

Out of the Mist: May 2008

Chairman's Report: Jim Hunter

The courage and determination of young Michael Dunlop in winning the 250 North West 200 race only two days after the tragic death of his father makes me feel proud to be associated with the sport of road racing. Standing up for what you believe in, celebrating a fantastic life that has brought pleasure to thousands of us and getting on with the task in hand makes Michael's achievement truly remarkable in my book. I watched two races from the North West live on the excellent BBC coverage and then switched over to catch the last 15 minutes of the Moto GP coverage from France. As much as I enjoy watching the Moto GP stars (we had a great time at Jerez) they'll never hold a candle to the sight of a pack of riders flat out down the coast road between Portrush and Portstewart. Long live road racing!

With change in organisers from Manx Motor Cycle Club to ACU Events limited the run up to this years TT races seems (at least from my perspective) to have been a little more fraught than usual. Couple this with the pretty damning Coroner's verdict into the incident at the 26th Milestone last year and the task of implementing a general 'tightening up' of road closing / insurance procedures required before this years event, perhaps you can appreciate why so many people still seem to be scratching their heads at the moment and wondering how it's ever going to happen. Obviously it will and I sincerely hope that all the hard work that has done pays off and we have a great TT! I am sure all members would like to join me in thanking Roger Hurst and Neil Hanson for all their dedication and support over the years and wish John Quilleash and Phil Taubman all the very best of luck in their new roles as Chief Marshal and Clerk of the Course for MGP 2008.

The Manx Motorcycle Club are working hard to promote the event and attempt to raise it's profile. I think the idea of inviting experienced MGP competitors to act in an official capacity as ambassadors for the event (see manxgrandprix.org) is an excellent one. This year of course also marks the 25th Anniversary of the Classic races and the 30th year of the Newcomers races. I know that there are plenty of special events in the pipeline - lets hope we get a good set of entries for all of the races and that the slightly relaxed rider eligibility rules allowing past TT riders to ride in the Lightweight race has a positive effect!

Perhaps the biggest issue facing the Manx this year will be getting enough marshals out on the circuit. I can't remember the exact figure for minimum manning level (it's around the 600 mark) but I can remember the disappointment at last years Senior being lost because the minimum manning level figure could not be met. Fancy a few days on the Island last week in August - go on, you know it makes sense.....The Steam Packet is doing their bit in offering reduced fares to people who marshal both the TT and the Manx as well as continuing their discount scheme for competitors. If we want to ensure the long term feasibility of the MGP then we have got to get out and do our bit.

Secretary's Report: Keith Trubshaw

Well can the 2008 TT match the Centenary 2007 one ??? Only time will tell really. Last year's event was really good - until the last day when we had the catastrophic accident at the 26th Milestone which has snowballed over the last twelve months.

Personally I feel that the incident was bad but , unfortunately , a racing accident and we must move on. Since then some Marshals have been reluctant to sign on because the Chief Sector Marshal was arrested but this seems to have been straightened out now and I think we are on target for a full turn out of Marshals.

There are two big changes to the Course for this year. Braddan Bridge is finished and is a fantastic improvement for normal traffic. There are two new Roundabouts, one round the Oak Tree and one on the exit. I don't think that the change will affect the Course but just beware

when you are having a run round !!! Next is Governors's Bridge. A new road (but not quite finished) has been built from The Nook to Governors for normal traffic and the TT will continue on the old road. Riders nay attempt to knock a couple of seconds off their lap time by experimenting with the approach which will be different to normal.

A big change for us is that the Travelling Marshal's bikes will not be Hondas after over thirty years on the famous Japanese models. We heard lots of rumours but Yamaha have come up trumps with R1's. I am very happy with my blue one !!!!!

We have seventeen new members :- John Silversides from Southsea, Colin Peters from the Wirral, Grahame Davy from France, Michael Capper from Chirley, W.A Robert from Wickford, Wolfgang Fiscer from Austria, Chris Swallow from Huddersfield, Neil Vicars from Tadcaster, Robert Millinship from Worcs, David Calvert from Gwynedd, Pete Gibson from Anglesey, Mark Parbury from Colchester, Ross Johnson from Lincolnshire, Dave Bosendorfer, John Shopley from Rainford and Neil Richardson from Winslow.

I hope that the 2008 TT will be as good as all the other TT's over the years and then,of course the 2008 MGP will hopefully be a great success.

See you at the TT

Keith Trubshaw