello round of the Italian Championships where, as a wild card entry, he secured a magnificent 4th position. The next year saw another fourth place in the Superbike race, again as a wild card; in 2008 there was a really brilliant 2nd in the Tofeo MC Franciacorta Pirelli, the same great final result also being achieved in 2009 in the Premier Cup with two victories and many podiums. A newly purchased BMW S1000R took him to 3rd and 5th positions in the final ranking of the same championship in the next two years. Even better in 2012 when he was runner-up, with two victories, two pole positions and two lap records, with similar race results in the following two seasons, the latter, of course, saw his debut on the Mountain Course.

After such a debut, particularly as he had limited opportunity to learn the circuit prior to the meeting, there was an ambition to move onwards and upwards. At TT 2015 he will race his BMW S1000R in the three highest capacity classes sporting number 61. He is to be supported by www.roadracingcore.com, RMS Spare Parts, the Italian distributor of Motorex Lubricants and with, hopefully, several other partners joining him prior to the TT.

Other good news for our flag comes from Paton Motorcycles, which has reached an agreement with the Ian Lougher Racing Team for them to support top road racer, Tony Rutter to ride the S1 machine in the Lightweight TT.

Pier Ortalda



Here at Road Racing News we pride ourselves in supplying the best and latest news on Pure Road Racing, including Race Reports, Race Reviews, Interviews, Live Updates and giving every Road Racer, from Grass Root Racers/Sidecar Drivers & Passengers, to all the Top Solo Riders and Top Sidecar Racers a platform.

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Surely a 100mph for Oscar this Year

We featured Debbie Barron in our Winter 2012 magazine when she told her fascinating story of how she went from marshal to being the first ever Manx lady driver to complete a Sidecar TT... so how have things progressed, are preparations well advanced for TT 2015? Well, Team Oscar's fan base has gone from strength to strength with Debbie's infectious enthusiasm for everything she does and her fun personality, making her team very popular in the paddock. With many of the Susan Jenness Trophy winners having won the award twice, it would be so fitting if Debbie could win the it again this year – there is every possibility of this if she achieves her ambition of that magical 100mph lap, which would also see huge smiles throughout the paddock...let's hope 2015 brings these happy celebrations to all at Team Oscar Racing. Sally Bly caught up with Debbie as plans for her racing season were being finalised.

❁ **You proudly received the Susan Jenness Trophy for your efforts and the history you made at TT 2012, a very proud moment for you and all at Team Oscar Racing.**

An honour that will live with me for a long time, along with receiving the IOM Mar-

shals Association Best Newcomers' Award for TT 2012 presented at the Southern100.

❁ **The Team Oscar Racing fan base goes from strength to strength each year with more and more members around the world since you created the team. You must be delighted and very happy with the support you receive in person at race meetings – I know you see the fans waving around the TT course – and via the internet, etc from your followers?**

It's fabulous to see and hear from fans from around the world. Generally, during TT fortnight, after working on Oscar till about 2pm each day, the boys in the team make me have a couple of hours to myself. I am supposed to be sleeping, but sshhh, I listen to music, read emails and update our status on Facebook... this is where valuable fans photos are posted, letting us know where we are on the wrong line or have a bit more room. Messages of encouragement when you're up against it remind me we are not alone and many people rely on Oscar and are living the dream with us. We're now even getting pit boards around the course with Oscar being held upside down if we're not doing well, sideways if in touch and waved up and down if all's going well. Cannot wait

to see what happens with the 100mph lap. On one occasion, I actually caught out of the corner of my eye a group of people getting to their feet and cheering us on when we were approaching the Gooseneck. Marshals around the track show support, which naturally includes the section from Union Mills to Greeba Castle and in particular of course the gang at Ballascarey... I expect the Paul Owen salute one day from them!

❁ **You have worked hard to improve your outfit since your TT debut in 2012... what changes have you made to make Oscar more suited to the long distances of TT Races and the rigours of the Mountain Course?**

Gosh, different brake fluid, including pads, lots more cable ties and duct tape, New suspension, new water hoses by Samco, Mocal Oil Cooler and hoses, Varley red top 8 battery which won't get shaken to pieces; new front and rear hand made sprockets. The biggest thing for us was having the chassis altered by Dave Molyneux, enabling us to put in a fuel injected engine, airbox and engine management system.

❁ **What work in particular have you been doing over the long winter in preparation for TT 2015?**

Chris Holmes gifted Oscar his own personal laptop and at Christmas another very kind sponsor, Airmed, donated the very expensive cable and software enabling the engine management system to operate efficiently. This has meant that each of our three engines, after they have been stripped and rebuilt, have been on the dyno at Evomoto in Ramsey with Sir Hagan. This is a massive help because now, if we change an engine for a reason, we can do so overnight or in a morning and the map for that particular engine can be downloaded, so we can get out on the track straight away. Before it was work overnight, head down to the dyno and then get back to the pits just before the practice or even miss a session. Sponsors, "Ship Shape and Bristol Fashion", have made it possible for us to afford

a new lighter weight fairing as Oscar's original coat was extremely heavy. This may also give us room for a bigger radiator – work, hopefully planned for the spring. Thanks to Sally and Rob of Central Windows, Grimsby we have two new sets of rims for the chair wheel – the scrutineers didn't like to see the slightly flat ding as it went through inspection, commenting each time that Oscar would go quicker with totally round wheels!

❁ **In 2014 you had some big life changes / change of career direction and you now work at the Hyperbaric Chamber on the Island which has helped you get back to fitness?**

It is common knowledge that superstars of BSB including James Ellison along with Mark Cavendish, Tour de France Stage winner and TT racer, Connor Cummins have been aided in their recovery by treatment at the Isle of Man Hyperbaric Chamber. I guess everyone has a moment of clarity in life and reassessment, mine coming with the loss of my Gran, Margaret Musker on the 20th February 2014. Gran was a small Manx lady who could light up a room with one of her smiles; she had a huge hug and I knew I was loved. A long time ago she said, "number 4 will always be lucky for you and there will be a time when I won't be here, but I'll be able to help you make a decision". She also said I would wear a blue uniform, but not the uniform that I was thinking! And so it was... I left my unhappy employment and followed my dream of being a competitor at TT 2014. Things are meant for a reason and a fabulous gentleman called David Downie (Operations Manager) made contact and I started part time work as a

Debbie and Karl receive their well deserved Finishers' Awards. Courtesy Gert Melman.



fundraiser for The Hyperbaric Medical Facility here on the Island. Squeezed between the TT and Southern100, myself and a work colleague, Dean Cooke were whisked off to Plymouth for a week, qualifying as Hyperbaric Chamber Operators in the process. So my daily tasks are administration of patients, fundraiser, raising awareness of the chamber, and chamber operator as and when required... fabulous rewarding work – and wearing a blue uniform!

☉ **This has obviously been to the benefit of your racing career as your work is now more closely linked to the racing environment, and you receive support and understanding for your achievements and aims in sport.**

When I took on my new role it was a breath of fresh air to work for an establishment which understood that racing was part of my fabric and drive, being so essential to my life. They understand I give 110% commitment to everything I do all the time and at work, it's the same. I got told, "look, part of the criteria to you working here, is that your racing comes first". If I rode for a factory team I'd be able to go to work during the day and just jump on a prepared machine – dreams, hey!

☉ **How would you sum up TT2014 which was**

your third experience of TT racing and what changes have you seen in those years?

In brief, TT 2014 showed us once again the highs and lows of racing... during Tuesday practice we were one of three outfits travelling in close proximity over Ballaugh Bridge with Nev Jones / Nalim Lerov shooting past us then Mark Saunders / Kev Jones and myself / Karl. Positions remained the same, we could only be split by a few feet, but at Kerrowmoar there was a white flash of a body flying through the air going from right to left; it was poor Nalim who hit the hedge, coming back out striking Mark's sidecar on the passenger side fairing and wheel. He then laid spread eagled right in front of us. Avoiding action resulted in a bump and thud, the chair wheel rising and falling. That awful sickening feeling I'd just run over someone, not knowing if it was his arm, shoulder or head. Nev Jones had pulled his unit over a little further down the road and Mark & Kevin and Karl and myself proceeded to Ramsey expecting a red flag. We carried on, concentrating on learning more about racing at speed over the Mountain. On approaching Governor's Bridge it was like two characters on my shoulders having a full scale argument ...do another

Congratulations to the winners of the 2015 NATIONAL RAFFLE

1st	G.Bean, Cheadle Hulme	£350
2nd	C.Weller Norfolk	£250
3rd	J.Partridge, Lancaster	£150
4th	R.Lonsdale, Bognor Regis	£50

Many thanks to all club members who sold tickets in connection with this year's raffle; thanks also to those of you who also kindly sent in donations. A substantial sum of money will be directed to the fund used to support those who choose to pit their skills against the Mountain Course at this year's TT meeting. As indicated in the Chairman / Secretary's Report, all competitors who are member of the TTSC will receive £45 cash.

Thanks, as ever, to John Newton for his efforts in co-ordinating the raffle.



lap – no don't, go in to the pits, calm down and have a drink. Oh, thank goodness ... red flag, pull into the pits. Thank you, Wyn Evans, the Riders' Welfare Officer for getting word to me that Nalim didn't have life threatening injuries and would be ok. Nev Jones also popped in late at night to let us know all was well. Despite suspension problems, we duly qualified in 40th position at a speed of 96.78mph. During the first sidecar race we didn't see another outfit; we finished 29th out of 32 finishes with an average of 97.70mph for the three laps. We took time out on Mad Sunday to pay tribute to Simon Andrews by taking part in the commemorative lap, then onto race 2, which was unfortunately delayed until Thursday. Despite a near miss with a rock at Keppel Gate we came home 24th of the 46 starters at an average of 98.51mph, with our best lap of 99.47mph... so close, yet, so far! Thanks Gran for our lucky number 48 and a finish in the top twenty.

❖ **Do you feel you make steady progress in learning the course further each lap or do you, at times make huge strides forward during practice and race week when something just clicks at a particular part of the course, and gaining a vital few seconds off a lap time?**

Each year we have taken huge chunks out of certain sectors and I put this down to two things... firstly having the same passenger on board for the past two years meaning you get to know and grow in confidence

with each other and "Oscar" of course. Secondly, by studying a particular part of the course over the winter months which I think we can do better in. This year it's the run home from the Creg as we have not increased a single second since 2012!

❖ **No sidecars at the MGP, so you are not able to compete during that fortnight, but that doesn't mean you were not heavily involved in the background, in an organisational/official role. Can you give an insight into your marshalling/official involvement at the MGP?**

Last year I volunteered to be a driver and therefore was one of four marshals in the marshal response cars around the course. This was also extremely helpful with my homework project as it happened that our sector was from Brandywell to Appledene. During the fortnight I was located at Windy Corner, Creg ny Baa, Hillberry, the Nook, Governor's Entrance, Governor's Exit, which all needed our services. Then on the final day I had a wonderful drop off on closed roads all the way to Appledene...the only problem was being restricted to 70mph due to the marshals teams working hard to get the course ready.

❖ **You will again have the very experienced Karl Schofield in the chair for TT2015; how does Karl's knowledge help you around the course?**

Karl's great to have on board, he will be able to keep his head down longer with the new fairing fitted, so he doesn't have to

keep popping up like a meerkat. Listening to the great Mick Boddice, I also need to get tucked in more and grow longer arms and let the built-in airbags down a bit! I will do my very best with this!

❁ **Your hopes and dreams for TT 2015?**

One of our patients brought in a wonderful piece of history for me to see – Mike Hailwood’s first ever TT silver replica which he won when only 17. I wouldn’t touch it as we have never won one and it’s a dream to get our hands on one; it would be like winning the lottery. Last year, due to others’ misfortune we had to slow down to a crawl twice on our final lap, yet still finished with a lap time of 99mph and a race average of 98mph, so it’s within our grasp... just need a start number of 44 – come on, Gran sort it out.

❁ **Anyone you would like to thank?**

An appeal in February last year baled us out of a huge hole and sponsors “Ship Shape and Bristol Fashion” and a “special lady” who wishes to remain anonymous purchased Oscar’s new Nitron suspension. We also had assistance with regards the setup from Wal Saunders for the last meeting prior to TT. Then Andreas Road Racing allowed us to hire the track for a set up ses-

sion where we discovered different springs were required prior to setting off down Bray Hill.

Of course, we appreciate the input from all our sponsors... not in any particular order... Ship Shape and Bristol Fashion, Debbie & Graham Blight, Trudi & Charlie Day, Rex Physiotherapy, Andy & Kay Brown, Swift Motors, Evomoto, Kaneen’s Petrol Station, “The Stig”, Dale & Colvin, Old Market Inn, CGPOS (Helen & Diccen Sargent), Castlecutz, Railway Inn Sector 1 Marshals, Jan Jones, Heather & Carla Boalch, Karl & Sue Schofield, Mike Preston (for giving up three weeks of his annual leave to be apprentice Oscar technician), Beccy, Kevin & Elizabeth Moggridge, Mugs4U.com, Henry & Cath Cubbon, Ian & Myrtle Harrison, Steve & Jools Anderson, who made the fabulous magnets, Aiden & Glenn, Di & Roy Killey, Ken, Ann Redner, Hair Fusion (Jane & Ian Kirk), the gentleman who donated the hot water urn, Denyse & John Hill for the gas barbeque, everyone who delivered food parcels throughout the fortnight and naturally “our special lady”. Special thanks go to Oscar’s TT and S100 mechanic Tim Andrews and the loving memory of my Gran, Margaret Musker.



Oscar along with Debbie and Karl. Courtesy Gert Meulman.

TT RACE GAME

“Can you beat Bruce’s lap record?” Well, the answer is, “yes, you can!”

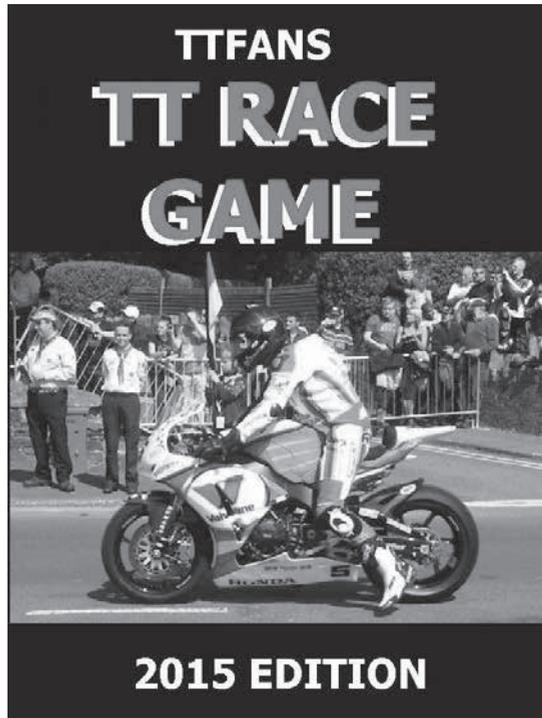
The TT Races have been simulated in board game format – invented and patented by Ian Huntly as long ago as 1978, it has been updated to cope with the current ultra-fast speeds!

This game, sponsored by Staples, reproduces the TT very closely – any number of players can participate or it can be played solo. The aim is to complete either a lap or a race with the fastest speed. The board game lap of 38 miles has been assigned ‘factors’ to certain relevant milestones (+ and -) pertaining to experiences at those locations.

A throw of the dice indicates how many miles you move forward; if you land on a milestone with a ‘factor’, then that is noted as a plus or a minus. At Ramsey there are choice cards face down, with which you might better or worsen your lap total.

Each lap must be completed exactly. The recorded number of throws is adjusted using the plus and minus factors, the total being converted to your lap speed using a sliding scale. In a six lap race, all six speeds are added together, an average then calculated... the player with the highest average wins the race.

The game is obtainable from e-bay or direct from Ian on **0118 926 5748**.



SOCIAL MEDIA

TT Supporters’ Club social media pages have updates regarding racing events. Anyone wanting to send us information can contact us on these pages for us to share with followers.

Facebook: TTsupportersclub
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10 YEARS AGO

Glancing through the Magazine archives reveals much variety in our corresponding issue ten years ago – Summer 2005 which featured a leading sponsor, radio commentator, top sidecar exponent and ‘Memories from Down Under’, an article in which Isle of Man resident, Dorothy Greenwood reminisced about those gritty, determined, yet highly stylish Antipodean riders who graced the Manx roads in the late ‘40s and ‘50s – many of whom she knew personally. A well balanced article, in which Dorothy referred to our Australian and New Zealand friends as ‘musketeers’, illustrated the highs and lows of TT racing, with Rod Coleman’s victory, the first by a Kiwi, of 1954 on his Junior AJS being in direct comparison to the tragic

accident involving Geoff Walker, the first Tasmanian to compete in the TT, at Kerrowmoar on the fourth lap of the 1953 Senior. Dorothy knew Geoff and told in her article that, the previous day to the accident he had phoned home to Tasmania to make arrangements to buy a new Norton on which he intended racing the rest of the season in Europe; Geoff is buried in Braddan Cemetery, right alongside the Mountain Course.

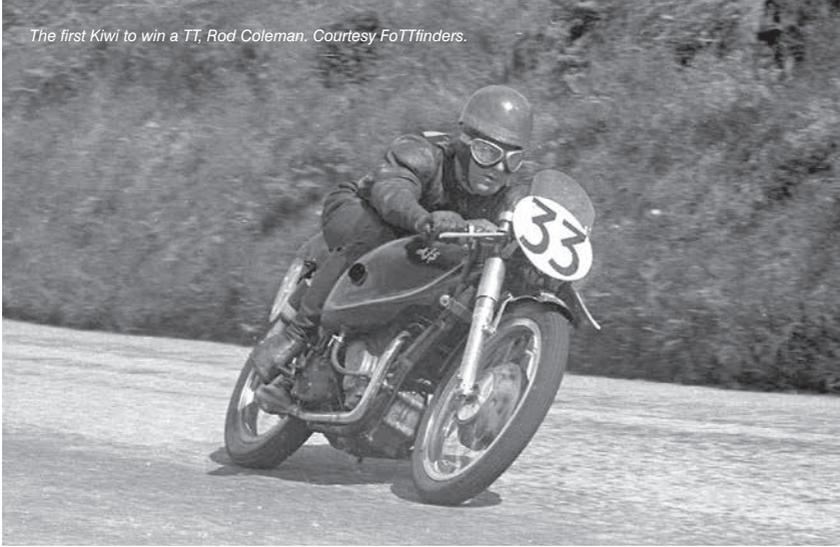
“No Idling Around” was the title allocated to the article about 2014 sidecar race winner, Conrad Harrison. The effervescent Yorkshireman recounted his 2004 TT experience... “It was a nightmare as the bike was running like a pig. I think I did more laps of Jurby than around the TT Course; I changed that many things my head was spinning. I knew my carbs were well worn, but funds were short, so I managed to borrow a set that were in bits and tried to make a good set out of two, but the bike was just not the same. It was pretty dangerous, cutting out then coming back in whenever it felt like it, pulling the outfit all over the track! Some people say I’m a bit mad, but I do have a limit, you know! It’s ok at Cadwell Park, but not the TT. So, I took my bat home, and, as some would say, ‘Conrad’s spat his dummy out!’, but I certainly did leave with my tail between my legs.” Fortunately, things have changed, start number 2 for TT 2015 indicating his progress.

“In the Pit Lane” featured Chris Kinley, now well established as a road racing radio commentator... he told of the delights of his job, access to the starting grid, winner’s enclosure, being a party to the victor’s celebrations, but as he candidly explained, being a commentator is not always a bed of roses... “There is, sadly, a down side – I think the hardest part was at last year’s MGP when I learnt about Tommy Clucas’s awful accident at Ballaugh Bridge over the headset, but was told not to mention anything and then having his friends and mine coming up to ask what had happened....having to say nothing was the hardest thing for me. Also, in 2003, it was difficult to deal with DJ’s accident as I had had a long conversation with him on the first Saturday of practice week; the way he talked to people in the crowd at Ballacraigne after he’d broken down, so friendly and very, very funny”. It won’t be long now before Chris’s communication skills will be holding our interest and keeping us well informed about TT 2015.

Leading IoM based sponsor, Martin Bullock replied to questions set by Mike Ham-



Still heavily involved in motorcycle racing... Martin Bullock seen here at TT 2014 with his rider, Dave Madsen-Mygdal, along with the MB Manx-sport 650 Kawasaki twin. Unfortunately, the machine failed to make the distance in the Lightweight race. Courtesy Mike Hammonds.



monds'. Martin's reply to the following indicated the recent upturn in fortunes for the TT: Richard 'Milky' Quayle and Paul Philips have recently been appointed Rider Liaison and Rider Recruitment Officers. What would you like them to achieve? "Top appointments. I have seen the difference already with the way we had the Press Launch. Wow. Razzamatazz! This is what we need. A real professional approach to it, everybody's buzzing. Martin Finnegan summed it up for me when he said that gone are the days when we put up a few flyers on Douglas Prom three weeks before the event. Everybody's up for it because we all have a sense of direction."

The TT was 'moving on'... in a direction which has been maintained!!

EQUIPE AJAX

MOTOR SPORT ACTION PHOTOGRAPHERS



Barry and Sheila would like to wish "Good Luck" to all T.T. riders and visitors.

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Introducing 24 year old Craig Neve...

... an electrician from Immingham, North East Lincolnshire, who took part in his very first road race event, the 2014 Manx Grand Prix, hoping very much this will lead to a TT debut in the future.

Craig is a familiar face in short circuit racing paddocks having competed up to the 2014 season in support classes at MCE British Superbike events. Having been on the books of Grimsby Town FC at youth level, Craig's first interest in racing as a young boy was watching his father, Andy race at Oliver's Mount; he lists the legendary Valentino Rossi as a big inspiration on his racing career.

With no road experience Craig got a race licence, competing in his first meeting at Elvington in 2008. In the same year Elvington was the venue of his first win, ultimately helping him to win the Rookie 400 Championship

on a Honda VFR400. By the end of the season he was also winning races in the F400 class. Craig's aim from these early days was to race at the highest level possible on short circuits, but his overall racing ambition was to win a race at the IoM TT.

2009 saw Craig step up to a Yamaha R6 machine in the popular 600cc stock class. Initially, this was tough, but he achieved his target of finishing in the top ten of the Thundersport GB Championship, a great interim step to National Championship racing. He will contest the 2015 Thundersport GB Superstock 1000 Championship in between furthering his road race career with debuts at the NW200 and the Ulster GP.

During 2010 and 2011 Craig contested the ultra competitive Metzeler National Superstock 600 Championship, a class con-

sisting of huge grids designed to help young riders show and develop their talent in front of large crowds as a support class to the British Superbike series. Again Craig found himself in at the deep end, but he made good progress towards the end of his first season; to assist him with track knowledge in these events, he also competed in around ten club meetings taking wins each time out.

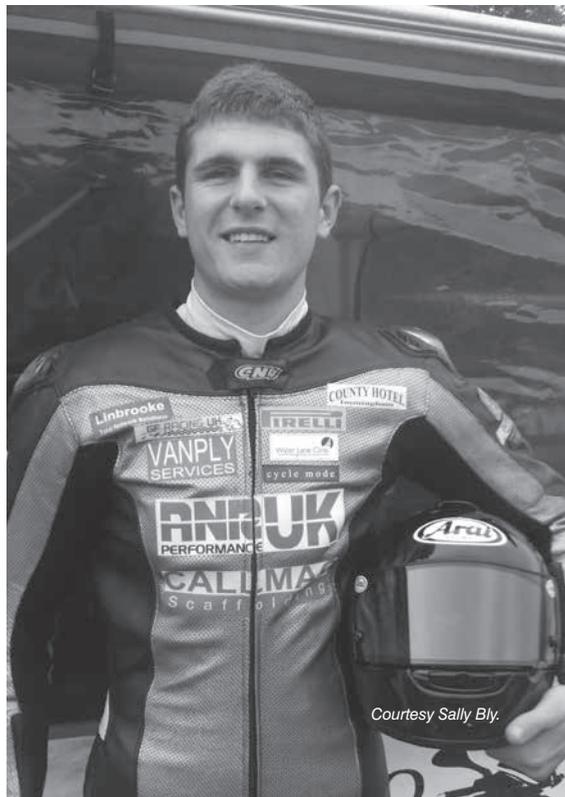
For 2011 in that championship he opted for a change of machinery riding a Triumph 675, but an early season testing crash hampered him, only joining the competition at Croft, round three, where he was pleased to secure a top 20 finish from an entry of sixty. As a benchmark, Craig also competed in some club meetings finding he was now beating riders who had always previously headed him, indicating he was learning quickly and making good progress.

For 2012 and 2013 Craig moved up to Motorpoint British Supersport, racing against many experienced ex-British Superbike level racers from a host of nations. Again he opted for Triumph machinery... 2012 proved to be a positive year with the Lincolnshire lad standing proudly on the Supersport Cup podium three times in the last two rounds at Silverstone and Brands. Again between championship commitments Craig competed in nine club meetings securing personal best lap times and several wins; his outing at Brands was particularly memorable in that he gained his first points in the British Supersport Championship, a top 15 placing overall and second in the Cup Championship part of the race.

Same class for 2013 season but this time on Honda machinery and he became faster each time out, setting personal bests again and securing four Supersport Championship podiums...two second places at Oulton Park, a 3rd at Cadwell Park and a 3rd at Silver-

stone. Craig also went back to compete at the Thundersport meetings at Cadwell, Oulton and Rockingham winning at all three events and setting a new lap record at the latter; he ended up 4th in that championship such was his dominance in those three meetings.

Early in 2014, realising his small family backed team led by father Andy and his ANR Performance UK racing concern, although possessing great technical knowledge, would need a much higher annual budget to compete at the front of the Supersport Championship pack, Craig decided to follow a different path by competing in the Repsol Spanish CEV Championship on a 1000cc Honda Fireblade. Riding the Callmac Scaffolding machine he gained valuable experience of European racing in between his UK short circuit outings... fine preparation for his road racing debut in the Manx Grand Prix on a Callmac Scaffolding CBR 600.



Courtesy Sally Bly.

And so Craig prepared for his road racing experience, having been allocated his favourite number 4 in the Newcomers A, an event in which he knew he'd be seen as one of the top seeds for race honours. However, he was under no illusions about the magnitude of being able to achieve success on the Mountain Course at the first attempt so wisely stated, that, to finish first in any race, first and foremost a rider has to finish. Craig was well aware that to concentrate and focus through such a long race was the ultimate test of man and machine...he now takes up the story of his first MGP experience:

"During the build up to my first MGP I felt as though I had to learn the most I could without actually riding a motorcycle around there, so I decided to do as many car laps as possible in order to learn 'what came next', thus becoming more familiar with the circuit. I spent one weekend over there with Peter Hickman which was helpful as he had ridden at the TT that year, making history by becoming the fastest newcomer ever earlier in 2014.

Peter's a very capable rider and a safe one at that and I'm pleased he gave up his time for me that weekend; I found his advice invaluable and also very interesting getting a newcomer's perspective instead of a very

experienced racer with years of laps under his belt saying it's 'flat through here' or it's '6th through here'. Overall, between my other racing commitments, I went over to the Island three or four times lapping in a car 15-20 times in a weekend as I realised from the outset, knowledge and doing your homework is everything.

During practice week I felt very frustrated... I have no problem admitting that I'm a slow learner, needing to have things right in my mind 100% before I can give 100% out on the circuit. I honestly just didn't know the place well enough! Bearing in mind I did around 70 laps in a Nissan Micra, the course was just so different using both sides of the road. I so needed more laps of practice but it seemed things were conspiring against me as, every evening something or other would prevent me having a good run of laps.

We'd get out late because of scrutineering so I'd only get two laps whereas some others would get that all important third lap under their belt. Other evenings, there was rain, accidents and mechanical issues which led me to say 'all in all, practice week was a nightmare'. I simply needed more laps; Peter Hickman commented that he got more laps at the TT during practice week than I did during

FoT Tofinders Exhibitions...

...not to be missed whilst on the Isle of Man for the 2015 TT

Laxey Woollen Mills, Glen Road, Laxey

Open 9 am to 5 pm June 1 to June 13 (including Mad Sunday). Free parking, super cafe on site, but as the exhibition is situated on the first floor, there is restricted disabled access.

Sulby Glen Hotel

Open pub hours. June 1 to June 13 (including Mad Sunday).

Good beer and superb pub grub available

***Free admission to both, but a donation to the MGP Helicopter Fund will be appreciated.**



the whole MGP, but some of this was unavoidable due to weather. My mental strength was good for the event, never once feeling nervous in the holding pen waiting for practice and I felt more eager to get going as each session approached; I was praying for those crucial three laps, but it never happened for me.

In conclusion, I felt very under prepared for race week as I just hadn't done enough laps; I felt my course knowledge was poor, I thought I'm not going to win the Newcomers' Race, but what I will do is work at a few little sectors just to see if I can improve slightly. With the lap being so long I found I'd do some areas better than before and some worse as I was trying different things here and there to try to find the best lines, etc. I remember the guy from Manx Radio asking me on the grid of the Newcomers' Race, because I'd qualified so far down the grid and I was setting off with number 4 on my bike, 'what's the problem Craig, where have you been struggling this week?' I replied, 'well Chris you see that area over there? The start/finish line from there and all the way back round again', he laughed but it simply was true!

We finally set off and I did improve throughout the race. I would really like to thank my lads in gasoline alley who gave me a great professional pit stop unlike, unfortunately, some of the others I saw, but let's not forget, it is an amateur event and there is little opportunity to prepare for this discipline unless you compete in endurance events. My stop gained me some vital positions during the race in which I eventually finished 7th.

In between the Newcomer and Senior races we had one lap of practice and again I tried to stay out of trouble and get my head down; it was going great, I was enjoying myself, again learning each sector a little bit more and growing in confidence, and hoping to get one more lap if I could get around in time. But what do you know... we got around to Cronk-ny-Mona only to be red flagged as an ambulance had to cross the circuit because there was an accident down one of the nearby streets, I couldn't believe it, I thought, yeah just my luck, anyway all this meant that I had to wait two more days until the Senior race for more track time!

The morning of the Senior arrived and I knew these would be my last laps of 2014

around the course and I was desperate to improve again, but throughout the morning we heard around the paddock and on the radio that there were record breaking high winds on the mountain and it was looking very unlikely that the race would be run. Also, it started to rain, then dry out and then it would rain again! All in all it was an agonising wait for the decision, but eventually the organisers decided to run the race, alas cut to 3 laps yet again.

A lot of the top riders decided not to start because of high winds and generally terrible conditions, but I thought what the heck, even if I cruise around, that's a few more laps under my belt and a little bit more circuit knowledge. I set off at 27 and had a successful race having experienced a few near misses because of the strong winds; it was probably the worst conditions I'd ever raced in, but also good for me in a way because my race average speed was 110mph the same as the Newcomers' Race despite the damp and high winds. This meant I could take some positives from my final laps of 2014 around the course. As we started lap 3 I had risen up to 15th position, but unfortunately the red flags were shown as a friend of mine, Gary Firth had crashed at Alpine Cottage sadly losing his life. Gary was a terrible loss to the paddock; it was a pleasure to have met him on the Mike Hailwood Foundation weekend, Gary was also in his Newcomers year at the event. The result of the race was decided on count back to the end of lap 2 which I completed in 24th position, so this was my declared finishing position in the race, but I did finish as the third best newcomer.

To sum up my MGP 2014, I have to say it was a great experience and I cannot wait to go back to compete in the event again in 2015 and know that I can, and will improve in so

many areas. At the end of the day I was disappointed not to win anything at the 2014 event, but that's the racer inside me. I was never going to win, not in my first year, and possibly not in my second. The whole idea of the MGP was to gain some experience, but the fact that I didn't complete as many laps as I would have liked was a little disappointing. However, I can look to the fact that I crossed the line in the Newcomers' Race having only completed 7 laps of practice and finished 7th, lapping at 112mph with a race average of 110mph, as a solid base on which to build for future years. Thinking about what I achieved I am very happy, but at the time over there I was slightly disappointed because I expected to do a lot better than I actually did, results wise; however I actually couldn't do any more and be safe with it. I need to improve my circuit knowledge for 2015 – I still stress that knowledge is everything around the TT Course.

Having experienced the roads for the first time at the MGP I know that road racing will now be my main aim and focus in my racing career. Before I first started racing I spoke to my Dad and told him that I wanted to win a TT, but having had experience of road racing himself, we decided it would be a lot safer for me to go down the short circuit route. Now I feel, with valuable years' experience gained riding in British Superbike meetings and the Spanish CEV Championship and with the feeling it's only money holding me back at these levels, I believe that my future will be on the roads and know with more laps, course knowledge and experience and when I can be 100% confident in my mind on where I am going around the course, I can be very successful. I am determined to achieve my road racing ambition and the pinnacle of any rider's career, that TT win!"

Sally Bly



Joey Dunlop Foundation

I am writing this article on St Patrick's Day which is always an indicator that the road race season is fast approaching.

In 2014 we have seen a 10% growth in summer season guests at the Joey Dunlop Lodge, and during the winter we had an added bonus with Manx residents staying with us whilst on the road to recovery between a stay in hospital and home.

We had a very special guest over Christmas at the Lodge... and he is returning for an Easter Break. Big H...Paul Hunt, is a larger than life character in the motorcycle world and we were pleased to help him with his recovery from injuries following an accident whilst undertaking travelling marshal duties at TT 2014.

Indications are that the next six months are going to be busier with limited availability in June, July and August.

The Trustees are keen to build two more apartments during winter of 2015/16, and assuming that the charity will enjoy another bumper year with merchandise sales then we should be able to proceed. Please look out for the Joey Dunlop Foundation stall which will be at many motorcycle events and shows during the road race season, as well, of course, in its usual position at the Grandstand during the TT Festival.

We are pleased to be associated with the Simon Andrew's Legacy Lap and have been appointed as the sole retailer of the Simon Andrews Legacy Lap T-Shirts which will be available for purchase from early April.

The charity has a small band of loyal volunteers; unfortunately we are now becoming an elderly team, so any offers of help are appreciated. If you would like to become involved with Joey's charity then please do not hesitate to contact me via our website www.joeydunlopfoundation.com

Kevin Quirk

Chairman, Joey Dunlop Foundation



Paul Owen at the top of Bray Hill.
Courtesy Glynne Lewis.



Did you know?

... well, we all know that the absolute lap record around the Mountain Course is now held by Bruce Anstey – 132.298mph – but the laid back Kiwi is only the third non-British Isles rider to have the honour of holding this distinction, the other two being Southern Rhodesians, Ray Amm and Gary Hocking. In fact, Ray Amm's effort of 1953 – 97.41mph – was the last time a rider on a British machine – Norton – had the absolute lap record to his credit.

Despite his dominance of the late '60s and early '70s, Giacomo Agostini was never in possession of the 'lap', living in the shadow of that amazing circuit – 108.77mph – of Mike Hailwood in 1967, a level which was not surpassed until 1975 when Mick Grant took his 750 Kawasaki past the 109mph mark.

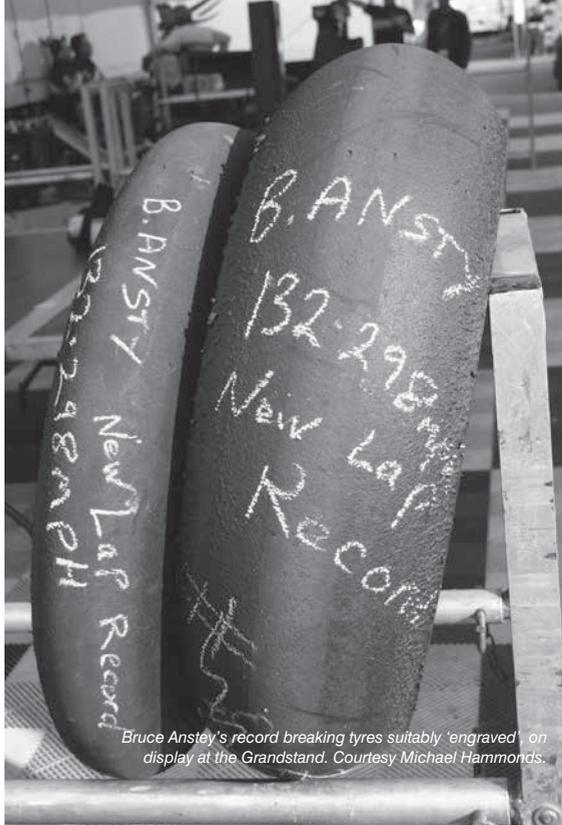
The last Suzuki mounted rider to hold the ALR was Norman Brown, in 1983 – 116.19mph – in fact, only two Suzuki riders have held the honour, the other being John Williams – 112.27mph – in 1976 on his 500 works machine, surpassing Mick Grant's record of the previous year by some 27 seconds, a massive increase. The biggest post-war increase was actually that of John Surtees in 1960 on his MV Agusta, 37.4 seconds quicker than his own record set the year before – 104.08mph from 101.18mph.

The name of the last Irishman to hold the absolute lap record might well be a surprise... Steve Cull's 500 Honda completed a circuit in 1988 at 119.08mph to consign Joey Dunlop's record of four years previous – 118.48mph – to the history books. Joey Dunlop does have the 'honour' of holding the ALR riding the largest capacity machine – 115.40mph – in 1981 on a 1023 Honda... at the other end of the scale, a Junior 350, machine, that of Jimmy Simpson, was actually in possession of the record – 64.54mph – in 1924. Riding an AJS he was the first to top the 60mph barrier, as he

was the 70mph on the larger capacity of the same marque in 1926 and then some five years later the 80mph barrier, but this time on a Norton.

Other landmarks... Freddie Frith [Norton], 90mph in 1937, Bob McIntyre [Gilera], 100mph 1957, Gary Hocking [MV Agusta] 105mph 1962, John Williams [Suzuki] 110mph 1976, Joey Dunlop [Yamaha] 115mph 1980, Steve Hislop [Honda] 120mph 1989, David Jefferies [Yamaha] 125mph 2000 and finally, the 130mph barrier was surpassed by John McGuinness on his Honda, most aptly, in the centenary year of 2007.

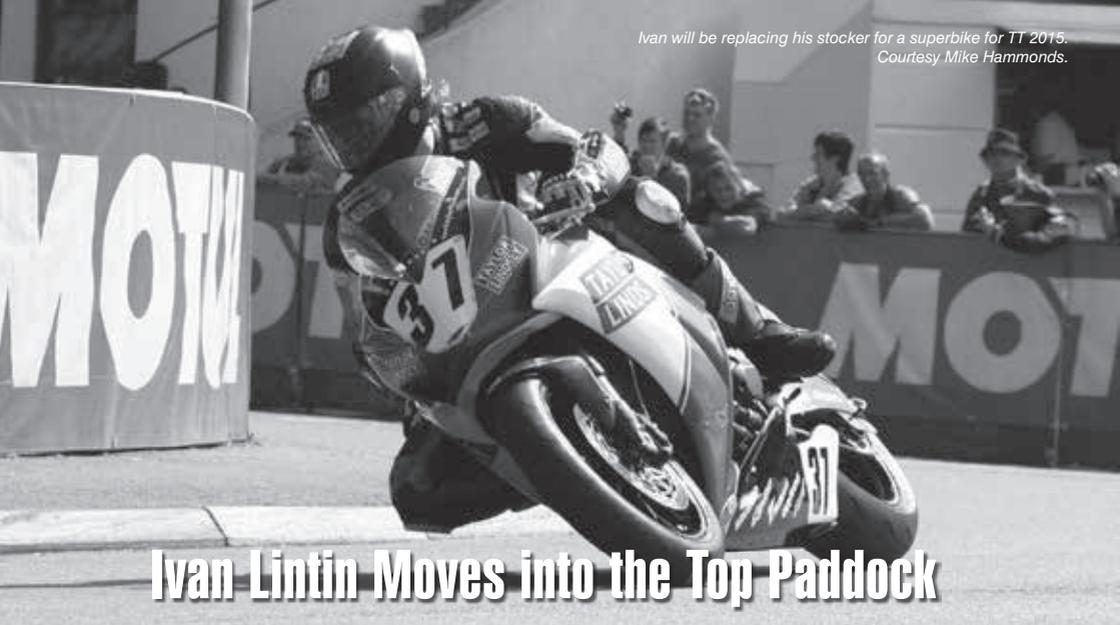
What of this year? Will bike developments, tyre improvements, changes to the course and increased competition between the top flight riders see the 133mph broken? The rear cover shows Bruce Anstey at the Creg on that very special lap [Courtesy Glynne Lewis].



Bruce Anstey's record breaking tyres suitably 'engraved' on display at the Grandstand. Courtesy Michael Hammonds.



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Ivan Lintin Moves into the Top Paddock

The vast majority of road racers would be proud of a 2014 CV which reads... 2nd in the Scarborough Spring Cup ~ 2nd in the NW200 in the class catering for twins ~ Privateers' Champion at the TT with a best finish of 7th in Supersport 2 ~ winner on his twin at the Southern 100 with a new lap record ~ another lap record whilst taking victory in the same class at the UGP along with 4th in the Supersport... and the opposition decimated at the Gold Cup – six victories from seven starts, including the prestigious Gold Cup Race itself. Ivan Lintin was, indeed, delighted with his performances and consequent results of last year... resting on his laurels? Not a chance, as after parting company with the Taylor Lindsey Racing concern, he will now find himself in Paddock A with all the other top riders when he arrives at the Glencrutchery Road Grandstand at the end of May as the main man for RC Express Racing.

So, how did the link between Ivan and RC Express come about? "Obviously it was very well documented about myself leaving Taylor Lindsey Racing and also Dean Harrison leaving RC Express Racing. Dean moved on but I was left without a ride... but I believe things happen for a reason; it had been a couple of weeks since my departure had been announced and I had been chatting to various people and

teams to see what was available. Nothing was happening, although something was in place if all else failed... I would be lining up on a race bike for the 2015 season, but then the call came through from Roy Constable, co-owner of RC Express. We forged a relationship from that point onwards, about three weeks later I was down in Bristol for press photos with a move in place with which I was more than happy."

In the larger capacity classes and Supersport last year Ivan was Honda mounted with a Kawasaki twin completing the stable... same again this summer? "No, I will be riding all Kawasaki machines for the 2015 season with a proper superbike for the first time about which I am very excited as I am about the Superstock 1000 and 600 Supersport bikes. I will be aboard a trusty Kawasaki twin in the Lightweight class."

It's probably not too difficult to anticipate in which meetings the man from Bardney will compete - NW200, TT, Southern 100, UGP and all those at the twisty Oliver's Mount circuit around which he is now the fifth fastest rider, as well as holding the lap record for the twin class. "You're quite correct" adds Ivan "but, the team is hopeful that I will be able to travel to the Far East at the end of the year to make my Macau debut. The season started with three days warm weather testing at Cartagena

in Spain. This was brilliant as normally, on such a tight budget my testing was limited to a club meeting at my local circuit, Cadwell Park or on some occasions, I'd even just arrive at the first meeting of the year, the Scarborough Ian Watson Spring Cup."

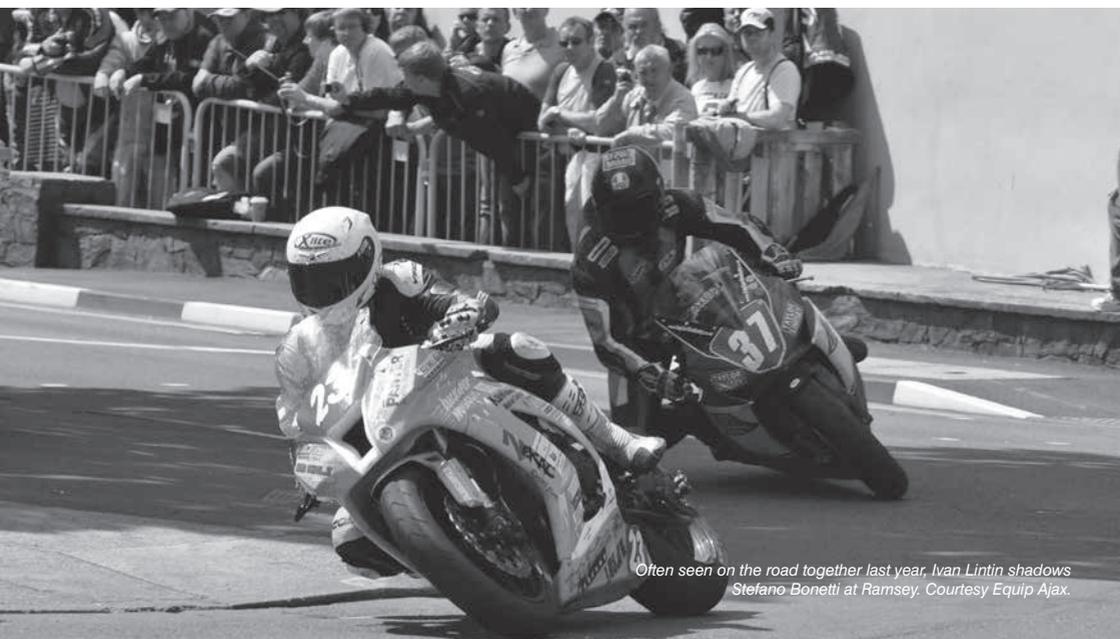
Presumably, the overseas test programme will set the 30 year old up for the season? "Yes, I was able to complete over 70 laps on each of the three days, gaining valuable mileage on the ZX-10R Superbike, ZX-10R Superstock and ZX-6R Supersport machines. It was my first time on a bike since last September's Gold Cup and my first time out with the team so there was a lot to take on board, but I can't fault how the week went. I gelled really well with the team, working particularly well with my mechanic Danny Horne as well as Richard of Maxton to gradually improve the set-up of all the bikes and, aside from flinging myself over the handlebars on the Superbike on the final day, it was great."

A different set-up for Ivan this year, presumably he won't be as much hands on with respect to machine preparations? "Moving into a well established larger team is a new thing for me as far as bike prep goes. Danny will work on the bikes full time so I will be taking a step back; it will also mean I'll have a load of pressure

taken off not having to worry about getting bikes prepped in between meetings. Mind you, I did have the Twin down at my house recently to put my twist on it!"

Ivan's Mountain Course debut was in the MGP Newcomers' of 2008, finishing second behind Ryan Kneen at an average of 103.14mph, but he is now circulating in excess of 125mph on his Superstock and 117mph on the twin, so, what will be the expectations from the management of his new team this season? "From the very first chat Roy and Ben told me that there is never going to be any pressure from their side to get results, which is very nice to hear as a rider about to make a big change in his career. I've signed a two year contract, but I will, of course, put pressure on myself to keep progressing forward with lap times and results because that's the game; we aim to be the best we can be on any given day. Perhaps, if I started to drop out of the top 20 on a regular basis and not make 'A' Finals there might be a quiet word in my ear, but personally I would expect that."

Ivan's season is 'road based' with a couple of early season club meetings to blow away the cobwebs, but, what then in terms of aims and targets? "Well, it'll be barrelling into Mere Hairpin at Scarborough in an attempt to win the Spring Cup and to



Often seen on the road together last year, Ivan Lintin shadows Stefano Bonetti at Ramsey. Courtesy Equip Ajax.

meet the criteria of the TT course licence, but at the big meetings it's sometimes very difficult to have a goal concerning a particular finishing position because of the depth of field and other criteria involved. However, the NW 200 will be just a warm up for the TT, getting used to 190mph before you fly off down Bray Hill; I think if you didn't do it, you'd lose a couple of nights' practice getting 'up to speed' at the TT. Specifically, at the TT I just want to keep progressing, with the twins I want a good solid run then hopefully stand on one of the podium steps; on



the 600 and stocker, I'd be happy with top ten positions, obviously accompanied by increased lap speeds and then in the top twelve or fifteen on the superbike. You've got to bear in mind that with fourteen people doing 130+mph laps, the TT is really progressing massively. As long as I get six finishes from my six starts I'd be over the moon and a lap of 128mph would top the meeting off nicely."

At last year's TT Ivan was circulating on the roads with likes of Dan Cooper, Stefano Bonetti and Russ Mountford, so what about this year, with increased power, with whom would Ivan anticipate sharing the road? The reply is quite clear cut... "I want to be circulating with no-one really; hopefully with the increase in power, if I do catch anyone, I can pass them straight away; last year was a proper nightmare because I couldn't drop them when I caught them. Then they would start to race me on the road thus slowing down my progress."

Number allocation comes into play here. Ivan expands, "I would have liked to have been seeded in all classes as it takes that little bit of pressure off during practice to get a time in for a clean run in the races. I've been seeded on the smaller capacity bikes – 6 in the Lightweight, 17 on the Kawasaki ZX 6R, but I've been allocated number 22 for the three big bike races so I will just have to put in a good lap during qualifying to start as far up as I can... I don't want to start deep in the pack and possibly get stuck in on-the-road battles."

Despite becoming a 'resident of the top paddock' at the TT, Ivan will still be keeping in contact with his grass root supporters and sponsors by holding his now traditional promotion evenings at his local, the Nag's Head, Bardney as he still has costs which need covering. "The evenings", as Ivan explains, "have grown and grown and I think this year we will be having a marquee outside in the beer garden as a lot of people have followed me from the start when I was competing in UK short circuit meetings and in the Irish Road Racing Support Championship. It's good to bring them all together twice a year for an evening's entertainment."

THE OFFICIAL TT SUPPORTERS CLUB WEBSITE

Don't forget, you can receive information about the TT Supporters' Club via the web:

- * membership application forms for you and your friends
- * buy your TTSC clothing [jackets, caps, shirts, etc] and memorabilia
- * regional news – club nights, etc
- * race statistics

For further information contact Pete Oulton: peter.oulton@virgin.net

www.ttsupportersclub.com

Ivan is certainly appreciative, indeed very grateful to the people who gave him the chances and help to reach his current level of expertise as he is to Roy and Ben Constable for giving him the opportunity of competing with success at the highest echelons in pure road racing. Speaking of success, come the Winter issue of this magazine, what does Ivan hope we will be reading about with respect to his 2015 season? "In the winter article I would love to be talking about winning, especially at the NW200 and TT... this would be great reading for my personal CV. Also, I'd like readers to hear about my successful exploits in my first Macau GP and how my relationship with RC Express Racing has grown into something fantastic, as I fully expect it will. All in all, I'm hoping for another successful season – I shall certainly be doing my best."

We know that this will definitely be the case as Ivan will continue in his thoroughly professional manner, respecting his rivals and taking the advice from one of



road racing top teams, RC Express Racing. There is every chance we will be reading about an international road race winner in the next issue, hopefully a TT one at that – we wish Ivan well.

STOP PRESS:

Ivan now has entries for both the Classic TT and Pre-TT Classic meetings on a G50 Matchless engined Seeley, backed by Brian Richards.

The Three Legs Fly in France

The TT Supporters' Club representative, Jean-Michel Prudon is certainly well respected in the motorcycle fraternity of the United Kingdom's nearest cross channel neighbour, France. For many years now, Jean-Michel has held the TTSC banner aloft at national and regional motorcycle shows, the winter just passed being no exception.

During the cold, often snowy months, Moto Journal, France's most influential biking magazine organises chat shows, exhibitions, demonstrations in a variety of venues all over the country, to which our French TTSC representative is invited so he can impart his knowledge of the TT Races, a subject on which he is regarded as somewhat of an expert.

This particular meeting was a two day affair where a team of journalists, guest racers and thirty-five bikers came together to discuss, amongst other things the TT and Manx Grand Prix; naturally, Moto Journal asked Jean-Michel to talk to the gathered body about the two world famous meetings.

The photograph shows, from the left... Julien Toniutti, French Rally Champion 2014 and now MGP pilot, Frederic Protat ex-French 250 and Superbike Champion who also competed in the 500 GPs of 1996 and 1997, Stephane Coutelle former TT pilot – 1997 and 1998 and on the far right, classic endurance racer, Christian Hacquin... all positioned under the colours of the TT Supporters' Club and the Three Legs of Man.



Courtesy Jean-Michel Prudon.



TT DIGEST

- ✦ There was some doubt that Antonio Maeso, our Spanish friend, would ever ride a motorcycle again, never mind race one, after his 'incident' on the Mountain during TT 2013 when he clipped a wall with his leg on the last lap of the Superbike Race whilst well within silver replica time. You will recall that he remained upright on the machine, pulling in at the next suitable point – the Black Hut – in agony. Well, a You Tube video is testimony to his determination to compete again; seen at an Almeria track day on a borrowed Suzuki 1000 with its seat raised and right gear change moved forward to cope with problems still existing in his damaged leg, he seems to have lost none of his old style. He is now concentrating on increasing the movement in his offending limb, hours of physiotherapy lying ahead. We wish Antonio well... it would be great to see him pitched up in the Glencrutchery Road paddock again.
- ✦ Competitors holding licenses other than those issued by the ACU or SACU have to ensure they have the document issued by their own federation giving Start Permission

[for the TT Races]. This document should also confirm that insurance has been taken out with respect to personal accident in accordance with FIM regulations with additional cover for medical expenses and repatriation costs. For ACU and SACU license holders the organisers will arrange personal accident cover.

- ✦ Newcomers must have signed on and commenced qualifying including the completion of a speed controlled lap by the end of Tuesday's qualifying session and should have completed three laps by the end of Wednesday's qualifying session, or they may be disqualified.
- ✦ Qualification criteria remains as last year – for all solo classes [except TT Zero Challenge] 115% of the third fastest time in the relevant class, sidecars, 120% of the third fastest qualifier and electric bikes must complete a lap in under 45 minutes. Whether or not prize money remains the same as 2014 remains to be seen, as no such amounts appear in the Regulations at the time of writing.

- ✦ A rider may ride the same machine in both superbike and superstock classes, but, if doing so, must practice using the number allocated for the former.
- ✦ The new Transport Museum is on schedule to be open in time for the TT. Housing 300 vehicles, an approximate equal number of bikes and cars, this brand new building is situated on the main road through Jurby. The bikes will be displayed on two mezzanine levels running parallel to each other for almost the length of the building, outside of which will be a recreated 1930's street scene with period shop frontages.
- ✦ Toni Rechberger, the Austrian TT fanatic had submitted an entry for this year's TT, but just for the Superstock race on his Suzuki GSXR1000 – if successful, this would commemorate the anniversary of his TT debut some thirty years ago in 1985. Toni's aim is naturally to finish the race which would mean that he would have completed the distance in each of the 36 races started on the Mountain Course... a remarkable 100% record. A 36th finish would have added significance as it would equal the number of finishes by German TT legend, Hans Otto Butenuth. In 2014 Toni won two races in the European Superbike Hill Climbing Championship, taking third place overall. In January this year, Toni was a guest speaker at the 'Motorradwelt Bodensee' in Friedrichshafen's spe-

cial Isle of Man TT Exhibition.

- ✦ Refuelling during pit stops... during practice week every pit crew member and team manager must attend a pit lane briefing. All machines must be placed on a paddock stand before the tank cap is removed and refuelling takes place; the machine must remain on the stand until refuelling has been completed and the tank cap replaced. Stringent regulations have been introduced regarding protective clothing... so much so that the attendant responsible for refuelling must be clad in a specific suit which has the highest of standards with respect to fireproof; these overalls must have collars, ankle and wrist cuffs, and be zip up and not pop stud. He / she must also wear a double layered fireproof balaclava of a given standard and fireproof gloves. Footwear should be suitable, certainly with no studs or steel tips.
- ✦ Self-contained remote starters may be used for the Superbike and Senior races provided applications are made to the Clerk of the Course and approval being given at least 24 hours before the scheduled start of the race. Remote starters must be intrinsically safe and must stored within the pit box.
- ✦ During the winter months work has been going on to upgrade the media area at the TT Grandstand. Disabled access is being



Dan Kneen and David Johnson in Supersport action at Kirk Michael. Courtesy Gert Meulman.



*"Up and Down" for Sam Wilson at Ballaugh.
Courtesy Gert Meulman.*



improved with ramps to the conference area and to the tower. In addition, the leaking conservatory section at the front of the press office is being replaced with an improved reception area. This will be extended and an additional entrance incorporated at the other side of the tower. Leaking windows are also being replaced in the tower itself.

- ✦ Teams and competitors are not permitted to retail any goods or services from their paddock area during the TT period, including merchandise. Such activities are to be carried out in the Paddock Trade area by arrangement through the normal channels. The IoM Office of Fair Trading will carry out unadvertised inspections of the paddock during the event and have the power to confiscate goods which are being sold without an IoM Non-Resident Trader's License
- ✦ The overall Sidecar Champion calculated on a world championship points scoring basis will be presented with the RAC Championship, with the passenger receiving the Craig Trophy. The Fred Hanks Trophy goes to the Chassis Manufacturer with the fastest aggregate time across the two sidecar races with the crew having achieved this securing the Bill Boddice Trophy. The best driver newcomer receives the Peter Chapman Trophy and the equally successful passenger, the Dave Wells Trophy, although the pair may not necessarily be on the same outfit.
- ✦ Although numbers 1 to 20 are technically seeds in the solo race, it is only those riders sporting 1 to 15 who have to carry onboard cameras if requested to do so by the broadcasters. Cameras will generally be fitted to brackets on the machine by the Broadcast Rights Holder on the day of the practice ses-

sion or race, but it is the responsibility of the competitor to fit the brackets prior to signing on.

- ✦ Sunday racing has been confirmed at this year's Pre-TT Classic meeting. Roads at the Billown circuit will be closed: Friday 29th May, 6.05pm-9.25pm, Saturday 30th, 12.15pm-4.15pm and Sunday 31st, 1.00pm-8.00pm
- ✦ Correct at the time of going to press are the times for the now traditional and superbly presented TT programmes on ITV4, all of which are scheduled to start at 9.00pm unless otherwise stated: 1st June TT2015 Young Guns, 2nd TT2015 130 Club, 3rd TT2015 The Beginners' Guide, 4th Preview Show, 5th Qualifying Highlights, 6th Superbike TT, 7th Sidecar Race 1, 8th Supersport Race 1, 9th Superstock, 10th Supersport Race 2, 11th Sidecar Race 2, 12th Senior, 13th Lightweight TT, and 15th June 6pm, Review Show 1 followed at 7pm by Review Show 2
- ✦ Announced in the Manx press in mid-March were the projected bookings for passages on Steam Packet vessels for this year's TT meeting... the number of motorcycles booked shows a 10% increase on last year, due largely to the placement of a removable mezzanine deck on the fast craft, Mannanan. An extra 100 bikes can be transported each journey... over 13,500 have been booked; let's hope extra seating is also available!! Crucially, MV Arrow providing freight services during the TT has allowed more space on Ben-my-Chree for vehicles. The charter of P&O Express has also once again added additional passenger capacity for the event.



1965 TT RACES - HAILWOOD ADDS TO THE LEGEND!

The 60s, like its predecessor the 50s, were arguably the two eras in motorcycle racing which are remembered by those who were around at the time as being 'Golden'. Manufacturers' spending knew no limits as the search for power and speed continued. There were works Hondas, Yamahas, Suzukis, Benellis, MV Agustas, Jawas, MZs, Kreidlers, there were twins, 4 and 5 cylinder missiles and Monza 1964 had seen the appearance of the legendary Honda-6. And the TT was the British round of the World Championships. For those who were there at the time, things have never been the same since!

No internet sites proclaiming that Alf Bloggins was sorting out a ride, if you wanted to know who was doing what, and where, then the weekly 'comics', Motor Cycle News (MCN), Motor Cycling were full of the latest from Japan, stating that Honda were doing this, Yamaha doing that. By and large if the manufacturer had done well in, say, the 125cc class, then there would be little change for the following year, but a year of disappointing results would bring about a winter of frantic development and testing. There were six classes then, and Suzuki's Hugh Anderson was the reigning 50cc champion with Honda's Luigi Taveri the 125cc 'king', but the early rounds of the 1965 series, held in the USA, Spain, Germany and France

had shown that the '64 champs were having a tougher time this year. Anderson was lying second in the 50cc class to Honda's diminutive Ulsterman Ralph Bryans, while Taveri hadn't scored a point in the 125s, Anderson and team-mate Frank Perris dominating. Phil Read had won his first world title in the 250cc class in '64 and he was out to double up and had won all four races so far. Max Deubel with passenger Emil Hörner had won the sidecar title for 4 consecutive years, but their arch rivals Swiss drivers Fritz Scheidegger and Florian Camathias were sharing the wins with Deubel this time round.

But the big news for 1965 was that Count Agusta, the boss of MV Agusta, had got himself an Italian rider to support Mike Hailwood in the 350 and 500 classes. Step forward, one Giacomo Agostini. 'Ago' as he was soon nicknamed had won the Italian 250 cc championship on a Morini and had impressed in the '64 German and Italian GP events. There had been just the one round of the 350cc championship before the TT, and when both Hailwood and Honda's Jim Redman had engine problems, young Ago had won his first GP. No problems for Hailwood in the 500cc class, the reigning champion had won both GPs.

In Motor Cycle's TT Guide issue, they reported on the record entry for the six races, 478, 28 up on the 1964 total, as being 'incred-

The traditional start... sidecars set off in pairs.
Courtesy Fottofinders.



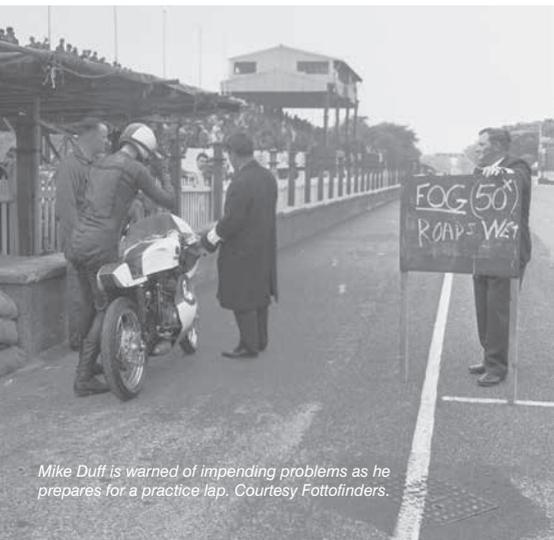
ible really, that the TT should attract another record entry. Proof that the magnetism of the TT can overcome credit squeezes, spiralling prices... No change there, then! The magazine warned bikers to ensure fuel levels were low on arriving at the departure ports. Any surplus could be drained off at a cost of one shilling (5p). Radio Manx and Caroline (an off-shore pirate radio station near Ramsey) would interrupt their normal programmes to bring items of particular interest but neither station would broadcast live commentaries. Programmes would be on sale at all newsagents for half a crown (12 and a half pence!). And of particular importance for the sidecar entry – a sign would be shown at Ballaugh Bridge warning of NO overtaking on the Bridge!

Fourteen practice sessions were scheduled, the first on Friday night, the 4th June, a full ten days before the first race day! The Manx weather was no different, 'sustained sunshine all week' ended at 6.20pm with 'Fog and Wet Roads' on the board greet-

ing riders as they emerged from the holding bay, or whatever that area was called back then. Over the next 10 days, all the old familiar names featured. In the 50s, Bryans, Anderson and Ernst Degner all broke the existing lap record, the latter had been pushing so hard, he went off at Brandywell one night demolishing a few yards of fencing! Anderson was top man in the 125s but Read, Yamaha, and Taveri on the Honda were close. Read was prominent in the 250s along with team-mates Mike Duff and new signing Bill Ivy, but Honda's Redman was pushing Read. Redman was top dog in the 350s, Hailwood in the 500s, both not far off the lap records, but young Agostini was quite obviously not put off by the Mountain circuit in any shape or form.

In the sidecars, Scheidegger and Deubel led the way but despite all the practice sessions, the 'chairs' hadn't had the best of weather conditions and come the Saturday night after the last practice, only half had qualified but the ACU applied common sense(!) and 44 lined up Monday morning when racing began.

Camathias was number one but he began to slow during the first lap and soon retired. By then Scheidegger was into his stride and he led Deubel by three seconds after the opening lap. Scheidegger broke the lap record next time round but Deubel was even faster and took the lead, which he held to the flag winning by 14 seconds. Deubel's new record speed was 91.13 mph, not even qualifying speed these days. Chris Vincent and Terry Harrison were best Brits in 5th. 28 out of the 44 outfits finished which was a good return by the three-wheel brigade – in



Mike Duff is warned of impending problems as he prepares for a practice lap. Courtesy Fottofinders.

the afternoon's 250cc race, less than a third of the entry completed the six laps.

The opening laps were marvellous, Redman on the Honda 6 at number 2, Read Yamaha at No.5. I was watching at Braddan Bridge and the noise of the '6' changing down for Quarter Bridge and accelerating away was fabulous. Alongside Redman on the grid was Provini and the Benelli – also rather pleasing to the ear! By the time Redman was about to appear on his second lap, Read had him in his sights and the reigning world champion had a 16 second lead thanks to the first 100mph lap on a 250 cc – just, at 100.01. But Read's Yam seized on lap 2 and that was that. Redman upped the lap speed to 100.09 and eventually won by over three and a half minutes. Read's team-mate Duff was second but only after Bill Ivy had retired. The popular Ivy, starting at number 45, was racing superbly but came off at Brandywell on lap 4. Perris on a Suzuki was third, Provini 4th. 5th to 7th were Stastny (Jawa), Williams (Mondial) and Milani (Aermacchi) making seven different makes in the first seven. Has that happened before or since? I don't know either!

Perfect weather for the 125 and 350cc races on the Wednesday; practice had indicated that, perhaps Anderson would have a battle on his hands to win a 5th consecutive world round. He led early on but had to change a plug and was down in 10th. Read,

on a new water-cooled twin, broke the lap record from a standing start as did team-mate Duff and Suzuki's Katayama, Taveri was in 4th place. The racing was fast and close, one of the best TTs of the decade. Ultimately Ivy and Degner were only 7th and 8th! It was to be Read's day though – just! Taveri had overtaken Duff and was closing on Read but still 20 seconds down - but Read's twin became a single three miles from the flag and the gap was just 5.8 seconds. Anderson set the fastest lap though and was up to 5th at the end.

For the Junior, Redman and the Honda had won in '63 and '64 but Hailwood on the MV wouldn't be bothered by that and 'Mike the Bike' duly led with a record lap from a standing start. Redman was second, Read on a 254cc Yamaha third, Agostini 5th. Ago was up to 4th when they came into refuel, Hailwood and Redman together but separated on corrected time by around half a minute. But Mike had a chain problem (MV-chain problem 1967!) – once it had been adjusted he'd lost his lead and stopped at Sarah's (yet another coincidence!) Redman won from Read by almost two minutes with Ago an impressive third in his first TT.

Four races, four record laps but it was soon obvious on Friday that the run would not be extended. Heavy rain soaked the roads and speeds would be well down. A boring 50cc race wasn't helped with world





*Mike Hailwood after his victory in the Senior.
Courtesy Fotofinders*

championship leader Bryans having to change a plug at QB – he later retired. The '63 winner, Japanese Mitsuo Itoh led after the opening lap but he retired and with the other favourite Anderson having plug problems it was Taveri who was the winner.

But this race was soon a fading memory as the Senior went into the not-to-be-forgotten category! Parts of the course were wet but the forecast was promising. Or not! Hailwood was leading Ago on the opening lap, 'Motor Cycle' reported 'drenching rain at Ramsey, sleet at Brandywell!' Mike still lapped at 95+, Ago 25 seconds down. They went past me at Laurel Bank but within a minute or so Ago was on his backside as he slid off at Sarah's. Hailwood had no problems and led the Woodman-Dunphy dice for second place by over 2 minutes – no problems at all, until he, too, slid off at Sarah's a lap later! 'Motor Cycle' reported he'd 'dropped the model at Agostini's feet. But Hailwood is built of

heroic material. Yanking the crumpled four upright, he pointed it in the right direction and pressed on'. Perhaps the reporter didn't know or perhaps he did, but Hailwood actually pointed the four DOWN the hill to be able to get it started! The race returned to normal and Hailwood increased his lead but with one lap to go he came into his pit. One of the four throttle cables had broken, so in effect he'd been riding a '3'. He ripped the offending carb apart, a mechanic removed the throttle slide, changed the plug and he was on his way to win by over two minutes! 'Motor Cycle again' – another win for the MV4, but it was a battered and mechanically sick heap of scrap iron which Mike nursed across the finish line – windscreen gone, megaphones flattened, throttles stuck and one carb minus its slide!

Some final stats: 478 entries in the six races led to 371 starters but only 186 finishes, just to say 50%. And the 1965 world championships? Read, Redman and Hailwood retained the 250, 350 and 500 titles, Anderson regained the 125 he'd held in '63 while the two first-time champions were very popular winners. Ralph Bryans, who died just last year, won the 50cc while Fritz Scheidegger and passenger John Robinson, three times runner-up, finally won the sidecar crown. One more little gem highlighting the difference twixt then and now. What do you think Mike Hailwood was racing and where on the weekend before TT practice started? A BRM-Lotus at the Formula One Monaco GP!

John Newton

Prize Presentations TT 2015

Monday 8th June – 8.30pm : Villa Marina, Douglas
Superbike, Sidecar 1 and Supersport 1 TT Races

☆☆☆☆

Wednesday 10th June – 8.30pm : Villa Marina, Douglas
Superstock, Supersport 2, Sidecar 2 TT Races and TT Zero Challenge

☆☆☆☆

Friday 12th June : TT Grandstand – after racing
Lightweight & Senior TT Races + Special Awards inc. Solo & Sidecar TT Champions

A 140mph record lap and still improving... Nuno Caetano

Staring eyes, full of concentration, determination written all over his face... Nuno Caetano as he was featured on the front cover of our last TTSC Magazine. Captured by our photographer, Robin Hynes the likeable Portuguese rider was seen at speed exiting the dip at Greeba Castle on his way to 37th position and a well earned bronze replica in the Superbike race of last year... a fine achievement from one of the few men from the Iberian peninsula to compete around the Mountain Course.

Nuno will be with us again this year as he reveals, "short circuits have dropped materially on my priority list since I moved to true road racing; I now only make a few appearances in the Portuguese Superbike Championship... it's the roads for me."

Few from Nuno's part of Europe have competed around what is considered to be the world's most dangerous course, so what drew him to the Isle of Man? Oops, the writer was soon corrected as Nuno was quite adamant in his reply, "not sure I would label it as the most dangerous, but I actually stumbled into racing as I'd been following Luis Carreira on the road courses, doing a bit of English translation for him. Got word about the Manx Grand Prix and signed up for the 2011 meeting, thoroughly enjoyed it and have been racing on the Isle of Man every year since."



Courtesy Gert Meulman.

Was it a straight forward case of submitting his entry, or, like the neighbouring Spanish federation, were hurdles to be jumped in order to secure the support of the Portuguese racing authorities? "Not an issue with the Portuguese Federation", came the reply, "as we've had Portuguese riders competing at Macau for over twenty years and for five or six years, racing on the international roads." Of course, the former Portuguese colony with its Armco lined Guia circuit and the previous comments about the world's most dangerous course now come to mind.

Stringent checks are now made on the racing experience of would-be MGP participants... no problem there



Courtesy Gert Meulman.

as Nuno was competing in the Portuguese Superstock 1000 Championship at the time, a championship in which he eventually finished as runner-up in the same year as his Manx debut. Allocated start number 4 in the Newcomers' A Race of 2011, Nuno qualified 4th after a week's intense practising on his 600 Kawasaki, certainly a positive start after what Nuno describes as "a great deal of grafting. I went to the Island for four or five weekends, driving around the course in rental cars, putting in 500-600 miles every time. I bought a bunch of DVDs and even went as far as buying a PlayStation 2 and the TT Superbike game to find my way round... vintage items now!"

Not such a high position in the race itself... "no, I ended up dropping to 8th as I almost ran out of fuel on the last run over the Mountain ... had to short shift

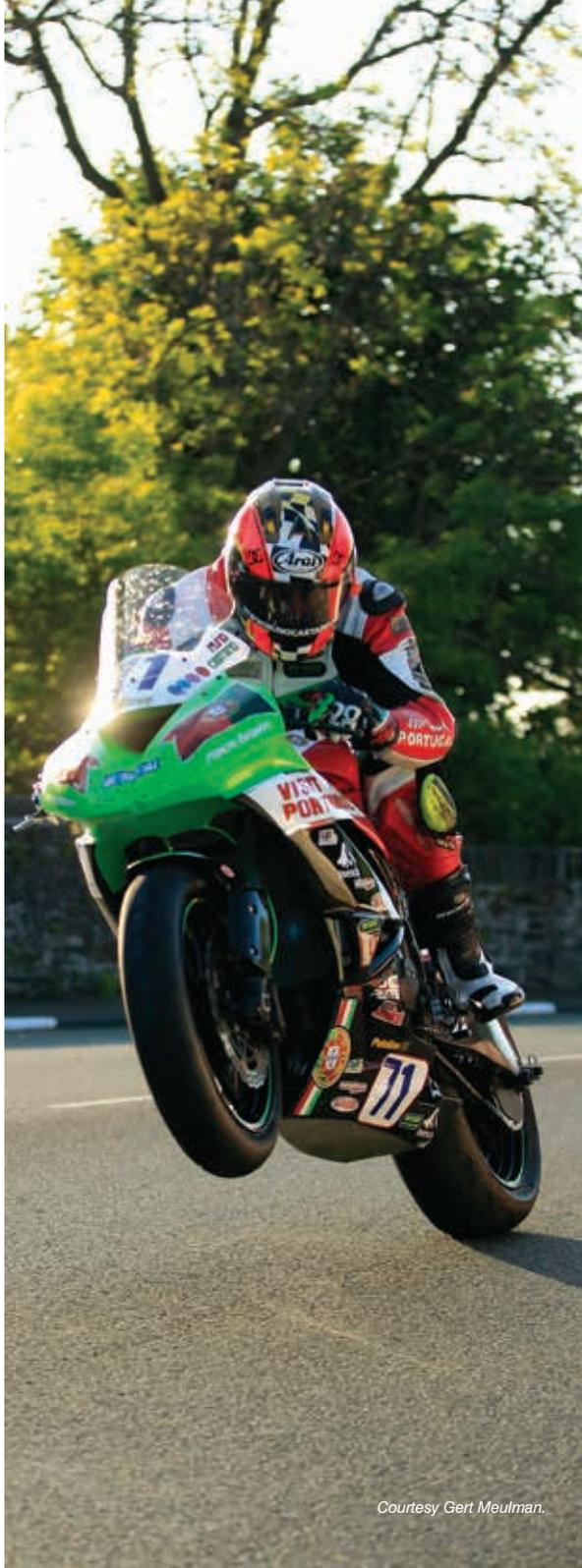
all the way through. It was a strange feeling afterwards... I'm not sure if I can describe my emotions... relief, mixed with exhilaration, I suppose." The same machine took our Portuguese friend to 37th out of fifty-eight finishers in the Junior later in the week.

2012 beckoned, presumably a return to the Manx? "No, I entered the TT as it was always a matter of ticking a box... I didn't have it in my mind that three to four years on I would still be racing on the Isle of Man. I just wanted to do the TT once and be done with it... never quite worked out that way." Three starts, three finishes, average race speeds in excess of 110mph... race fans were being impressed by the approachable European, a most welcome overseas competitor adding extra flavour to the meeting. Nuno's road racing was still going hand-in-

hand with his circuit commitments, fourth in his national championship of 2012 also being a credit to him.

Most of Nuno's sponsors have been with him for a long time, but he has largely given up looking for new ones as, "I just save up and fund the racing myself ... that way I only have myself to answer to. I now own all my own bikes, which are immaculately prepared by Kevin Spurr from KS Performance" Well, save up he must have done as extra machinery was added to his stable for the following TT, leading to five finishes out of six starts and associated speed increases, but nothing was to match his fantastic lap speed of 2014..."if you are to believe the result sheets, I have the official lap record at over 140mph in the Superbike TT 2014!! My race was cut short and the timing system got confused... take that Bruce Anstey!! I have the lap by lap chart placed on my mantelpiece for fun."

"Seriously", as Nuno continues, "I can circulate at around 120mph on the stocker no problem. I got two bronze replicas on the big bike last year which were great to have; unfortunately, I missed the best chance to improve on the Senior last year – set off from a standing start at 119mph+ but then got a hole in the radiator, resulting in my one and only DNF on the Island. Most riders around me on the roads increased their lap speeds by 2-3 mph during the race... great racing conditions... last race of the meeting... that's where good times come."



Nuno achieved his best TT finish to date of 37th [out of the fifty-four who completed the distance] on his two year old ZX-10R Kawasaki in last year's Superbike race, doing so at an average speed of 117.149mph... but what of the smaller capacity bikes? "Erm...Supersport... I am a bit at a disadvantage as all my background is in big bikes; I'm also quite heavy for that size of engine, so basically I always struggle a bit more... that's the reason I have dropped Lightweight TT altogether... although, I have actually been training a bit on the ZX6 to see if I can improve... let's see!"

A busy season lies ahead for Nuno, particularly as the majority of his chosen events lie well away from home... he explains, "Calendar wise

I will be a bit pickier this year as it's becoming increasingly more difficult to juggle work and racing commitments. TT & Ulster Grand Prix are firmly on the list and I will also try also to drop into some of the Irish stuff which I haven't done yet... I am particularly curious about Armoy as the folks there have been kind enough to invite me over a few times... this is looking like it's going to be the year."

Steady, stylish, yet determined riding will surely mean consistent lap speeds in excess of 120mph and finishes well within replica time at this year's TT meeting... we wish Nuno well and long may we see the Portuguese flag fluttering above his temporary home in the Glencrutchery Road paddock.



Regional Representatives

MIDLANDS (Shropshire, Staffs., & W Midlands):

Aston Social Club. First Thursday of the month, (Not June!). See Mrs Rose Hanks, 50 Lyndhurst Road, Birmingham, B24 6QS. Tel: 0121 6863799.

N. WEST (Cumbria, Lancs):

See Dave Davies, 26 St. Marys Avenue, Walton-le-Dale, Preston, PR5 4UE. Tel: 01772 322241.

SCOTLAND:

Leadburn Inn, A701, 12 miles South of Edinburgh. See Mose Hutchinson, 15 Castlelaw Court, Penicuik, Midlothian, EH26 8BS. Tel: 01968 678337.

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USED POSTAGE STAMPS

We continue to receive many packages of used postage stamps from Club members – your efforts in assisting us to raise money for research into a cure into multiple sclerosis have been amazing...many thanks to all of you; please accept our apologies for not sending individual replies.

... would those sending packages for the first time, please include their names and addresses

...please leave a little bit of the envelope around the stamp thus ensuring that the perforated edge is not damaged

...there have been occasions when the Post Office has not delivered envelopes containing the stamps to us as insufficient postage has been paid; the charge now depends on size as well as weight – anything in excess of 5mm [3/16th"] needs to have a Large Letter 2nd class stamp [there is no need to use First Class Postage]. If the required amount is not paid by the sender, then we have to pay the postage due, PLUS £1...so, please check at the Post Office when sending your packages – thanks.

Once again, thanks ever so much for your help in supporting this worthwhile cause.

Mr and Mrs G W Scott: 40 Bateman Rd, Hellaby, Rotherham, United Kingdom, S66 8HA.

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