



MAGAZINE

Summer 2017



inside... **Maria Costello : Dan Knight : Mark Goodings**
Ivan Lintin : Craig Neve : John Surtees



Editor's Line

Our Club Chairman, Roy Hanks has decided to retire, the orange-faired machine will be missing from the TT entry list for the first time since 1966. Congratulations to Roy on a marvelous Isle of Man racing career – a fine driver, mentor and ambassador, unique in the annals of the TT.

I hope you enjoy this issue with Maria Costello, Dan Knight, Mark Goodings, Ivan Lintin and Craig Neve being the principle 'victims', with a tribute to John Surtees also to the fore. Thanks, as ever, to all who have made a contribution.

As indicated by Roy in the Chairman's Remarks, times are changing, but it is the intention to produce the next issue of this magazine – Winter 2017 – as usual, but it may drop through your letter boxes a little later, perhaps just after the Christmas festivities rather than before. In all probability, the next issue will be the last TT Supporters' Club magazine in its current format, so I'd love to include any memories of and involvement in the world's leading pure road race from our club members – please feel free to make a contribution... written, photographic or both.

Copy date for the Winter 2017 issue is Monday 9th October.

Graham Bean

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Cover: Conor Cummins, courtesy Glynne Lewis.

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 Administrator

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

Officials

Patron: Pauline Hailwood

President: Charlie Williams

Vice President: Chris Kinley

Chairman: Roy Hanks
50 Lyndhurst Road, Birmingham, B24 8QS. Tel: 0121 6863799.

Vice Chairman: Phil Harvey
2 Oak Villas, Rawcliffe Bridge, Nr Goole, East Yorks, DN14 8NU. Tel: 01405 831070.
pharvey@timloc.co.uk

General Secretary: Rose Hanks
50 Lyndhurst Road, Birmingham, B24 8QS.
Tel: 0121 6863799.

Treasurers: Roy & Rose Hanks

Quartermasters: Paul & Julie Hanks-Elliott
44 Lyndhurst Road, Erdington, Birmingham, B24 8QS. Tel: 0121 373 1035, or 0121 6862390
after 6pm.

Membership Registrars:
Viv & Pete Oulton
13 Avondale Road, Buckley, Flintshire,
CH7 3BW. Tel: 01244 548584
ttsupportersclub@hotmail.co.uk

Magazine Editor: Graham Bean
Flat 10, Regency Court, 119 Cheadle Rd, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 5DQ.
Tel: 0161 486 6197.
w.bean2@ntlworld.com

Assistant Editor/Advertising/ Minutes Sec.:
Michael Hammonds
Creg Ny Baa, 9 Clipper Close, Warsash, Southampton, SO31 9BJ. Tel: 01489 570 295.
mike.hammonds@hotmail.com

Web site Coordinator: Peter Oulton
e-mail: ttsupportersclub@hotmail.co.uk

National Raffle Coordinator:
John Newton. 21 Portman Rise, Guisborough, Cleveland, TS14 7LW. Tel: 01287 636914.
johniom@hotmail.com



The TT's Top Female Solo Competitor - Maria Costello

Without doubt the most high profile woman in the world of motorcycle racing on pure road circuits is Maria Costello... recipient of an MBE, the first female solo competitor to stand on the rostrum at the Isle of Man Mountain Course and the lap record holder for her gender at a number of road racing circuits.

Maria's introduction into racing was a simple, but, perhaps a painful one..."riding to work, I was knocked off my bike; not my fault, but with the compensation I purchased my first racing bike and enrolled for a track day at my local circuit, Mallory Park." In fact, the Leicestershire circuit is dominant in the Costello CV – first track day, first race, first win, even the first broken bone. Her talent and ambition were soon acknowledged, none more so than by leading woman racer of the '90s, Sandra Barnett, who, along with husband Peter, were intent on putting together an all-female team to compete at the 1996 Manx Grand Prix.

So, competing as part of the George Pilkington Race Team along with Brigit McManus,

Maria was 10th in the Senior Newcomers in a race won by local, Paul Duckett, then later in the week, on the same Honda powered machine, she came home 73rd in the Senior at an average of 98mph. So few women solo competitors over the years means that spectators' eyes are always cast over the ones that do take part – were they impressed? They were and they still are, as Maria had carried out thorough preparation, as she still does, for her high speed excursions around the Mountain Course ... "Prior to my debut I viewed the traditional on-board videos, drove around the course countless times in my van, but a massive plus was my daily chat during practice week with Eddie Roberts, a MGP winner in 1974 and a racer who has shared a TT podium with Phil Read and Tom Herron in finishing third in the 1977 Senior; we 'talked' a lap of the course every day, a fine racer, a fine tutor". Twenty years since her debut, preparations are still taken seriously in that, along with John Barton, she completed more practice laps, 12 in total, than anyone else for the 2016 Lightweight race, thus developing

her racing lines and testing her machinery to the point of perfection.

By 1998, Maria was lapping in excess of 107mph, so a move to the TT beckoned, but our sport can bite hard..."My '99 debut on a Honda CBR900 Fireblade ended in disaster when, during practice, another rider clipped my bike at the bottom of Bray Hill, resulting in an awful crash and multiple injuries including broken pelvis, collar bone and ankle". A gap in her Isle of Man career followed, but not from racing as she embraced British and European Superstock Championships as well as the endurance racing scene...but a return to the 'Island' beckoned with both TT and MGP being placed on her calendar. 39th and 49th in the Production TTs was a prelude to taking home two silver replicas from the MGP, along with the Lesley Ann Trophy for the best performance by a female competitor and a lap in excess of 110mph.

Lap speeds now moved on apace, Maria becoming, in 2004, the outright fastest woman to lap the TT course, averaging 114.73mph on her standing start lap of the TT Production 1000 race; unbeknown to her,

she achieved this with a broken collarbone, which she thought had healed. She was now rising up the leaderboard, when a couple of months later, being beaten by only seven men in the Senior MGP she finished 8th on board the Island Motorcycles Ltd Honda CBR600RR. This achievement was surely usurped when, in the following year's Lightweight MGP she became the first female solo competitor to stand on that podium adjacent to the Mountain Course. This, as Maria explains, is one of her career highlights, "Tim Bradley provided me with a Honda RVF400 which I rode under the RLR Motorsports banner to third place behind Paul Corrin and Alan Oversby. I was so proud and delighted". Fifty-four competitors finished the race

One has to accept the 'downs' as well as the 'ups'... the following year, Maria suffered what she considers to be the worst injuries she has received, "during practice for the MGP I came off at Keppel Gate on oil left by a previous crash just moments earlier, the result being an operation, a two week stay in the IoM Nobles Hospital and a fair amount of time out of the sport.

Maria aboard her Kawasaki twin on her way to 12th position in the 2016 Lightweight TT and the Susan Jenness Trophy, courtesy Glynne Lewis.



However, undeterred, she returned to the event in 2008, then in '09, she finished 6th in the Ultra-lightweight class, her profile certainly on the rise with links to the Davy Morgan and Derek Redmond racing teams being developed over the next year or so. However, another highlight approached and not on the track, when in November 2009 she was presented with an MBE for her services to motorcycling in a ceremony conducted by HRH, The Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace

Maria was now effectively involved full time in motorcycling... regular entries at the TT, North West 200, UGP, the 'Irish road scene' – Skerries, Cookstown, the Goodwood Revival meeting, even events in South Africa, New Zealand and at Daytona Beach. Thrown into this mix were the races for classic machines at the MGP, later to be rebranded as the Classic TT... a successful move? Without doubt, riding the Beugger Paton Maria finished 5th in the 2014 Senior Classic, the best TT race position ever achieved by a female on a conventional motorbike. Achieving a Silver replica she followed home Louher, Cooper, Anstey and Behan at an average race speed of 103.46mph over a minute clear of Mick Godfrey, who was 6th of the forty-seven finishers.

The Beugger Paton is no mean performer with Maria recording a win, two seconds and a fourth place at the 2016 Barry Sheene Festival of Speed held at Sydney Motorsports Park, the girl from Northamptonshire now being a regular competitor 'down under'. Later that year, there were two important results on the Isle of Man – with Maria now becoming a specialist in the Lightweight class, there were high expectations for her at the TT in the race, now increased to four laps in length. However, before dealing with

this particular race, it's worth looking at her developing pedigree in racing super twin machinery.

Riding her own, home-built Pizza Race Bike Kawasaki ER6 super twin, she came home in 16th place, securing a Bronze replica, her 4th at the TT, in 2013. The following year's TT outing, 25th, is put into context in that she was still recovering from a broken fibula and damaged knee received when crashing her Suzuki GSXR600 at the NW200 a few weeks earlier. In 2015 she was up to 17th position and another bronze. Two solid finishes at the 2016 NW200, and the fastest ever lap around the triangular course by a female – 108.77mph in the Superstock on the ESM Wollaston BMW S1000RR, but Maria explains her feelings, "very pleasing results and another milestone in my career as I am now the fastest woman solo competitor at the North West 200, but it was not a time for celebration due to the tragic accident involving Malachi in the second Super Twin race."

Excellent practice for the Lightweight, her only TT race last year, on her NGK Spark Plugs Pizza Race Bike Kawasaki ER6, complete with Nova gearbox, saw her in good fettle as she prepared for the off from the Glencrutchery Road start line. Steady riding throughout the four laps saw her up into 11th position as she commenced the final circuit... Maria continues, "I couldn't see the pit board I had arranged at the approach to Ginger Hall clearly enough, but a bloke at Bedstead hung out board each lap for me – it said 'Position 11', I couldn't believe it, that's not me, I thought. Sadly, I had a problem with a slipping clutch during last lap so didn't maintain my position. Nevertheless, I was delighted with 12th." Maria actually finished 0.065 seconds behind Michal Dokoupil at average speed on 111.504mph, resulting in

her best TT finishing position and, of course another Bronze replica. Maria was awarded the Susan Jenness Trophy for this performance.

A great TT result, but another Isle of Man highlight was on the horizon...a fantastic 3rd place finish in the Classic TT 500cc race on the Beugger Paton, sharing the podium with TT legend John McGuinness and Dean Harrison. An average speed of 106.779mph saw her leave such talent as Coward, Oversby, Herbertson, Webb, Swallow, Linsdell and Saiger in her wake. A class win in the 350cc race on the Bob Jackson Suzuki T20 250cc, despite losing 4 minutes on the start line when the bike refused to fire, also gave cause for celebration. Her Classic TT experience culminated by being given the honour of piloting Richard Wylde's classic R51 BMW in the Parade lap.

Maria's 2016 did not finish with her Classic TT exploits as she made the motorcycle press headlines with her venture into sidecar racing at the end of season Cadwell Park meeting. This, however, was not her first experience of controlling a three-wheel

machine as, some years ago, during a New Zealand race season she drove a TT winning Dave Molyneux outfit. At the Lincolnshire circuit, along with passenger Harry Payne, racing a DDM Formula 2 Suzuki sidecar, she recorded three race finishes in 15th, 17th and 14th positions and was looking set for an even better result in race four, before crashing out of 8th position. Will we hear more of Maria in this branch of our sport? You bet we will.

Maria's involvement in motorcycling is full time – organizing all-women track days, guest appearances as well as preparing and racing machines all over the world; she has also been appointed a Rider Ambassador by Britain's biggest road safety charity, IAM RoadSmart. Ambitions for the 2017 season are simple, "go faster, finish higher" – of this, there will be little doubt as she continues to raise the profile of women in the sport of motorcycle racing. Maria will receive the Susan Jenness Trophy, for her outstanding performance at TT 2016 in a ceremony at the Grandstand during this year's TT meeting.



Maria during 2016TT a practice session,
courtesy Mike Hammonds.

Chairman & Secretary Report

In the last magazine (Winter 2016) there was some indication that the TTSC needed to make changes. This in the main, has been brought about by slightly decreasing membership numbers and the ending of the TTSC market outlet at the rear of the TT Grandstand, together with the logistics of transporting stock to and from the Island along with the manning of the outlet for twelve plus hours a day for a full fortnight. Sadly, there is the age factor as none of us on the Executive Committee are getting any younger and when you also consider the increasing costs of producing two magazines a year – the outlay for printing and postage in 2016 was £7,520, then you will appreciate the need for change.

The working committee is looking at some proposals which will be laid out in the next magazine – Winter 2017. This may include going to a news update once a year in late January/early March and the ending of date bars, membership cards and stickers along with the two 52 page magazines. As in the past all monies received via membership, donations and sales will still go towards supporting the TT and its competitors, with the amount being passed on, decided annually. There are other ideas that the committee are discussing which maybe mentioned throughout this magazine. Formal discussions will take place at a committee meeting to be held in the Island in early June; members will be kept informed of updates through social media and of course, in the 2017 Winter Magazine.

The Club would like to thank you for your support in the past and hopefully in the future.

Roy & Rose

Arrangements for the competitors who are members of the TTSC 2017

The distribution of the £50 support money to competitors who are members of TTSC will take place in the Technical Inspection Area when helmets, clothing and boots are checked on the Friday, Saturday and possibly the Sunday (if open) before the start of practice week. Also, all those competitors will be included in the Riders' Draw in which £1,000 is up for grabs.

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.

We would also like to thank those of you who have purchased TTSC merchandise from our club shop and hope that you'll continue to do so in the future. We are hopeful of adding new items to accompany the polo shirts as soon as possible.

As you would have read in the Chairman and Secretary's Report, major changes are having to be made in what do, but hopefully we will still have a membership based club in some way and naturally, our priority will be the continuation of the support we give the competitors at the TT. From our prospective this will, as stated earlier, mean that we'll still sell merchandise in our club shop online using PayPal payments; in the last few months this system has proved to be most successful. The website link to the club shop is

www.ttsupportersclub.com/clubshop.htm

Finally, all we can add is that Viv and myself will be doing our best to keep the club moving forward in whatever format that maybe in the future via the TT Supporters Club website, giving you updates as and when we have them. I will also keep you informed on my twitter social media account www.twitter.com/ttscwebsite

Let's hope the sun shines and that you all have a safe and enjoyable TT 2017, both competitors and spectators alike. You can contact us via email as usual using ttsupportersclub@hotmail.co.uk.

Viv and Pete Oulton
Membership Registrars

Membership Forms: Once again, you will have noticed the inclusion of a membership form with the magazine; only fill this in if you did not use the one included in the 2016 Winter Magazine. If you don't need it, feel free to pass it on to a friend – a new member will be much appreciated.



The current outright lap record around the Mountain Course stands in the name of Michael Dunlop...

16 minutes 53.929 seconds - 133.962mph

However, this, according to the official IOM TT website – iomtt.com, is slower than the PERFECT LAP. Dividing the course into six sections, taking the fastest officially recorded time for each, adding them together the theoretical ‘perfect lap’ would be...

16 minutes 48.656 seconds - 134.662mph

Sector	Rider	Race	Lap	Year	Time
Start-Glen Helen	Michael Dunlop	Senior	2	2016	04:09.437
Glen Helen-Ballaugh Bridge	Michael Dunlop	Senior	1	2016	03:02.142
Ballaugh Bridge-Ramsey Hairpin	Michael Dunlop	Senior	2	2016	03:12.475
Ramsey Hairpin-Bungalow	Steve Plater	Superbike	5	2009	03:13.557
Bungalow-Cronk ny Mona	Ian Hutchinson	Superstock	2	2016	02:14.241
Cronk ny Mona-Finish	Ian Hutchinson	Superstock	1	2016	00:58.801

RACE PROGRAMME TT 2017

SATURDAY 27TH MAY

18:20 – 18:45 Solo Newcomers' speed controlled lap
18:35 – 19:00 Sidecar Newcomers' speed controlled lap
18:45 – 20:50 Lightweight TT / Supersport / Newcomers (all solo classes)

MONDAY 29TH MAY

18:20 – 19:50 Superbike / Superstock / Supersport / Newcomers (except Lightweight)
19:55 – 20:50 Sidecars

TUESDAY 30TH MAY

18:20 – 19:25 Superbike / Superstock / Supersport / Newcomers (except Lightweight)
19:25 – 19:55 Supersport / Lightweight / Newcomers (all Solo classes)
20:00 – 20:50 Sidecars

WEDNESDAY 31ST MAY

18:20 – 19:40 Superbike / Superstock / Supersport / Newcomers (except Lightweight)
19:45 – 20:35 Sidecars
20:35 – 20:50 TT Zero

THURSDAY 1ST JUNE

18:20 – 19:15 Superbike / Superstock / Supersport / Newcomers (except Lightweight)
19:20 – 19:45 Supersport / Lightweight / Newcomers (all Solo classes)
19:50 – 20:35 Sidecars
20:35 – 20:50 TT Zero

FRIDAY 2ND JUNE

18:20 – 19:45 Superbike / Superstock / Supersport / Newcomers (except Lightweight)
19:50 – 20:35 Sidecars
20:35 – 20:50 TT Zero

SATURDAY 3RD JUNE

11:00 – RST Superbike TT Race	6 laps
14:00 – Sure Sidecar TT Race 1	3 laps
15:55 – 16:30 Supersport / Lightweight Qualifying	
16:35 – 16:50 TT Zero Qualifying	

MONDAY 5TH JUNE

10:45 – Monster Energy Supersport TT Race 1	4 laps
12:25 – 13:05 Sidecar Qualifying	2 laps
14:15 – RL360 Quantum Superstock Race	4 laps
15:55 – TT Lightweight Qualifying	1 lap
16:15 – TT Zero Qualifying	

WEDNESDAY 7TH JUNE

10:45 – Monster Energy Supersport TT Race 2	4 laps
12:35 – Sidecar Qualifying	1 lap
13:45 – Bennetts Lightweight TT Race	4 laps
15:40 – 16:00 Senior TT Qualifying	
16:25 – SES TT Zero Race	1 lap

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE

10:15 – Sure Sidecar TT Race 2	3 laps
12:45 – Pokerstars Senior TT Race	6 laps



Mark Goodings – a determined privateer

As the new season approached we caught up with one of our sport's true privateers, Mark Goodings, who despite being a regular starter at road race meetings for many years, is still only 24... so, the bug must have bitten early? "You could say that as I was brought up around motorbikes and in a racing environment. From the age of two I regularly went along to watch my brother, Mick, race as by then my father, Dave had retired with his last race meeting being the Macau GP of 1991. Racing has always been a way of life for me and my family so it was a natural progression for me to start racing myself."

Well, he didn't let the grass grow under his feet, mentored by his dad, his first on-track race experience was aboard a 125cc Aprilia at the end of 2005 at an Auto 66 organised meeting held at Elvington. A strange time of

the year to make a debut? Seemingly not, as Mark explains, "this was one of the last meetings of the season with the main goal for entering being to get some track time behind me and to finish the race; I had no pressure put on me to get results." Did he finish? "I came home in last position, but it gave me the drive to continue and improve my results."

Following in the family footsteps, Mark soon became a regular at Oliver's Mount, making his debut at the Gold Cup meeting of 2007, recording his first victory some three years or so later in the 400cc class in a rain affected race. A true road racer was now in the making as Mark explains... "as I competed more and more in events around the twisty, tree lined Scarborough circuit my interest in this branch of motorcycling grew; after my first year at the Southern 100 when I was

17, my thoughts turned to the TT – I wanted to race on the Mountain Course."

The TT might have been grabbing the man from Doncaster's imagination, but the more traditional approach was to be adopted, an entry being made for the 2011 Manx Grand Prix. For articles such as this we always ask as to how the competitor in question set about learning the intricacies of the Mountain Course and exactly how they coped with its associated demands. Well, Mark's response was not of the norm... "my preparation for the 2011 Manx mainly consisted of watching on board videos. I didn't travel over to the Isle of Man for any practice laps and was offered no help of any kind. I was a very naive 19 year old and, in hindsight I wasn't prepared for how difficult the event would actually be; I found it very difficult when I was there."

Starting with plate number 3 in Newcomers' A, Mark came home in 23rd position on his 600 Kawasaki in a race won at a canter by the late Wayne Hamilton. He followed this up with 58th and 49th in the Junior and Senior

races on the same machine – three starts, three finishes in his debut year, no mean feat. Fortunately, circumstances have changed with would-be first time MGP entrants now attending tuition sessions with seasoned Mountain Course competitors.

Anyway, the upshot in Mark's case was that he didn't race again on the Mountain Course until 2015 and then it was the TT, not the MGP. Why the gap of four years and why the move to the TT? "I felt that my lack of road racing experience had an effect on my performance at the 2011 MGP, therefore I felt that going away and getting some more experience behind me would prepare me better for another attempt on what is probably the most demanding the course in the world. On the approach to 2015 I felt I had matured a lot, both personally and professionally, which was going to place me in a better position. I chose to compete at the TT instead of the MGP as it was a much more affordable option for me as well as it providing me with the opportunity to ride my Superstock bike, which by that



An illustration of a determined privateer,
courtesy Mike Hammonds.



A stylish Mark Goodings,
courtesy Stuart Watson.

point had become my main focus." So, the TT it was with two machines and entries in five races, his Kawasaki ZX6 for the Supersport events and his Superstock, ZX-10R for the three larger capacity classes.

Mark is to be commended, as a young man of 19, in making the decision to back off, get more experience and return better prepared... his lap speeds testify this – his average speed for the 2011 MGP was 98.478mph, that for the Senior TT five years later was 117.725mph. Was he pleased? You bet. "My first TT in 2015 would have to be the highlight of my career, I just loved everything about it. I was circulating at high lap speeds and returned home having completed the distance in four of my five starts."

The fact that Mark tells us that he considers the TT of 2015 to be the highlight of his road racing experiences so far, might indicate that last year's event was not so much to his liking... "you might say that as my second TT

seemed to be plagued with problems from the outset. During practice week, we had a broken gear box which cost us some crucial practice time, then to follow this, a tilt switch broke during the Superbike race causing my retirement. I wasn't happy with my results, it seemed that the issues we suffered during practice week affected the performance during the rest of the event." Happy or not, Mark did finish in four races with a best of 37th in the Senior.

Despite his obvious disappointment, he remains positive, "I did learn a lot from my second TT, realising that not everything can go right and it has left me eager and looking forward to improving in 2017 when my main goal is to finish every race, with increased lap speeds and return home with at least one replica."

A comprehensive road season is planned for Mark, an architectural stone operative by profession, who will contest all four Oliver's

Mount meetings – he finished 7th in last year's Gold Cup – will return to the July meeting at the Billown circuit where he gained top ten finishes last year and again take part in the Ulster Grand Prix, where he has a lap in excess of 126mph to his credit.

Mark will remain on Kawasaki machinery, competing for his own team, which will carry backing again from PMH Promotions and new sponsorship via Pennine Stone Ltd, but as he says, "It is extremely difficult to raise sponsorship for such an expensive sport, the main obstacle is trying to bid for money against some of the big names and trying to get noticed. I fund the majority of the events I attend myself with the help of donations and support from family and friends."

Mark Goodings epitomises the road racing privateer without whom the TT Races would not exist; his sensible approach in 'not trying to run before he can walk' is to be



Mark Goodings leaves QB in his wake,
courtesy Mike Hammonds.

admired and so with his family based team assisting him he will continue on his learning curve this summer on the Isle of Man, increase his lap speeds, probably well into the 120mphs, and hopefully return home with more than one replica. We wish Mark well and thank him for his help with this article. If you would like to support Mark, he can be contacted on 07833474930.



Mark Goodings on his larger capacity
machine, courtesy Stuart Watson.

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THE TTSC AT TT 2017

Money will be changing hands at this year's TT with those competitors who are members of the TT Supporters' Club receiving £50 support money, the distribution of which will take place in the Technical Inspection Area at the beginning of practice week. These competitors will also be eligible for inclusion in the....

Riders' Draw...

in which £1.000 is up for grabs:

1st - £350 | 2nd - £250 | 4 prizes of £100

Competitors will be vying for two Trophies sponsored by your club...

The TT Supporters' Club Trophy...

...presented to the rider with the best aggregate time across the two Supersport races. Current holder of this trophy is Ian Hutchinson as a result of being victorious in both races last year

The Susan Jenness Trophy

... presented to the best female competitor as adjudged by the Executive Committee of TTSC...

Last year's winner, Maria Costello will be presented with the trophy along with her replica for her determined performance in finishing 12th in the 2016 Lightweight TT. Club Chairman, Roy Hanks will present the trophy, so named to commemorate Club member, Susan Jenness who lost her life whilst marshalling an off-road motorcycle event in the UK some years ago. This ceremony, held at the rear of the Grandstand will be broadcast live on Radio TT.



Ian Hutchinson, courtesy Glynn Lewis.



Maria Costello, courtesy Mike Hammonds.



Maria Costello, courtesy Mike Hammonds.



Marco Pagani in action at Signpost Corner,
courtesy Stuart Watson.

ITALIANS AIMING FOR SUCCESS ON THE MOUNTAIN COURSE

There will be three Italian riders competing at this year's Isle of Man TT, and, like last year, they are Stefano Bonetti, Marco Pagani and Alex Polita.

Stefano is now the fastest ever Italian rider at the TT and, since his first appearance in 2004 he returns, year after year, always excited about the prospect of riding around the Mountain Course. For this year, he will continue with his Kawasaki ZX10R in the three larger capacity classes while, after a fantastic debut last year with the Paton S1 in the Lightweight where he achieved 5th place, he will pilot a well-tuned machine with the assistance from the Paton Factory.

Marco Pagani will again be aboard a BMW S1000R and hopefully, with this competitive and reliable machine, he can demonstrate all his talent and improve on previous solid performances, perhaps even with a finish in the top fifteen. Interestingly, last summer Marco made his debut at the reintroduced Imatra road races, recording excellent results.

Alex Polita was delighted with his first TT meeting last year, impressing fans with his professional approach and stylish riding, so much so that he has arranged a full programme of road racing with the Penz13 squad

this season with entries at Most, Horice, Imatra, Frohburg and Macau being submitted. Further cause for delight is that, since last year's TT, Alex has become the proud father of a beautiful baby girl called Ida.

Rumour has been circulating on the web that another top Italian rider is planning to make a TT debut... it has now been confirmed that former 250cc GP World Championship runner-up, Roberto Rolfo will debut at the TT in a couple of years time. For the next two seasons he will concentrate on the World SS Championship then focus all his efforts on the TT. Roberto comes from a racing family, his father, Angelo being an Italian Hill Climb Champion on a Laverda 600 TT2 in 1980, a few months before Roberto was born. Roberto has been to the IoM on two occasions, at the 2003 MGP he had an escorted lap with Travelling Marshalls, then three years later he participated in the Lap of Honour at the TT.

While Stefano, Marco and Alex prepare for the TT, the TT Supporters' Italian branch, in particular Gabriele Pezzotta continue its work in promoting the Classic TT and Manx Grand Prix... this year, the list of potential Italian newcomers at the IoM Festival of Motorcycling is really strong, with six potential pilots

The fastest Italian around the Mountain Course, Stefano Bonetti, courtesy Robin Hynes.

– Francesco Curinga, Maurizio Bottalico, Nicolò Capelli and Matteo Bardelli in the MGP with Gianfranco Agueci and Valerio Licini in the Classic TT.

Francesco Curinga, a former multi-European and Italian Hill Climb Champion and very fast, experienced road racer, hopes to achieve his dream this year as his entry was turned down last year, his class being over-subscribed.

Maurizio Bottalico, a 36 year old from Naples, has had a long racing career with some outstanding results in FIM and Italian Superstock Championships; he's also an official test rider for Motosprint Magazine, as well as an instructor for a racing school.

Nicolò Capelli, 24 years old from Bergamo is a very fast and talented rider having won the Italian Supersport Championships of 2014 and 2015.

Matteo Bardelli was in the 2015 MGP Newcomers' entry list, but a few weeks before his trip to the IoM he was unfortunately involved in a track day crash at Mugello, the result of which necessitated a stay in hospital. However, he is now back in action, racing both classic and modern machines, securing a few podiums in the Italian Championship.



The potential Classic TT Newcomers are Gianfranco Agueci, 47 years old from Como, who won the Vintage Endurance Championships in 2010 and 2016 and Valerio Licini, 56 years old, with many years of race experiences, winning the Vintage Endurance Italian Championship 750 TTA classes in 2014 and 2016. Both Gianfranco and Valero will race Moto Guzzi machines.

We really hope that all of them can realise their dreams in that their entries are accepted for their selected events at the Festival of Motorcycling. We wish all riders and teams involved in events on the Mountain Course this year the best of luck for good, safe racing.

Pier Ortalda





JOHN SURTEES

A true hero, John Surtees, the only man to ever be a World Champion on two and four wheels died in March this year, aged 83. A winner of six TTs, seven times a motorcycle World Champion, he turned his back on two-wheeled motor sport in 1960, taking to racing cars, becoming World F1 Champion in 1964.

However, it was neither two nor four wheels which saw his quite remarkable racing debut... when John was 14 years old, his father was participating in sidecar speed trials at London's Trent Park but when his passenger failed to show up, John Senior did what any father would at the time and threw his son alongside him as a passenger he could trust. The two worked exceptionally well together and won the event, but were disqualified on the grounds of John Junior's age.

As an apprentice with the Vincent factory, he soon became interested in road racing, hitting the headlines, when in 1951, he gave Geoff Duke a run for his money in a race at Thruxton. The following year he entered his first World Championship race, the 500cc Ulster Grand Prix in which he finished sixth. In 1953, as a 19 year old, he entered his first TT; fortune seemed to turn his way as, when he got to the Isle of Man, Joe Craig, the supremo at Norton, offered him a works machine as one of their contracted riders had been injured, Craig seeing Surtees as the most promising young rider on British short circuits. Wanting to get as much experience as possible of racing on true road circuits, the young rider also accepted an offer to ride an EMC in the Ultra-lightweight race. There was now a down turn in his fortunes, as on his first practice lap on the tiny machine the forks broke as he negotiated Ballaugh Bridge, for the rider the result being a broken bone in his hand. Joe Craig was not too impressed, rumour being that because of this, Surtees was not given a contract with Norton, that was until 1955.

He did, however, make his TT debut in 1954, finishing 11th and 15th on his own Nortons

in the Junior and Senior respectively. Works machinery the following year brought him 4th and 29th in the same classes, then in 1956 his run of TT victories began, but not on Norton machinery as financial problems had beset the company and so, with their racing plans in doubt, Surtees accepted an offer from MV Agusta.

An enviable TT record ensued – 1956 Senior 1st, 1957 Junior 4th, Senior 2nd, 1958 Junior and Senior 1st, a feat he repeated in 1959, and then in the 1960 Senior 1st and Junior 2nd. In all he competed in fifteen TT races, finishing in all bar one. Little disrupted his fine, flowing style around the narrow public roads of the Isle of Man, although he did tell of the hailstones on the Mountain Road in 1959 which took the paint off his silver and red fairing, but that was of little consequence as compared to an incident three years earlier when a cow strayed into the road! The beast was hit amidships, the MV was written off... fortune, however, was with the cow which apparently got up and walked away!

1960 was the last time John Surtees raced around the TT Mountain Course – he left with a swansong lap of 104.08mph. His motorcycling career statistics are astonishing... between 1951 and 1960 he claimed 250 race wins from 352 starts. Along with a first 500cc title in 1956, he secured a hat trick of class doubles: six world titles in three years from '58 to '60 - and his fame spread beyond motorcycle racing, as, in 1959, he won the BBC Sports' Personality of the Year and remains the only motorcyclist to have claimed that accolade.





In the late '50s the idea of switching to four wheels had already been put to him; In 1959, tests with an Aston Martin sportscar and Vanwall GP machine at Goodwood made him think that cars may well be his future. By 1960 the lure had more appeal as Count Agusta insistence that he could only ride MV machinery left him with too little racing and too many weekends free. Amazingly he was to combine both disciplines during that year. Following some exploratory Junior and F2 outings and an F1 debut at the International Trophy, he was invited to make his Grand Prix debut with Team Lotus at Monaco. He then took an impressive second place on only his second outing at Silverstone, and earned pole in his third race at Oporto in Portugal. All of this was combined with his MV Agusta duties and his final two-wheeled titles.

After spending the 1961 season with the Yeoman Credit Racing Team driving a Cooper T53 'lowline' managed by Reg Parnell and the

1962 season with the Bowmaker Racing Team, also managed by Reg Parnell but now in the V8 Lola Mk4, he moved to Scuderia Ferrari in 1963, winning the World Championship for the Italian team in 1964.

In 1970, Surtees formed his own race team, the Surtees Racing Organisation, spending nine seasons competing in Formula 5000, Formula 2 and Formula 1 as a constructor. He retired from competitive driving in 1972, the same year the team had their greatest success when Mike Hailwood won the European Formula 2 Championship.

Congratulations to the winners of the TTSC 2017 NATIONAL RAFFLE

£350
£250
£150
£50

A Lewis
S Smith
R Peers
P Wickham

Kidwelly
York
Knutsford
Cambs

Many thanks to all those who supported the raffle by buying tickets and/or making donations... all monies raised go directly to the competitors who will be pitting their skills against the Isle of Man Mountain Course this summer.

John Newton

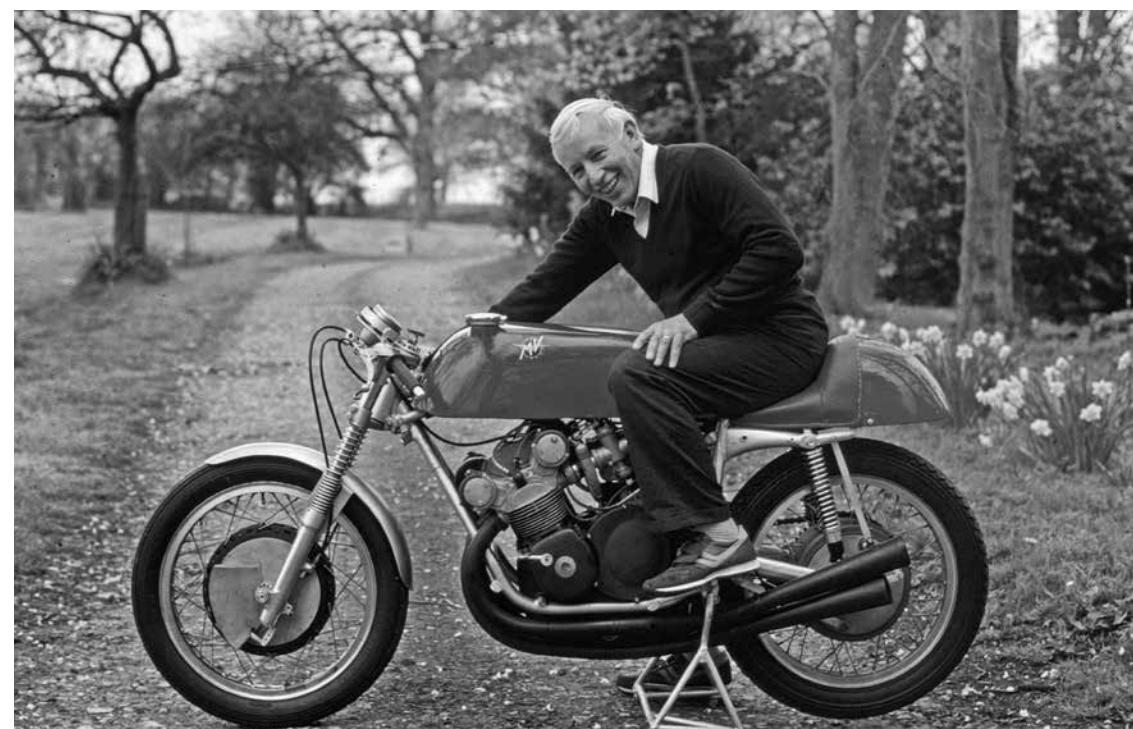
In 1996, Surtees was inducted into the International Motorsports' Hall of Fame. The FIM honoured him as a Grand Prix 'Legend' in 2003. Already an MBE, he was appointed an OBE in the 2008 Birthday Honours list, then a CBE in the 2016 New Year Honours, all for services to motorsport.

In 2013 he was awarded the Segrave Trophy in recognition of multiple world championships, and being the only person to win world titles on two and four wheels. In 2015, he was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Engineering by Oxford Brookes University.

John Surtees used tragedy to help others. His only son, Henry, was killed in a freak accident at Brands Hatch in 2009 when he was just 18 years old. Instead of turning his back on a sport that caused his tremendous loss, it spurred Surtees into launching the Henry Surtees Foundation, an organisation which raises money to fund and support both fast and effective response for victims of motorsport crashes, as well as assisting victims of brain injury. British-based air ambulance services have been beneficiaries of the foundation.

John Surtees – a true TT Legend.

*All photos are courtesy of Don Morley





RELIVE THE PAST

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**Evocative photographs of
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**Free entrance, but a donation to
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Free parking, super café.

CHANGES IN THE LAYOUT OF THE TT PADDOCK

Without doubt, in recent years, there has been a rapid growth in physical terms of the TT, resulting, quite understandably, in pressure on the paddock and surrounding public places increasing.

This has manifested itself in increased scrutiny from various regulatory bodies on the Island, culminating in a formal improvement notice from the Health and Safety Executive.

This notice requires the organisers to make adjustments to the way these areas are operated. For 2017 there are wholesale changes in the way the site is constructed, laid out and managed.

The time allocated to building up to the commencement of the meeting will be increased from two to three weeks, with all vehicles being allocated a specific arrival time at the paddock upon reaching the IoM.

There will be a new layout, with clearer segregation of working and living vehicles, Paddock A no longer being the main presentation paddock; vehicles normally placed there will now be located in the hard standing area known as Paddock B. All separate living vehicles will now be positioned in a new fully serviced RV Paddock situated in Nobles Park, a separate area being constructed for limited camping.

The entire site is to be operated on a pitch basis with pitches allocated before arrival. All vehicles being brought to the event will now have to be pre-registered on a new event entry system, with unaccredited vehicles being refused access to the site. Vehicle movements in the working paddocks are to be completely prohibited during core daytime hours.

Greater restrictions are being placed on pass allocation, including the introduction of charges for additional passes provided over and above a yet to be determined number. There is to be an on-site Permit Office to manage the day-to-day issues surrounding all passes and permits. There is also to be increased regulation and enforcement surrounding fuel safety, including the use of PPE for technical personnel and the mandatory provision of fire safety appliances

Prize Presentations TT 2017

20:30hrs, Monday 5th June, Villa Marina, Douglas
Superbike, Sidecar 1 and Supersport 1

★ ★ ★ ★

20:30hrs, Wednesday 7th June, Villa Marina, Douglas
Superstock, Lightweight, Supersport and TT Zero Race

★ ★ ★ ★

After racing on Friday 9th June, TT Grandstand
Sidecar 2, Senior, Solo/Sidecar and Privateer Champions, Solo and Sidecar
Manufacturers' Award. Along with other Special Awards



SIDECAR STATS

One Sunday morning in mid-March I received a phone call, the voice on the other end said, "sorry, I've not been in touch Graham, it's been an emotional few days", then after a short pause, Roy Hanks said, "I've decided to retire with immediate effect." After fifty years, it will seem strange me not waving at the driver of the orange faired machine as it motored past me at some far flung section of the course – he never did wave back – or watching him lead off the newcomers' on their initial lap of TT practicing. I was wearing short trousers when, as a Scout manning the clocks on the scoreboard opposite the Grandstand, I first saw him race and was watching from the forecourt of the Sulby Glen Hotel one Saturday in 1997 when he achieved, what I'm guessing, he considers the pinnacle of his career – a TT victory. Let's look at a few statistics about sidecar racing around the

Mountain Course...

Records show that the current Chairman of the TT Supporters' Club tops the list with respect to the most number of starts for a sidecar competitor at the TT – 92 in all. Commencing his IoM career in the National Seamen's Strike year of 1966, Roy has started 25 more races than any other driver... next in the list is Dick Hawes, followed by Steve Sinnott [61], Mick Boddice [57], Dick Tapken [52] and Kenny Howles, who also competed at TT 2016 with 51. Of his 92 starts, Roy completed the race distance on 54 occasions, also a record.

Of the drivers who entered last year, Roy Hanks obviously has the most finishes, but second in that particular list is Brian Alflatt. An early victim for an article for this Magazine, Brian has now competed in 44 TT races of which he has finished in 38... a marvelous record - 86%. Sadly, he failed

to make the start line last year, but, hopefully, he'll be able to add to his fine record this time round. Brian made his Mountain Course debut in a one-off appearance as a passenger to Mick Harvey in 1980, returning as a driver ten years later.

Claude Montagnier, who finished his first 21 TT races, has now completed the distance on 28 of the 29 occasions he has set off from the Glencrutchery Road start line. Wayne Lockey got to 17 starts before he had his first retirement. Of those drivers who competed in 2016, Debbie Barron, on her reliable, 'Oscar' has the best 100% record with nine finishes from the same number of starts. Laurent Seyeux, passenger to Claude Montagnier, finished his first 17 races. Of the 2016 passenger entry list, Shaun Parker now has 12 finishes from his 12 starts.

Which Manxman has made the most starts as a driver of a sidecar in TT races? Well, multi-winner, Dave Molyneux has pushed off from the Glencrutchery Road start line on 48 occasions, but, alas, he is not the answer to the question... compet-



Roy in the modern era, here in action with Kevin Perry, courtesy Mike Hammonds.

ing between 1970 and 1996, this particular honour goes to Keith Griffin with 51 starts. Twenty-five finishes and three passengers – Malcolm Sharrocks, Gordon Garrett and Peter Cain, Keith's highest position was 16th, a feat he achieved on three occasions.

Another one to ponder... which non-British driver has finished a TT race on the most occasions? Well, topping this list is Sweden's Lars Schwartz with 30 races completed from 46 started. His debut year of 1980, with compatriot Leif Gustavsson as his partner, saw him secure an excellent 12th finish. Lars' best result came seven years later with a 4th behind Lowry Burton, Kenny Howles and Warwick Newman,



Dave Molyneux and Dan Sayle, courtesy Robin Hynes.



less than two seconds off the podium. Leif Gustavsson remained his passenger from his first race to 1994, thereafter Lars was accompanied largely by Manxmen – Dougie Jewell, the late Colin Hardman and the evergreen Dicky Gale – until his last appearance in 2005 when he returned to Sweden 21st and 24th positions to his credit.

Speaking of Dicky Gale, he tops the list of current passengers with the most starts – 46 – to his credit. Of these, between 1984 and last year, he has completed the distance on 28 occasions with at least eleven different drivers.

Only one passenger has started more races than Dicky – that is Eddie Kiff, who in an interview with John Newton for this magazine a few years ago, referred to himself and similar competitors as drivers and

not passengers as those on the platform were just as instrumental in steering the outfit as those holding the handle bars. Eddie's tremendous Mountain Course career record of 75 starts and 47 finishes, began in 1970, culminating only four years ago, in 2013. For his first two years of participation he drove alongside John Wright-Bailey before beginning a legendary partnership with Dick Hawes which covered a fair percentage of Eddie's TT career; a third position with Dick Hawes in 1975 behind Heinz Luthringshauser/Hermann Hann and Gorge O'Dell/Bill Boldison was Eddie's best result. Rated highly by divers, Eddie also acted as a high speed TT companion to Tony Wakefield, Dennis Keen, Helmut Lunemann, Mike Hamblin, concluding a fine career with Wally Saunders with a 26th position in 2013.

Sidecar races are held over three laps, the first being completed in under one hour was in 2005 when Dave Molyneux and Dan Sayle recorded a time of 59 mins 6.39 secs – an average speed of 114.901mph. This was the first of thirty occasions this amazing feat has been achieved, but which driver has done this on the most occasions? No, it's not the aforementioned



Now a team manager, Nicky Crowe at QB,
courtesy Mike Hammonds.

Manxman, who has 7 such instances to his credit, but John Holden with nine. Also with 9, Dan Sayle tops the corresponding list for passengers as he assisted both the aforementioned drivers as well as Tim Reeves and Klaus Klaffenbock. In total there are eight drivers in the list Reeves [2], Klaffi [3], Ben Birchall [4], Nick Crowe [2], Conrad Harrison [2] and finally, the late Phil Dongworth when finishing runner-up in Race 1 in 2009. Second in the passenger list is Andy Winkle [7], all with John Holden followed by Tom Birchall [4], Patrick Farrance [3], Mark Cox [2], Mark Aylott [2], then with one such finish each, Rick Long, Gary Partridge and Ben Binns.

Which two F1 motor racing winners have competed at the TT? John Surtees, obviously, but as passenger to F Mulemann, Jo Siffert finished 11th in the 1958 sidecar race on the Clypse Course. They were BSA mounted, recording a race average of 56.59mph. Jo also rode on the Mountain Course that year on a Norton in the Senior, but failed to finish. The versatile Swiss won his national 350cc championship in 1959 before moving to cars, gradu-



Eddie Kiff with another TT stalwart, Wally
Saunders, courtesy John Newton.

ating to F1 in 1962. Driving a Lotus, he won the 1968 British GP held at Brands Hatch, then the 1971 Austrian in a BRM. He lost his life when crashing in a non-championship race, also at Brands Hatch, in 1971, when he was trapped in his burning car.

Having a successful TT career is the aim of many a sidecar driver; to win the Newcomer's Trophy is the dream start. Rob Fisher, a former GP racer and British Champion did this in 1993 with a 5th place... but the Cumbrian amazed every-

Biking Dates 2017

North West 200	9th – 13th May
Pre-TT Classic	26th – 29th May
TT Festival	27th May – 9th June
Post TT Meeting	10th June
Cock o' the North Continental Road Races	24th – 25th June
Southern 100	10th – 13th July
Barry Sheene Road Races	22nd – 23rd July
UGP Bike Week	6th – 12th Aug
Festival of Motorcycling	19th Aug – 1st Sept
Steve Henshaw International Gold Cup	23rd – 24th Sept

European Road Races

6-7 May	Hengelo [Netherlands]	7-9 July	Imatra [Finland]
21-23 July	Chimay [Belgium]	19-20 Aug	Schleiz [Germany]
26-27 August	Horice [Czech Republic]	23-24 Sept	Frohburg [Germany]



1995 Rob Fisher and Boyd Hutchinson.
Courtesy Fotofinders.

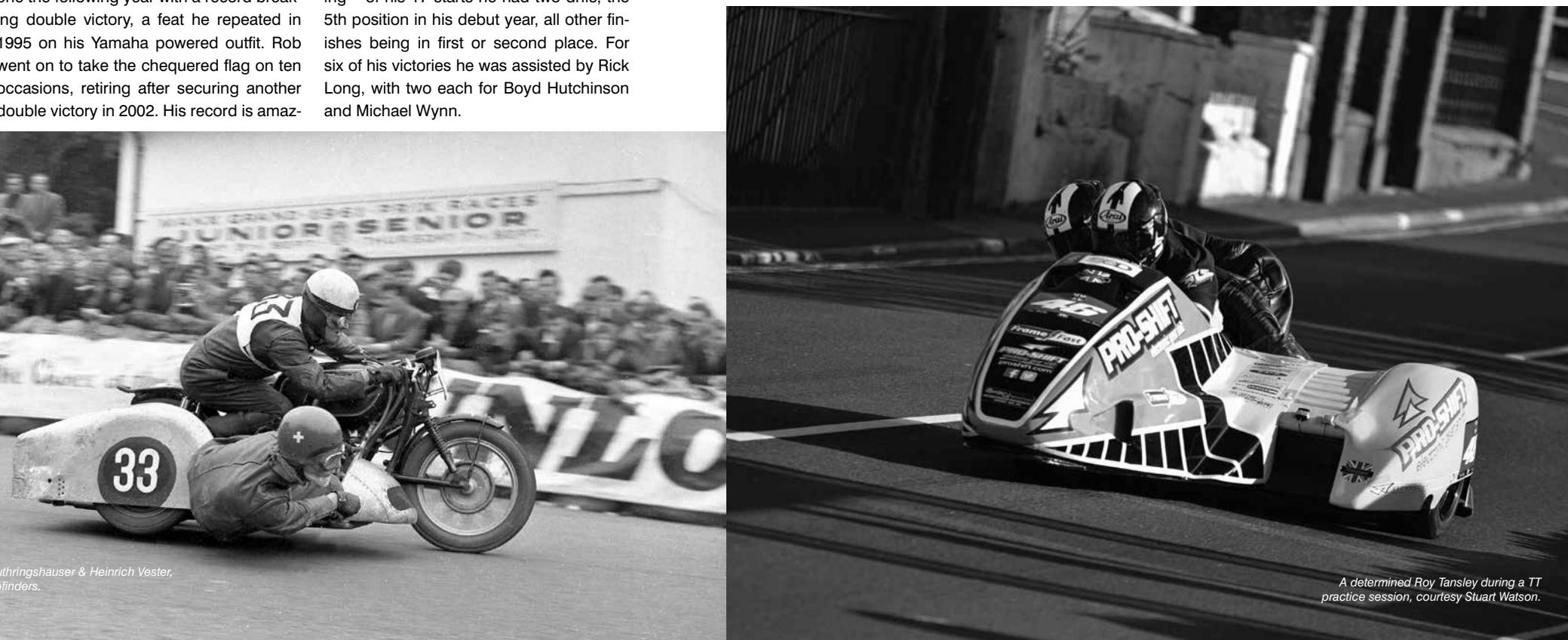
one the following year with a record breaking double victory, a feat he repeated in 1995 on his Yamaha powered outfit. Rob went on to take the chequered flag on ten occasions, retiring after securing another double victory in 2002. His record is amaz-

ing – of his 17 starts he had two dnfs, the 5th position in his debut year, all other finishes being in first or second place. For six of his victories he was assisted by Rick Long, with two each for Boyd Hutchinson and Michael Wynn.

German sidecar driver Heinz Luthoringshauser is still the only person to win a TT race having an artificial leg – foot to knee. Riding largely in the days when there was only one race per year, he had an impressive record with six top six finishes, the highlight being a victory in 1974 on his BMW with Hermann Hann in the chair. A tale is told that on one occasion he came off, resulting in his wooden leg being at a strange angle in front of him, spectators fearing an horrific injury... Heinz's passenger went over to him, readjusted the leg, and they were on their way again. Of course, we have a one-legged competitor in the sidecar ranks today – Roy Tansley who is to be admired for his determination, courage as well mechanical knowhow in making the adjustments to his machine,

enabling him to compete at such high speeds.

1977 was a significant year – the TT had lost its World Championship status, but the first 100+mph sidecar lap was recorded. George O'Dell decided to use his Windle rather than Seymaz and along with passenger, Kenny Arthur became the first crew to break the ton, but as it was achieved during practice, it was unofficial. The actual honour went to the Dick Greasley / Mick Skeels combination with a lap at 100.59mph, but in beating him by fifty seconds O'Dell raised the record to 102.8mph. In the name of the Birchalls, Ben and Tom, the lap record now stands at an incredible average speed of 116.798mph – will this be usurped in 2017? Is a circuit at a speed of 117mph possible?



1961 Heinz Luthoringshauser & Heinrich Vester,
courtesy Fotofinders.

A determined Roy Tansley during a TT
practice session, courtesy Stuart Watson.

ACU BENEVOLENT FUND ADMINISTRATION

The ACU Benevolent Fund has been producing Benevolent Fund badges since 1954 up to and including the present date, 2017. Over the years, sales of these badges have raised considerable amounts of money to assist those members of the ACU family in need of help.



This year's badge was designed on our behalf by Rob Leece, I.O.M Back Three Designs, who can be contacted via Facebook:- Back Three Designs. The Benevolent Fund Administration Committee is very grateful to Rob for his invaluable assistance.

Badges can be purchased by contacting the ACU at the above address or by phoning Rose Hanks on 0121 686 3799 or writing to her at 50 Lyndhurst Road, Erdington, Birmingham, B24 8QS

Roy Hanks : Chairman ACU Benevolent Fund



All change for the Joey Dunlop Foundation at TT 2017

With the construction of our new apartments scheduled to be completed by late March this year, the Joey Dunlop Fund team is now focussed on promoting the holiday complex rather than on fund raising.

The five apartments are designed and equipped to cater for people with a wide range of health issues. There are several holiday units on the island that have 'disability gradings', however the Joey Dunlop Foundation is at the top, being the only complex to be graded as 'exceptional'. Something else that is exceptional are the low tariffs... for more details visit the Foundation website:- www.joeydunlopfoundation.com

The highlight at TT will be the official opening of our new apartments by some famous members of the Dunlop family. This event is scheduled to take place at 3pm on Mad Sunday - we envisage a large number of people attending.

The Joey Dunlop Foundation stall will be at the Creg ny Baa on race days, Murray's Motor Cycle Museum on non-race days. We are also looking forward to attending the Ramsey Sprint and the Moddey Dhoo Motorcycle Show. Joey Dunlop Foundation tombola tickets will be available from the Hailwood Centre Café at the rear of the TT Grandstand.

Chairman of the Foundation, Kevin Quirk said "the building contractor, Andy Faragher has built some amazing apartments. We are keen to attract more visitors to our complex and by moving around we can spread the word to a wider audience. Please celebrate our good work by supporting the Grand Opening on Mad Sunday afternoon. Fingers crossed that racing takes place on Saturday, if required our opening will be rescheduled to 5pm on the Sunday."

Kevin Quirk
Chairman, JDF

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If you would like your business to become a Trade Member of the TTSC and so 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.



IVAN LINTIN - WILL HE MAKE IT THREE IN A ROW?

Another full season of road racing looms for Ivan Lintin, the highlight hopefully being a third consecutive win in the Lightweight TT. As this is being written, Ivan has just returned from a successful testing session with the RC Express Racing team at Cartagena in Spain, a shakedown for the battles ahead. It's actually not that long ago since he was competing in one of road racing's most demanding of battles – the Macau GP...

This was Ivan's second experience of riding at speed around the tricky, dangerous Asian circuit. He failed to complete the distance first time around, so presumably he had unfinished business? "Yes, and I was certainly looking forward to going back for a second go. Practice went well and I was lapping consistently quicker than I'd done in 2015, but everyone else was too. Although I was happy, I was still a fair way down the grid."

Ivan always plans his race in advance, so this was no different with a similar strat-

egy being adopted to the previous year – get a good start and try to get dragged around with some faster guys. Let the rider himself explain his race... "I did indeed manage a good start, running 12th behind Dan Cooper and John McGuinness, I think, and then moving up to 10th as the race progressed with a few people retiring. I settled into a nice, comfy pace going slightly quicker every lap, that was until about lap 7 when I started to lose rear end grip, dropping places in the process. A couple of laps later I felt matters had become dangerous; with the Macau track been so unforgiving, I retired at end of lap 10 from 13th place." A sound move as the rear tyre was destroyed. There apparently was no sound reason for this, but it did complete a problematic year the RC Express team had had with the rubber on their bike's wheels, the upshot being that they've changed to Dunlop for 2017.

After Macau and a long hard season, Ivan and his fellow racers were ready for a rest to recharge the batteries. Well, it's actu-

ally not quite like that, as time spent racing during the summer months has to be made up during the off-season. The Bardney man explains... "really, it's a massive juggling act. The management at both my primary job with Siemens, and my other one with the Fire Service are very supportive of what I do, allowing me to work extra hours to then have time off when I need it. However, it's tough, because over the winter I'm working 60 hour weeks, bank holidays and every bit of time I can, all to build up time to take off in the summer to go racing, testing and do all the press stuff that being a TT winner and riding for a high profile team brings."

Ivan is quick to add that "the most supportive person I have is my fiancée Georgina, who makes an equal amount of sacrifice as I do for me to go playing at motorcycle racing. It's not just work issues which need to be considered, but fitness levels have to be maintained so I have to spend much time working closely with my sponsor, USN to get training nailed and into a good routine again, so fitness becomes less of an issue than before; I've had a few little injuries along the way but should be stronger and lighter than years past."

One of those 'little injuries' was to his hand resulting from a high speed incident at Oliver's Mount, causing him to miss the Ulster Grand Prix. To what extent will this affect his riding this year? "The damaged has basically healed and really should not affect me that much apart from a finger being a little bit shorter than before; I have lost a little hand grip strength but it shouldn't be too much of an issue."

Ivan competes on RC Express team machinery for the third year this coming season, but there have been significant changes within the team... former Liverpool FC's chief executive, Ian Ayre has joined as has Steve Mercer. The latter's role is obvious, he's a high quality, seeded TT rider, whose experience will be of benefit to the forward thinking outfit, but what of Ian Ayre? Ivan explains, "road racing fan Ian, will basi-



cally act as 'sporting chairman' for the team in a non-executive role, helping to raise the profile of the racing operation and the sport of motorcycle road racing. With his extensive commercial experience working across major sporting global brands, it is considered that he will offer significant guidance for the team."

Ian Ayre was appointed Commercial Director at Liverpool in 2007. Amongst other things, he used his skills to secure one of the most lucrative shirt sponsorship deals in football, then in October 2010, when the Fenway Sports Group became the owners of the club after a £300m takeover, he became the Managing Director, finally being promoted to CEO in May 2014. A keen motorcyclist and frequent visitor to the TT and other international meetings, he has recently left the Merseyside club and is to become Managing Director at 1860 Munich FC.

Moving back to the actual racing, Lintin and Mercer will be a formidable partnership and will surely feed off each other. Ivan expands, "I think Steve will help me with the big bike a little as that certainly isn't my strong point, but I also don't want it to impede my racing of the twin... so I will absorb what I can from him and put as much of it into practice. There definitely won't be a number one and two structure although, if we were racing in a championship and it was the last round with one of us maybe going for the win, then there might be team orders but, other than that, I will be going as hard as



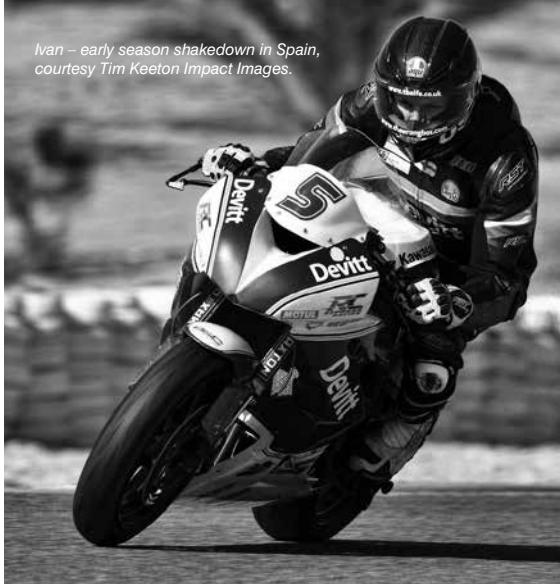
Ivan's eyes show his determination in winning the 2016 Lightweight race; courtesy Glynne Lewis.

will work well and we can both progress. I am certainly looking forward to working with Steve."

Ivan has always impressed us with his measured approach to his road racing, never 'running before he can walk', so what will be the plan this year with respect to the choice of big bike machinery – superstock or superbike, particularly at the TT? "I will certainly be racing a superstock bike in the superbike classes, as I did last year, but it will now be on slick tires. Superstock bikes are that good out the crate that I personally don't need anything better. As a stock machine the Kawasaki is 208hp at the rear wheel and went through the North West 200 speed trap at 198mph. I can confirm that is plenty quick enough for me at the moment!"

Consistent high speed riding saw Ivan average 125.232mph on his ZX 10R in last year's Senior TT, earning himself tenth position... no lap, as yet, in excess of 130mph – a realistic aim for his year? "It's always been a dream to complete a lap at over 130mph

Ivan – early season shakedown in Spain, courtesy Tim Keeton Impact Images.



lap – I've done it at the Ulster, so now just need to do it around the Mountain Course, but with everyone else going quicker all the time, 130mph is just normal lap, but it would be special to me."

One topic of discussion amongst fans during practice week for this year's TT surely will be... will Ivan Lintin become a three-in-a-row winner? Having stood on the top step of the podium for the last two years in the Lightweight race, his principle focus during the fortnight must be on the race for twin cylinder machines? "Of course, attempting to secure my third victory in a row is high on my list and I will be trying my hardest to make it happen, but no doubt there will be a long list of people trying to stop me. I will have last year's twin which took me to victory, but also a new 2017 bike we are building at the moment. Obviously, until I try the 2017 one I don't know what it will be like and will more than likely use both in practice at various events, making the choice when it comes to race time."

Prior to the meeting, Ivan will one of the favourites, if not the favourite to hold up the Lightweight TT Trophy on the Wednesday of race week, but when considering his opposition, he says, "I'm not sure yet who has got a twin as some people only jump on them at the TT, so until the entries come out you never know who is going to be on one and how well they will go – you just never know."

However, one addition to the field this year is Michael Dunlop in the McAdoo livery!!

When discussing this year's TT with Ivan, he was hoping to be seeded in the top 20 in all the big bike and supersport races, a single digit number for the Lightweight TT being a certainty. Wherever he starts, he will have prepared thoroughly, ride sensibly, taking his chances as and when they occur... it might be that, in the next issue we will talking of another victory on his Kawasaki twin and a 130mph lap on his 1000cc machine. We wish Ivan well.

Stop Press:- Ivan has been seeded at 20 in the larger capacity classes.

I can in every race and if that involves a last corner 'parking of a team mate', then that's what will happen. We will of course share information as we will be riding identical superstock and supersport machines - that will be the best for the team to get the best results."

Will the RC Express team duo be riding at the same meetings? "Yeah, as far as I am aware Steve will be doing all the road races" Ivan tells us, "but he is also doing the World Endurance Championship, so if there is a clash then he will drop one. In all probability, I will be strong at some meetings and he, at others, so hopefully the partnership



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Ivan, with style at Braddan Bridge; courtesy Robin Hynes.

ON THE SUBJECT OF TROPHIES

The rider recording the fastest lap at any given TT receives the Jimmy Simpson Trophy. The rider winning the Superstock TT is presented with the John Hartle Trophy. The Bill Boddice Trophy goes to the sidecar crew achieving the best aggregate time across the two races, the same for the TT Supporters' Club Trophy, which Ian Hutchinson won in 2016 for his exploits in the two races for Supersport machines. These awards are taken as fact and not open to opinion, unlike some...

According to the Regulations for this year's event, the Vernon Cooper Trophy will go to the best performance by a solo newcomer as judged by the Promoters, the Peter Chapman Trophy, likewise, to the sidecar newcomer driver and the Dave Wells Trophy to the best performance by a sidecar newcomer, also in the opinion of the Promoter. Subjectivity is obviously involved in the selection of the annual recipient of the Susan Jen-

ness Trophy... an award usually considered by the Executive of the TT Supporters' Club at its annual AGM, often following a vote after the nominations of various candidates have been discussed. Maria Costello, will be presented with the Trophy, a replica of which she keeps, by Club Chairman, Roy Hanks, at this year's TT, for her efforts as Best Female Competitor at last year's event. Previous winners have included Sandra Barnett, Liz Skinner, Estelle Leblond and Fiona Baker-Milligan.

Sadly, one trophy removed from the awards list last year was the Frank Cope Trophy, presented in recognition of the most meritorious performance with respect to the competitor's age at any given TT meeting. Based purely on subjectivity, recipients have included David Madsen-Mygddal, Mick Chatterton, Tony Baker and Roy Hanks.

So, who was Frank Cope? After racing bikes prior to the Second World War, the man from Birmingham returned to the track on



Frank Cope on his Norton in the 250cc Lightweight race of 1955. This race was held on the Clydesdale Course.... so where is shot taken? Well, rather than going down Bray Hill after leaving the Grandstand, take a right at St Ninians crossroads – this is Parkfield Corner which leads onto Ballanard Road. Courtesy Bill Snelling at FoTTofinders.

2016 winner of the 'Spirit of the TT' award, Paul Shoesmith, courtesy Stuart Watson.

the cessation of hostilities, entering his first IoM race, the 1948 Clubman's Lightweight. A 6th position, at an average of 57.82mph, gave him highest IoM finishing position. In total, he competed in 24 races – TT, MGP as well as Clubman's, completing the distance on 15 occasions, the last being the 1958 Lightweight, coming home in 16th position on his 250cc Norton at an average speed of 64.17mph. This race, held on the Clydesdale Course saw an all Italian 1, 2 for Tarquinio Provini and Carlo Ubbiali [MV]s with a young, NSU mounted, Mike Hailwood in third. Although Cope rode an MV Agusta in some smaller capacity races, his preference was British machinery. He emigrated to South Africa, one reported reason being that he was prohibited from competing in the U.K on grounds of his increasing age. He rode successfully, winning the Port Elizabeth 200, a feat which he counted as one of his career highlights, but in 1970 he went to watch a bike race, and although he had not intended to compete, was offered a ride on a bike he had never ridden before. Unfortunately, he crashed, suffering severe head injuries; he was 75 at this time. His family had him brought back to the UK for treatment, but he never recovered and died shortly afterwards in hospital.

Moving back even further in time to another 'subjective trophy'... the Nisbett Shield. Named in memory of J R Nisbett, a former Chairman of the ACU, the Shield used to be awarded to 'the competitor who exhibited such pluck, endurance or capacity to triumph over difficulties as to warrant some special prize'. It was awarded on six occasions before being discontinued after the 1933 meeting. One recipient was G W Jones, who, following a crash on his New Hudson at Sulby Bridge in the 1921 Junior TT, was pitched into a stream. He scrambled out, straightened his machine, continued and finished 38th.

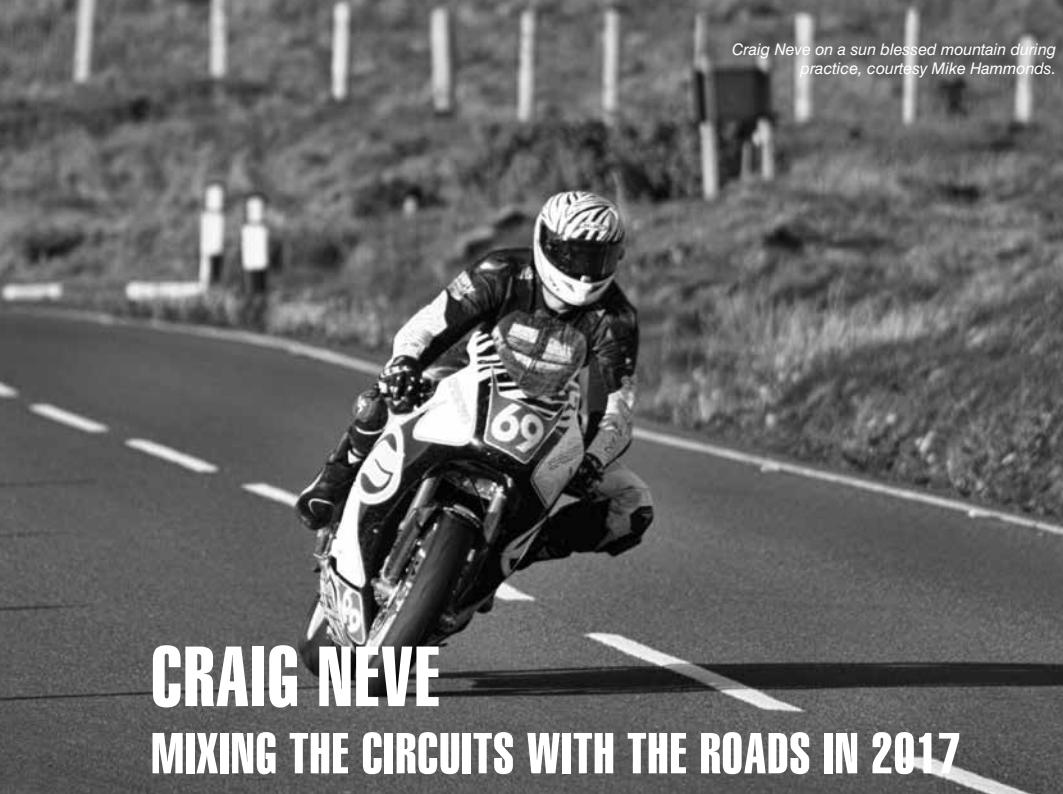
Today, the most high profile award of this nature is surely 'The Spirit of the TT' given in recognition of a selfless contribution by an individual to the event's success. The criteria for the award are based on key qualities such as innovation, leadership, teamwork, respect and integrity. The award, open to anyone who



contributes to the TT, such as riders, marshals and volunteers, was first presented in 2010, Paul Owen being the worthy recipient. He was following close friend New Zealander, Paul Dobbs on the track during the SuperSport Two Race when the latter crashed at Ballagarey, Paul dismounted and assisted the marshals in controlling the incident. He took a flag, telling the marshal waving it to go and attend to the rider and he would wave the flag; Paul Dobbs tragically died as a result of the injuries he sustained in the accident. In carrying out his actions, Paul Owen gave up his own race ambitions; he also withdrew from the TT Zero Electric bike race which followed.

Tragedy, sadly, was also involved last year with Paul Shoesmith becoming a posthumous winner. Not only was he one of the biggest characters in the TT paddock, but he also gave the opportunity for a number of riders to race on the Mountain Course through his Ice Valley Four Angels Racing – Peter Hickman, Simon Andrews and Sam West being cases in point, as well as a number of international competitors. He was also well known for his fundraising efforts, most notably his work with the Simon Andrews Foundation.

Other 'Spirit of the TT' winners have included Conor Cummins, the Birchall Brothers, TT Marshal Eric Alexander and TTRA secretary Frances Thorp. 2015 winners were 91 year old Harold Leece, who opens up his garden to spectators and 8 year old fundraiser, Cici Reed. There is certainly a place for subjectively driven awards at the TT – long may they continue.



Craig Neve on a sun blessed mountain during practice, courtesy Mike Hammonds.

Craig Neve at QB, courtesy Mike Hammonds.

CRAIG NEVE MIXING THE CIRCUITS WITH THE ROADS IN 2017

In the last issue, we were delighted to outline Craig Neve's excellent first TT meeting which followed on from his Mountain Course debut in the Manx Grand Prix the year before. Those of you able to listen to Manx Radio's race commentary will recall how Dave Christian, stationed at Glen Helen, quickly evaluated that Craig was 'one to watch', the result being that, lap-by-lap, comments were made about his style, speed and consequent progress despite him not circulating with the seeded riders... so, we move onto the current racing year...

Craig's main early season focus, prior to the commencement of his road season, is concentrated upon his step up to the hugely competitive Pirelli British Superstock 1000 Championship. This year, the series in its new format gives increased racing and more valuable track time for entrants, which Craig feels outweighs the increased costs for a small father and son team like his.

With the class being hugely subscribed, the grid looks extremely competitive with many very talented up and coming racers moving into the class from other championships to join the current top riders remaining from the championship of recent seasons.

Craig therefore, feels that he will be realistic about the championship this season and aim for top 20 positions on his 2016 Kawasaki ZX10R. However, during the season, he will look at the bigger picture particularly at the early outings at Donington Park, Brands Hatch and Oulton Park where he will be able to further develop his riding skills and sharpen him up in preparation for his first roads outing of the year, his third appearance at the North West 200 in early May.

Following this, a couple of weeks later, is his all important second TT where his main aims are to increase his lap speeds and improve on his very impressive results of 2016... six starts, six finishes... 37th, 25th on two occasions, 24th and 16th twice, one of which was in the Superstock race in which he averaged 122.34mph for the four laps.

For his roads season Craig will have a Kawasaki ZX10R for the Superstock class, another ZX10R in Superbike mode, a Kawasaki ZX6R for the Supersport class and the WK Bikes 650i to race in the Lightweight class

Early season testing... two outings at Cartagena in mid-February and early March went well, giving him optimism for the new season with him using the time on track for an initial shakedown, lapping to get up to speed again after the long winter break. The first test was a last minute dash for Craig and his team to catch the ferry to Spain as he had been working in the Dominican Republic in the days prior to this trip.

He also plans to appear at this year's Classic TT (19th August to 1st September) provided he can secure competitive machinery. In the next issue, we shall report on Craig's season, particularly his TT where we are confident he will again impress us all with his continued progress about which we will hopefully again hear from Dave Christian.

Sally Bly



Craig Neve on his way to 16th in the 2016 Lightweight, his best TT finish so far, courtesy Mike Hammonds.

TT DIGEST

- ⦿ The 2017 TT Festival kick starts, as usual, with the Pre-TT Classic on Friday, Saturday and Bank Holiday Monday 26th, 27th & 29th May on the Billown Course in the south of the island. The nine-race programme caters for 250/350cc Single cylinder machines; 250cc Lightweight; 350cc Junior; 500cc Senior; 850cc Classic; Junior and Senior Superbikes, plus the ever popular Sidecars, which includes a round of the prestigious Camathias Cup series. The total prize fund for the meeting totals over £13,000.00.
- ⦿ The maximum number of starters for the three largest capacity solo races at the TT will be 68, that for all others being 72. Obviously, more entries than are allowed to start may be accepted for qualifying with the upshot being that some competitors may well satisfy qualification criteria, but not get to race. Newcomers are guaranteed a race start provided they reach the qualification criteria in each class.
- ⦿ The TT Organisers pride themselves on the speed in which the rescue helicopters respond to a racing incident. The time from sending an alert to the helicopter arriving at the scene is, on average, between five and six minutes, the total time for a competitor to reach hospital being under twenty minutes. From 1995 to 2015 there were 539 recorded

incidents involving 609 competitors on the Mountain Course, with the helicopter being scabbled 243 times.

- ⦿ Non-homologated motorcycles may be accepted for the Superbike and Senior classes if they provide a demonstrable and significant marketing opportunity for the event. Entries were to be submitted in the normal manner along with a full technical specification of the machine to the Technical Director by the end of March; all teams and competitors contesting the event will then be notified of any non-homologated machines accepted for the event.
- ⦿ You can't always believe what you read... apologies again to Craig Neve – the front cover strap line of the Summer 2016 issue appeared to indicate that our man from Immingham had been rechristened as Chris, then in the most recent issue he changed his looks, appearing as Tony Redmond in a head and shoulders photo...sorry, Craig – everything in this issue is correct, promise!!
- ⦿ In this column, coverage is often given as to how much the Manx economy benefits from the races held on the Mountain Course. Well, it's now the turn of the Southern 100... last year around 3,200 fans visited the event held around the Billown circuit at Castletown, almost double the number the

last time the event was assessed [2010]. It was estimated the visitors spent £1.4 million during their stay, contributing just over £1 million to the Manx national income. The survey found, on average, visitors stayed for five nights, generally in hotels and boarding houses with about a quarter camping, variously using motor homes, caravans or tents. International interest is on the up with fans travelling from Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Norway, Australia, USA and Argentina.

- ⦿ Guy Martin and Josh Brookes both return to the Isle of Man this June, but another returnee, after a twelve year absence, is Roy 'Chubby' Brown. The 72 year old North Yorkshire comedian will be putting his own brand of humour on show at the Gaiety Theatre on the evening of Mad Sunday.
- ⦿ The testing of pit lane speed limiters for solo machines will be allowed at the end of solo practice session once the last sidecar has departed on its session. Testing can continue until the first sidecar passes through Cronk ny Mona. At the entrance to the Pit Lane is a single white line with a board at each side indicating a speed limit of 60kph. From this point to a similar demarcation with the board depicting the 60kph crossed out at the exit of Pit Lane is the speed limit zone. Sanctions are 60 – 80kph, a 30 second penalty, 80 – 100kph, 60 seconds with 100+kph being disqualification from the race. As an aid to competitors, at the entrance to the Pit Lane a display board will indicate the speed of competitors approaching. There is no right of protest or appeal if an offence is committed!
- ⦿ As noted in the Manx press during the winter, a new travel discount scheme has been initiated with the aim of encouraging marshals from the UK who carried out duties at the 2016 Southern 100 meeting to return gain this year. Race sponsor, the IoM Steam Packet Co has offered the discount hoping to ensure there are, again, sufficient volunteers to carry out marshalling duties. The scheme is to be reviewed after this year's meeting in the hope that new marshals will be attracted in the future.
- ⦿ Most charity shops on our high streets

raise money for one specific cause, not so the Peel Charity Shop. This charity collects and sells donated goods of all kinds as well as organising regular outside fund raising events. Its aim is to raise funds for distribution to mainly IoM based charities and organisations. To this end, a massive £10,000 has been handed over to the Rob Vine Fund; the money received during the winter, will be used towards that organisation's latest project of replacing one of the old ambulances with a new one, hopefully in time for TT 2017. All three of these vehicles in the fleet are now over ten years old.

- ⦿ There are new initiatives concerning head gear in the 'rules & regs' this year. Helmets must be no older than 5 years from date of manufacture, with those having the date code removed being ineligible. They have to be full-face in design with the UN EC 22.05 certification label present; the fitted visor should be free of scratches or defects and be capable of taking tear-offs. Any damage, other than that considered as cosmetic, will render the helmet unusable. Sidecar crews are to wear matching helmets in terms of colour scheme, although they may be different in make; dispensation may be granted at the discretion of the Race Organisers.
- ⦿ With respect to leathers, there is only a recommendation that they be no older than 5 years, but they must be made from cowhide [min 1.2mm thick] or kangaroo [0.9mm] with a double layer in the seat. Stretch material reinforced with aramid fibres or similar can be used but must not be at main impact areas of seat, hip, back, knees, elbows and shoulders. CE armour must be present to



Greg Lambert and Kenny Cole on the way to Glen Helen. Courtesy Robin Hynes.

the shoulders, elbows and knees, either fitted to the suit or worn underneath. Sidecar crews are to wear matching leathers in terms of colour scheme, again dispensation may be given. Kevlar suits are prohibited, but titanium knee and toe sliders are permitted.

- ✿ Jurby Airfield will be available for testing during practice week for a [small] fee of £40 per rider. Gates open at 9am with testing between 10am and 2pm on Tuesday 30th May, Thursday 1st June and Friday 2nd June [weather dependent]. Andreas Racing Association will also be running test sessions for Pre-TT and Post-TT Race competitors for which TT competitors are welcome to attend... contact Gordy 07624 491063 or Lizzie 07624 200470 for further information.
- ✿ 2017 sees the 70th Anniversary of club member, Ian Huntry's first visit to the IoM TT Races. Accompanied by his parents, Ian, originally from the north-east, but now residing in the south of England, first visit to the world famous meeting was, as a very young boy, in 1947. The first TT meeting after the cessation of hostilities saw victories for Harold Daniel, Bob Foster, Manliffe Barrington, Eric Briggs, Denis Parkinson and B E Keys. Many a tale to tell, Ian will be found in the paddock area during his annual trip or google ianhuntryttfan
- ✿ To qualify, solo riders [except TT Zero] must achieve a lap time within 112.5% of that set by the third fastest qualifier; 115% is the figure for the three-wheelers with those in the TT Zero Challenge having to compete a practice lap in under 30 minutes. Newcomers have to compete a minimum of six laps, solo and four laps, sidecars – passengers as well as drivers. Competitors who have qualified to start in any previous race on the Mountain Course are required to complete a minimum of five laps, solo and three, sidecars. Solo competitors must have completed at least two laps on each of their machines.
- ✿ In the event of a 'part course red flag' situation, red flags will be displayed from the Start Line to the end of the sector in which the incident has occurred. Thereafter, the Course will have stationary yellow flags dis-

played which will identify that an incident has occurred and those competitors who have passed the incident are to ride their machines back to the Parc Ferme at low speed. Overtaking is not permitted under such circumstances

- ✿ Future TT dates:- 2018... 26th May – 8th June, 2019... 25th May – 7th June and 2020... 23rd May – 5th June
- ✿ The Organisers reserve the right to examine, require dynamometer checking and dismantling of any machine that has started in any qualifying session or race, and for this purpose, impound it; fuel samples may be taken, tanks measured and weights checked. Superbike, Superstock and Lightweight machines have a compulsory dynamometer check which must be carried out prior to Wednesday 1st June. All costs relating to machine verification are to be met by the competitor or his team.
- ✿ The two newest members of the Tommy Club are to join the ranks of the TT competitors this year... Tom Weeden and Andrew Dudgeon both lapped in excess of 120mph at last year's MGP, the requirement to become inducted into the club commemorated to the memory of Tommy Lucas. The man from Peel tragically lost his life in an accident during the 2004 Junior MGP, having, on the previous circuit, become the first rider to lap 120+mph at the event. Members of the 'club' currently competing at the TT are Ian Pattinson, Davy Morgan and Simon Fulton. Four others are members of the elite club... Alan Jackson, Seamus Greene, Billy Redmayne and Malachi Mitchell-Thomas, who holds the outright MGP record at 122.221mph.
- ✿ As reported in the Manx media, the IoM holiday firm, Regency Travel is to close, winding down until a date in the autumn. However, all bookings currently in place for the forthcoming TT Races and Festival of Motorcycling will be honoured.
- ✿ One of the best ways of keeping abreast of news, on and off the track in the world of pure road racing is to log on to roadracingnews.co.uk, which, up-dated daily by web-master, Stevie Rial, gives the most in



A determined approach to Braddan Bridge for Frenchman, Morgan Govignon. Courtesy Glynne Lewis.

depth coverage of our sport available on the internet. From the UK international scene through racing between the Irish hedges to the International European Road Racing Championships and to the far flung street circuits of New Zealand, all facets of the sport are covered. Race results, opinion, profiles, action photos, visits to the archives, it's all there... not just the stars, the full spectrum of those involved in road racing.

- ✿ For the three higher capacity solo classes it is permitted to modify the standard manufacturer's tank or make a new tank provided the silhouette of the tank remains as homologated and the capacity does not exceed 24 litres for superbike and superstock categories and 22 litres for the 600s. For Lightweight machines the capacity must be no greater than 20 litres, but the unleaded baffle may be removed and the filler replaced. The position of the tank mounting points on the frame must remain as standard.
- ✿ A reminder...for those of the more nostalgic amongst us, a visit to www.immuseum.im should bring back memories of the Isle of Man in days of yore. An addition to the photo archives are a vast array of shots from the '60s and '70s capturing many popular occasions – carnivals, the annual Viking invasion, Tynwald Day ceremonies, even the Rolling Stones when they visited the Fairy Bridge.
- ✿ A new community shop located in Tower



The evergreen Ian Lougher about to guide his Suter down Bray Hill. Courtesy Glynne Lewis.

2016, with one on-board video of Michael Dunlop's record breaking Superbike lap being viewed 1.6 million times alone. Manx Radio TT's service, available on-line worldwide via the iomtt.com website as well as via Manx Radio aps, had over 350,000 unique connections during TT fortnight listening to live radio commentary in addition to the on-island radio broadcast audience. Over 102,000 unique users accessed the TT's live timing service during that period with a 58% increase in the average duration of the visit. A peak audience of 32,867 was recorded during the Superbike race.

- ❖ Available soon on the online TT Supporters' Club shop will be a unisex medium weight zip through hoodie embroidered with the TTSC logo on the front and the official TT logo on both front and back; prices, including postage and packing, from £25
- ❖ A dozen of the greatest names in motorcycle racing history have been listed for the Motor Sports Hall of Fame with this year's prestigious event taking place on Wednesday 7th June at the Royal Automobile Club in London. A fans' vote decides who will join the likes of Surtees, Agostini and McGuinness... www.motorsportmagazine.com/hall-of-fame. Nominations with a strong TT connection include Joey Dunlop, Geoff Duke and Mike Hailwood along with Soichiro Honda, founder of his eponymous company which had a massive impact on the motorcycling world. Other nominations are largely Americans and Australians from

the GP world – Messrs Doohan, Lawson, Rainey, Roberts, Schwantz, Spencer, Stoner, along with Barry Sheene.

- ❖ Held earlier this year at the Palace Hotel, Douglas, the annual Hogg Charity Auction again proved highly successful with over £6,500 being raised in support of the Phil Hogg organisation. Named in honour of Phil who lost his life in a TT practice crash at Ballagarey in 1989, the association helps pay the expenses for its rescue ambulance and other medical equipment. The highest earner was a four day break in the Lake District - £440 with two Kawasaki branded watches together raising £300.
- ❖ The Joey Dunlop Foundation is hoping to raise funds to provide a bench in memory of Paul Shoesmith. It is intended that the memorial bench will be placed alongside that of Simon Andrews in the Foundation complex at Braddan Bridge. Supporters can donate via www.joeydunlopfoundation.com or by cheque to JDF, Braddan Bridge, Peel Road, Braddan, IoM IM4 4NT.
- ❖ For those going to the TT this year, or perhaps to the Festival of Motorcycling, especially if you are taking in a Mountain Course event for the first time then a visit to the official TT website – www.iomtt.com may well prove useful. Click on 2017TT, then go to the 'Where to Watch' section... one more click – 'Download Restricted Areas Map' here you will find highly detailed plans / maps and aerial photos of, effectively, from where you can and cannot spectate

Rising star, Dan Cooper on his Lightweight machine. Courtesy Gert Meulman.



DAN KNIGHT from Grand Prix Passenger to TT driver

The 2010 TT saw a welcome entry into the sidecar class with the appearance of the Knights – Gary as driver with his son, Dan alongside him. They had been racing in the European and World Championship, but decided to make the move to pure road racing and the Isle of Man TT. A steady start, carefully learning the intricacies of the course on their Baker Yamaha to finish 26th at an average speed of 96.83mph.

They have been regular Isle of Man competitors since, but have 'gone their separate ways', so to speak with Dan now piloting his own outfit. Let's follow the path taken by 29 year Dan, an engineer from Crewe in Cheshire... so, presumably with a dad as motorsport competitor, he must have been around bikes from a young age? "I've been into sidecars pretty much as long as I've been alive. I can remember watching my dad building Grand Prix bikes in the garage from my bedroom window, and then standing on our garden wall waving to the back of his coach as they

left for Euro meetings, I must have been around three or four at the time"

It seemed then that young Dan was competing in the sport as soon as he was able? "Yea, I raced with my dad from the age of sixteen, he even allowed me to miss a few GCSE exams!"

The father and son combination soon gelled as, in 2004, they won the European Cup at their first go... Dan takes up the story, "taking the Championship was great at the time, but moving to the Worlds the year after was hard. Being competitive at that level takes a lot of work and even more travelling! We competed at Word Championship for around 10 years finishing 4th in 2009." The World Champions that year were the Birchalls, Ben and Tom, who will make a significant reappearance in Dan's road racing experience a few years later.

Their best world championship result was followed up the next year with a first appearance on the Mountain Course... a big move? "Deciding to do the TT in 2010

A beautiful summer's evening on the Mountain,
Dan and Stephane, 2016. Courtesy Mike
Hammonds.

Gary and Dan at Jurby.



was certainly a big step, but I don't think either of us ever regretted it; it's an event like nothing else I've ever done. However, it does make doing a world championship series in the same season very difficult. I think in more recent years we put too much focus on the TT, being a world champion really is the pinnacle of any sport."

Steady progress in their second TT meeting with a 17th position, lap speeds averaging 103+mph, then a big leap forward in 2012 with a 7th place at an average speed of 106.612mph for the three lap race. Result sheets indicate that, as a pair, their best year was 2013 with another 3mph being added to average lap speeds bring-

ing them across the Glencrutchery Road finishing line in 6th and 7th positions... their approach to learning such a difficult, dangerous course being a fine example to any would-be TT sidecar competitor.

The next question to Dan is probably pretty obvious...after excellent results with Gary at the 2013 TT, your next appearance on the Island was as a driver...how did this change in role come about? "Well, I just decided that I would like to have a go, I'd been doing well driving the F1 in the UK and I felt I knew the TT Course really well, so I'd wanted a go; it was something I'd been thinking about for a few years."

Luck was on his side as, "the Green

Ant Racing team approached me with the offer of a bike and some help and I didn't really look back", but how easy was it to adapt to the role of driver as opposed to passenger at the TT? Dan's quite frank in his reply, "it's quite hard, there is a lot more involved with being a driver than a passenger, yes you know the way round the course, but there are a lot more corners as a driver! There is also a lot more work in preparing for an event like the TT and then getting the bike set up during practice week... the list is endless!"

Well, Dan certainly adjusted well, as he and his passenger, Stephane Hubert brought their Suzuki GSXR home in 26th

position out of the forty-one crews to complete the distance in Race 1, improving to 20th in the second outing, average lap speeds being in excess of 103mph – a fine start as a driver.

Dan returned last year, but luck was not with the pair, particularly so for Stephane... Dan expands. "For 2016 I changed to the LCR chassis with a GSXR engine, which was really good. I think Green Ant really got the best we could from the bike and it was really reliable; we wanted to lap at 110mph but didn't quite make that, although I'm sure we would have done so in the race had we got that far. Unfortunately, Stephane missed his handle during

Father and son
– Gary and Dan at Ballaugh



Exiting Braddan Bridge. Courtesy Mike Hammonds.

Friday practice at the top of Barregarrow and ended up with two broken legs. Sadly, this ended our TT involvement and, what is worse, Stephane is still not able to walk properly – it's been a pretty bad twelve months for him."

As with most competitors in our sport, Dan's accident has not put him off, indeed he co-opted the services of Matty Rostron towards the end of the 2016 season, who has impressed Dan... "he's a really good passenger very enthusiastic, ambitious and being the grandson of Brian Rostron I think sidecars are in his blood, he's certainly up for the job!" Just to put 'in the blood' into context, Brian Rostron, a one-time TTSC IoM Representative, started in nearly fifty TT races between 1977 and 2003!

Dan is delighted with machinery he has at his disposal for the coming season, which actually doesn't, on this occasion, include the TT. "Yes, racing again under the Green Ant banner, I have a new LCR

which has been built by Ben and Tom Birchall; we will be out on this very soon, focusing on events like the Southern 100, where I will be making my debut and a few other international road circuits. Myself and Matty work well together and I think we can aim for some good results on the roads this year."

Dan Knight, for one still in his 20s, has a tremendous amount of experience – British, European and World Championship events, the TT as well as being the passenger and more latterly a driver of very fast three-wheeled machinery. He is one of the new generation of sidecar competitors who appreciates the difficulties and dangers of the sport, but has the ability, mechanical knowledge, and ambition to perform at a high level. We hope to see him back at the TT in the not too distant future, where he will be sure to resume where he left off in 2016, determined to achieve that lap of 110mph.



Dan with Stephane at Ramsey, 2015.

Regional Representatives

Midlands

Rose Hanks: 50 Lyndhurst Road, Birmingham, B24 6QS.
Tel 0121 6863799

North Yorkshire

Stuart Watson: 4 Wood Hill Close, Marton-cum-Grafton, Boroughbridge, York, YO51 9QP

Yorkshire

Michelle & Phil Harvey: 2 Oak Villas, Rawcliffe Bridge, Near Goole, East Yorkshire, DN14 8NU.
Tel 01405 831070. E-mail pharvey@timloc.co.uk

Canada

Harold & Mary Cosgrove: PO Box 793, Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada L2E 6V6.
Tel 1-905-356-6865. E-mail halmar@niagara.om

France

Jean-Michel Prudon: 18 Alles des Saugeys, 71000 Sance, France.
Tel 03 85 29 07 13. E-mail jmprudin@wanadoo.fr

Italy

Pier G Ortalda: Via Colombaro 31, Sebastino, Po [Torino].
Tel 011 9191516. E-mail ortalda@iveco.com

Japan

Yuki Kobayashi: Yokohama City, Tsuzuki-ku Fujimigaoka 4-5. 2240051.
Tel 81 45 948 0677. E-mail yukky-rt@nifty.com

Netherlands

Gert Meulman: Neuheede-Siedlung 22, 26892 Heede, Germany.
Tel 0049 4963906463. E-mail gert.meulman@gmail.com

Republic of Ireland

Myles Lally: 43 Selskar Avenue, Skerries, Co Dublin.
Tel 00353 868232295. E-mail myles@realroadracing.com

Spain

Peter Flores: Ctra de le Costa, 62. Esc B, 1º 4ª. 43840 Salou, Tarragona, Spain.
Tel 00 34 609 346 845. E-mail peterblue5@hotmail.com

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.

SPORTS, ACTION & COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY

GLYNNE LEWIS

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Contact - Glynne Lewis on blue146@sky.com