

ISLE OF MAN TOURIST TROPHY

TT 2010

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Conrod! Can the fastest man in the world be the next Manx TT winner?



Following a hugely successful 2009, local hero Conor Cummins looks forward to TT 2010.

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Above: Cameron Donald was back in action during a track day at Phillip Island.



Above: Cameron Donald was in scintillating form last year before an off at Keppel Gate in practice ruled him out of the races.

Cameron Donald

Back on Track for 2010

News reaches us from Australia where Cameron Donald has confirmed that he's back on a bike and is already looking forward to TT2010. Aussie ace Cameron, a double TT winner in 2008, injured his shoulder during qualifying last year and was unable to defend his titles.

"I could ride a TT race today if I had to."

Talking about his return to fitness Cameron said: "I am already back to a good level of fitness and could ride a TT race today if I had to so will be fully ready to race by June 2010. At the moment I am just working hard to regain my full range of motion in the shoulder but it doesn't affect how I ride the bike."

Cameron was speaking at a track day at Phillip Island where he was testing ahead of the new season. He is currently scheduled to return to the UK in March. The Relentless by TAS Suzuki team has already confirmed that Cameron will be racing in their colours again in 2010 alongside antipodean team-mate Bruce Anstey.

Cameron also talked about the popularity and profile of the TT in Australia; "The interest in Oz has been bigger than you could believe. We have just got free to air digital TV in Oz and Ten have a full time sport station named ONE HD and they continue to show the TT preview and race programmes."

Right: The 'Wizard of Oz' is back and the gloves are coming off!



Hector Neil, Relentless Suzuki by TAS

Bouncing Back in 2010?

Firstly, how did you get started in motorcycle racing and how long have you now been involved?

I became involved in road racing in 1974 after spending several years competing myself in a variation of motorsport like Motocross, grass track, trials and even Stock cars. After watching from behind the hedges at places like the UGP, I sponsored Norman Dunn on a 350cc Yamaha. At our first NW 200 we arrived with a new bike and a big box of spares but before the race even started our bike was broken and there were no spares left in the box! Ivor Greenwood was my next rider and we went on to enjoy notable success together including beating Tom Herron at Dundrod.

Had Cam not been injured in the practise crash however I think we would be having a very different conversation right now!

What's been your best moment to date?

There have been lots of moments to make me proud of what we have achieved as a team including being regarded as the most successful single team in TT history; however my most memorable moment from a personal point of view was winning the 1982 Senior TT with Norman Brown.

How many bikes and riders will you be running in 2010 and how difficult is it to keep the whole show on track?

At this stage we will run 2 riders in road race and 2 riders in BSB. However some details are still to be finalised!

How difficult has been in the current economic climate to get the funding and finances to run your race team? race career.

It is more difficult than ever before although we are very lucky to be part of some loyal relationships especially with Suzuki who we have been involved with for most our our race career

You'll be pleased to see the back of 2009. What do you think went wrong and what shape are you in for 2010?

We did have a very good year in BSB let's not forget. However the combination of a new model GSXR 1000, a new Japanese Factory rider and a very tough calendar logistically around the time of the NW 200, BSB rounds and the TT really did put us under too much pressure. We tried to arrive with a perfect SET UP for both disciplines and it just did not work out for various reasons including some horrible luck! Had Cam not been injured in the practise crash however I think we would be having a very different conversation right now!

How much does the TT set the tone for the year? Is it the most important event for you and is does a successful TT mean a successful year?

For me personally the TT is the pinnacle however Philip has to look after the BSB also which is hugely important to our sponsors and to the manufacturers therefore he needs to ensure BSB still gets equal attention at least. I know the TT has become very important to Philip as well over the years and as long as the TT team keep promoting the event in a professional manner it will remain important to the manufacturer which helps to ensure that we can bring our team to the TT every year.

There were lots of rumours, as always, about who would be riding for you next year but you've gone with the same TT team in Bruce and Cameron. Was there ever any doubt that you'd re-sign the boys and what are you expecting from them next year?

We did discuss this in detail this year although in the end we decided that we had a good relationship with both riders and the fact that we had just finished an under par season where both team and rider had problems it made perfect sense to come back stronger with the same line-up.

The team have a major commitment to circuits as well as roads. What additional challenges does it bring to running across both disciplines and do you think it helps or hampers you being successful in both?

It has helped in principal however there are times like the beginning of 09 when it just becomes too much work if anything goes wrong. It works better for us though because Philip and I can share roles when necessary to get the jobs done. It would be easier to concentrate on one discipline but then again we would find it more difficult to raise the support that we have each year.

Finally, what are your own ambitions in 2010. You've often said that a Senior TT win is the most important to you? Do you think you can achieve this and is that you're ultimate ambition for next year?

Yes without question the Senior TT is my main goal, I first won the trophy in 1982 and as a team we have won it another THREE times since then, one more time would be nice. However with the competition as strong as ever I would be pleased with any race wins. As a team Philip and I both share the passion about the Senior Trophy however from our sponsors point of view any TT win is prestigious.



Above: Happy Days: Hector celebrates the team's One-Two in the 2008 Superbike TT with Philip, Cam Donald and Bruce Anstey.



Above: Bruce Anstey who will again start as a hot favourite for Superstock and Superbike honours will be looking for that elusive big bike TT win in 2010.



Above: Cameron Donald leaps the famous Ballaugh Bridge on his way to setting an unofficial lap record. Can he really go faster than McGuinness? We'll find out in June!



Right: Cam Donald will be looking to get his hands on the famous TT trophies in 2010. Team mate Bruce Anstey is just one of many standing in his way.



Conor Cummins

2010 - Conrod's Year?

We caught up with Manxman Conor Cummins, the world's fastest road racer following his exploits earlier this year at the Ulster Grand Prix. Conor, affectionately known as 'Conrod' lives in Ramsey in the Isle of Man.

What a fantastic year you had in 2009. What was the highlight for you?

The TT races this year were very special for me this year. Two podiums at my home events made it my highlight of the year.

How much of an advantage is it to be with the same team as last year?

It's going to be a lot easier going into this season as we already have data from '09 to throw straight on the bike before we get to a meeting which will help and should give me an advantage as nothing will be new to me.

You first came to prominence in the Virgin Mobile R6 Cup and have enjoyed success on both roads and circuits. Which do you prefer and where do you see your future?

I wouldn't really say that I have a preference. However I would like to think that the Roads scene has given me the best exposure over the few years I have been doing them. It's fair to say though that I do have a passion for the circuits and am striving to build a career there as well.

What was it like to race in Macau this year and go so close to winning?

It's an awesome track to race around. It's an end of year race out in the far east and never fails to provide good racing. I had a great race there this year and feel I was unlucky not to win it. However it was a great experience to ride the Factory Kawasaki with PBM (Paul Bird Motorsport) and I definitely want to go back to win!

How does racing with McAdoo Kawasaki compare with previous teams you've been with?

The McAdoo guys are a fantastic bunch of people. Nothing's ever a problem and they follow up on whatever it is they say they are going to do and the bikes are all competitive. All of which are key elements to winning races!

As someone that grew up on the Isle of Man, did you always plan to do the TT?

I didn't intend to do the TT. I always followed the races including the MGP and every race on the Island with a great passion. A change in circumstance at the end of the '05 season made me reassess what I wanted to do and it wasn't until February/March that I decided to chuck in an entry for the TT and it has snow balled from there really. Fantastic!

What did it feel like to come through your home town of Ramsey on the sixth and final lap of the Senior Race knowing that you were in second place in the blue riband event?

It was truly brilliant going through Ramsey on the final lap. Everyone was clapping and cheering me on and it was just a really emotional experience (no tears). However I now want to take it to the next level and make that top step!

What is your racing schedule looking like in 2010 and what will your focus be?

It's looking like its going to be a very busy year which is great for me. I want to give a very good account of myself in this year British Superstock Championship. I know the Kawasaki Machinery that I'll be using will be competitive so its up to me to make it happen. The roads are a big part of my year and I want to be winning at all of them!

Do you think that you can become only the fourth Manxman to win a TT and what would it mean to you?

Yes, I think I can win TT races - only time will tell. For a Manxman to win a TT is something very special and it would be great for the Island too and most of all for me and my family. I'm up for having a damn good go at it!

Finally, as a local lad, where are the best places to visit on the Isle of Man and are there any local delicacies that you can recommend?

I would have to be biased and say come to Ramsey because I live there. It's a lovely little town at the north of the island with some great pubs and feeding houses. Also around the island there are various heritage sites and buildings. You've also got to try Bushys brewery, Manx Kippers and Davisons Ice Cream.



Above: Conor has proved himself to be one of the best road racers on the planet with fine results wherever he races - including the daunting street circuit at Macau. 'Conrod' will be aiming to be only the 4th Manxman ever to win a solo TT when he lines up Glencrutchery Road in June.

News

Maria wants her TT crown back to go with her new title!

Northamptonshire racer Maria Costello who lost her title as the fastest women around the TT course to Jenny Tinmouth, is looking to regain the honour in 2010.

Maria said: "It's fair to say that over the last couple of years I haven't been in the kind of form that I wanted but when I was competing at the Manx Grand Prix this year I really got my racing mojo back.

"I can't wait to race at the TT again in 2010 and I'm really looking forward to the challenge of trying to become the fastest women around the course again".

Maria was recently awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday honours and wants her TT crown back to go with it. She will be up against Cheshire's Jenny Tinmouth who recorded the fastest time ever by a woman when she was timed at 116.835mph on the fourth lap of the 2009 Senior TT.

Talking about her experience at the 2009 TT, Jenny said: "I had an amazing time at the TT. It's been one of the best things I've ever done and I enjoyed the experience so much. I'm already looking forward to coming back next year for some more racing between the hedges."



Above: Maria Costello and Jenny Tinmouth at the TT stand during the NEC Bike Show.

Honda Dream Team reunited for 2010 Isle of Man TT Races

Honda (UK) has confirmed that the HM Plant Honda team will be returning to compete in the Isle of Man TT races in 2010. The legendary Japanese manufacturer celebrated the 50th anniversary of their race team this year, having first competed on the Isle of Man in 1959.

The HM Plant Honda line up will again feature John McGuinness, the 2009 Dainese Superbike race winner and current lap record holder and Steve Plater who won the 2009 Pokerstars Senior TT and also took the inaugural TT Championship title in 2009.

John set the outright lap record of 131.578 during the 2009 Senior race and will be looking to add to his outright record of 15 titles, which puts him behind only Joey Dunlop's 26 wins.

Steve, who holds the record for the fastest ever newcomer at 125.808mph which he set in 2007, will be hoping to add to his

Supersport TT title from 2008 and his victory in the Blue Riband event, the Senior TT, in 2009.

Honda (UK) Racing will also continue its long-standing relationship and support of Clive Padgett's Honda squad in 2010. Ian Hutchinson will be hoping to add to his 3 titles, the last two coming in the Superstock and Supersport class on the same day in the 2009 TT races.

Hon Martyn Quayle, MHK, Minister for Tourism and Leisure, Isle of Man Government commented: "We are delighted that Honda continue to support the TT races with such a strong team and everyone is looking forward to seeing them competing on the Isle of Man in 2010. They have secured very talented riders who will no doubt be challenging for honours and next year's TT already looks set to be very competitive with all of the leading manufacturers in contention."



Above and Below: John McGuinness and Steve Plater both return to the TT in 2010 with the HM Plant Honda Team and will again be one of the teams to beat.



Below: Phil McCallen is the new president of the TT Riders Association - pictured here at the TT stand, NEC Bike Show.

Phil McCallen rides in as new TT Riders Association President

Irish Motorcycling legend Phil McCallen has been elected as the new president of the TT Riders Association. Phil is well known to TT fans as he is the only rider in TT history to have won 4 Races in a week, which he achieved in 1996. He has 11 TT titles in total, which puts him joint fifth in the all time winners list. Following his successful racing career that took him all over the world Phillip is now based in Belfast where he runs a successful bike dealership.

The TT Riders Association was formed in 1951 and currently has over 1000 members. Membership is only open to former TT riders who pay a one-off subscription of £35 for lifetime membership. Past presidents have included Geoff Duke OBE, Mike Hailwood MBE, Stanley Woods, John Surtees MBE and Joey Dunlop OBE.

The TTRA is a registered charity and provides cash donations to injured riders and their dependents. It also looks after the comforts

of elderly and infirm T.T. riders and provides essential equipment to the TT and MGP doctors and medical staff. The organisation generates funds through the T.T. Lap of Honour and an Annual Luncheon as well as receiving donations and legacies.

Phil, who has already started work, said "I'm delighted to be elected/appointed to such a prestigious position and to follow in the footsteps of some of the greatest names in TT history. The work that the organisation does is a really important part of the TT itself and I'll be doing everything I can to help."

Frances Thorp, Secretary of the TTRA, welcomed Phil on board: "We've got a president who is a real legend on the Isle of Man. Phil is a dedicated, enthusiastic and committed supporter of the TT and it's great to be working with him. He's already made an impact and I'm sure he'll do a fantastic job."



NEC Motorcycle and Scooter Show

MCN Hails Resurgent TT

The Isle of Man TT team recently took a stand at the bike show to launch the 2010 TT races and promote the new travel packages available from the official travel partner Regency Travel. And the launch was well received by everyone who visited the stand.

Motor Cycle News Editor Marc Potter hailed the 'Best of British' in his MCN editorial column reviewing the 2009 NEC bike show, citing the Isle of Man TT as leading the way. He referenced the fact that the Isle of Man TT stand at the bike show was 'mobbed' and praised TT organisers for their 'innovative new ways' of 'selling trips over the Irish Sea'.

He also referenced the TT team as people that were 'not prepared to sit back and do things the same way that they've always done'.

The same issue also praised Guy Martin as 'one of the sport's greatest characters ever' on the back of his TT campaigns.

Regency Travel Sales and Marketing Director Richard Howarth said: "We have already received a lot of calls from all over the world with people looking to come over for the TT in 2010 and the idea of a TT package trip, and a website where you can book everything, is going down very well."

Almost 15,000 people travelled to Birmingham on Saturday 5th December at the bike show was officially renamed 'TT Day'. Fans got the chance to meet their heroes as TT riders including John McGuinness, Conor Cummins, Dave Molyneux and Phil McCallen took to the stage and answered questions from MC's Steve Parrish and Jamie Whitham.



Above: The TT stand was a major hit at the NEC with many of the event's top stars on hand to sign autographs.



Above and Below: 'A Question of TT Races' returned to the NEC with teams captained by modern day legends John McGuinness and Dave Molyneux.



John McGuinness shows his TT knowledge off the track

'Question of TT Races' at the NEC bike show

Morecambe flyer John McGuinness showed that his TT knowledge isn't just confined to the track when he took part in a TT dedicated quiz game - "They think it's a Question of TT Races" - at the 2009 Motorcycle Show at the NEC.

John skippered a team that included sidecar world champion Ben Birchall, Maria Costello and Manx ace Conor Cummins while Dave Molyneux skippered TT legend Phil McCallen, Jenny Timmouth and Scotland's Keith Amor.

It turned into a closely fought battle between the team skippers who both displayed astonishing knowledge about the TT. This was definitely needed as they couldn't rely on their own team-mates. Conor Cummins didn't recognise a description of his own TT history while Phil McCallen failed to identify a picture of himself riding around the circuit.



TT aces John McGuinness and Conor Cummins entertain the crowds at the Visor Down stage during the NEC Bike Show.

