



*** STRICT EMBARGO TILL 1200HRS 27th NOVEMBER 2008

All star rider line up assembled for 2009 Isle of Man TT Races

- Major manufacturers commit to TT en masse
- Norton set for historic return with Michael Dunlop
- New riders, teams and manufacturers expressing interest in TT

Whilst the dust has only just settled on the 2008 road racing season, thoughts are already turning to next year, nowhere more so than the Isle of Man TT Races, which promise to better the superb show that was put on in June this year.

The majority of the leading manufacturers and riders have already finalised their plans with the mighty HM Plant Honda team leading the way. The Japanese giant will be celebrating their 50th anniversary of TT competition in 2009 with 14-times TT winner John McGuinness, and new TT sensation Steve Plater leading their attack.

Their biggest challenge is likely to come from the formidable Relentless Suzuki by TAS team who dominated the 2008 TT. They return with the Antipodean pairing of Cameron Donald and Bruce Anstey. 'Super Cam' took a brace of victories in 2008 and is sure to be stronger another year on whilst Anstey continues to hold his place as one of the current TT masters.

Guy Martin should, arguably, have taken his first win in 2008, having comfortably led the opening Superbike race before a mechanical breakdown and he continues with the Hydrex Honda squad, with an increased involvement from Honda Racing. The Lincolnshire rider briefly flirted with a move to Yamaha but the place with the Rob McElnea Racing team will be taken by Ian Hutchinson, another of the leading protagonists and, of course, already a TT winner.

Meanwhile, the Ian Lougher bandwagon continues to roll and the Welshman will be back to add to his tally of 8 TT wins. The Blackhorse Finance Yamaha



rider has currently competed in 99 TT races and will break the magical 100-mark in 2009.

Kawasaki will have a strong representation with the welcome return of McAdoo Kawasaki Racing, the Northern Ireland team having signed Manxman Conor Cummins, so impressive at the recent Macau Grand Prix. Ryan Farquhar flew the Kawasaki flag in 2008 putting in five rides and the Dungannon ace is sure to be amongst the front-runners once more.

The 2009 TT will also mark the sensational return of one of the most iconic names in British motorcycling history – Norton. The new version of Brian Crighton's 588cc special is set to make its TT debut next year and what better name to be on board than that of Dunlop or, to be precise, Michael Dunlop. The 21-year was a revelation in 2008 and is sure to earn even more fans as he follows in the footsteps of his legendary father who piloted the JPS Norton in the early 1990's. Meanwhile, elder brother William will be back on the Island in the colours of CD Racing

Gary Johnson (Uel Duncan Racing) and Keith Amor (Wilson Craig Racing) were extremely impressive in 2008 in just their second year on the Mountain Course and will return with their respective teams to challenge for top honours whilst the evergreen Adrian Archibald silenced all his doubters this year with another Superbike podium and he will be well to the fore once more.

Leading privateers Carl Rennie, Dan Stewart, James McBride, Ian Pattinson, Ian Armstrong, Les Shand and Mark Parrett will be back in action whilst the emerging talents of Mats Nilsson, Olie Linsdell and James Hillier will all be stronger, wiser and more determined next year.

The recruitment of new talent has been one of the undoubted success stories in the re-invention of the TT with numerous recent newcomers going on to wins and rostrums and 2009 will be no exception.

Heading the list of expected debutants is recent winner of the Macau Grand Prix, and former British Champion, Stuart Easton and his debut will be one of the undoubted highlights of TT2009. Meanwhile, the organisers have also been in extensive talks with numerous other British Superbike competitors



including Tom Grant, Dave Johnson and Steve Mercer who have all signalled their intentions to compete with further rider announcements expected soon.

It's not just the UK either where the newcomers will come from. Portuguese rider Luis Carreira was sensational at the recent Macau Grand Prix, finishing 4th, and his participation will be eagerly anticipated as will that of German rider Rico Penzkofer, who also impressed at Macau. Italy will be represented with Mirko Giansanti, ten times a podium finisher in the 125cc Grand Prix, set to make his bow.

Meanwhile, organisers are currently in talks with several BSB teams who have yet to make their debut at the TT, as well as some of the emerging European manufacturers, with announcements expected in the near future.

As well as the five solo races held on the Mountain Course, the two-strokes will be out in force on the fast and bumpy Billown Circuit in the south of the island. Re-introduced in 2008, the 125cc and 250cc TT's have been revamped for next year with each class being held over two 8-lap races and names like Lougher, Dunlop and Palmer will again fight out the wins. There has been significant rider interest in these races so far this year, and the entry for both events is likely to be swelled considerably in 2009.

On three wheels, the action in 2008 is still being talked about to this day after the wheel to wheel duel between Nick Crowe and Dave Molyneux had the crowd on their toes around the course and the Manx arch rivals will do it all again in 2009.

Crowe is part of the impressive HM Plant Honda team and will be keen to repay their support with another double whilst Molyneux, who will again be Suzuki-powered, will be looking to wrestle his crown back.

The duo can no longer expect to have it all their own way though. John Holden on the Relentless Suzuki is edging ever closer whilst the performance of Tim Reeves in 2008 will go down as one of the greatest ever drives by a TT newcomer; the triple World Champion can be guaranteed to be ever closer to the number one spot next June.



Former World Champion Klaus Klaffenböck was again well in contention, as were regulars Simon Neary, Phil Dongworth and Nigel Connole, and all four will be back on the entry, as will Dougie Wright , another major success of the recruitment drive. The big name newcomers in the sidecar class will be the Birchall brothers, Ben and Tom, who finished 3rd in the World Championship this season.

The 2009 TT also boasts a new, and intriguing event in the form of the TTXGP race, further confirming the status of the races as a pioneering and innovative meeting. Raced over one lap of the Mountain Course, the ‘Green TT’ will be the World’s first clean emission Grand Prix, providing an exciting opportunity for global innovators and engineers to showcase their talents, perhaps giving everyone an insight into the future of road racing.

Hon Martyn Quayle MHK, Minister for Tourism and Leisure, Isle of Man Government commented:

“The ever increasing strength of the TT within the motorcycle industry is clear to see with all the major Japanese manufacturers committing to our event very early. With more new teams and manufacturers as well as exciting up and coming riders expressing an interest in our event, fans can look forward to an amazing two weeks of high speed racing on the most famous and challenging circuit of them all .”

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