

Motor Cycling with John Savage - Saturday — Bishopscourt ISB

# Hat-trick hero Donald takes Enkalon Trophy



James Dickson had an excellent Easter weekend on the KP Racing Suzuki. Photo by Deek McCoubrie

**Australian ace Cameron Donald became only the second non-Irish rider to win the prestigious Enkalon Trophy, when he led home a one-two for Donegal man Uel Duncan's Honda team, at Bishopscourt, last Saturday.**

The 28 year old Claudy-based Melbourne rider also won the second Irish Superbike Championship race, and the first Irish Supersport Championship event, before the aptly named 'Wizard of Aus' finished runner-up to Manxman Conor Cummins in the second Supersport race.

**Enkalon Trophy**  
This was the third successive season in which the Enkalon Trophy event has been staged at the Co Down track, and only once in the 31 years of the race has the trophy gone to a rider from outside Ireland, when Halifax man Dave Leach won, aboard a 750cc Yamaha, at Aghadowey in 1992.

Last Easter, Cameron Donald finished runner-up to Carrickfergus man Alastair Seeley in the Enkalon race, but Seeley wasn't around to attempt to retain the silverware for a unique third year on the trot, as he was at Brands Hatch to contest the opening round of the British National Supersport Championship, although he failed to qualify for Monday's race.

Astride the Robinson Concrete-backed Honda Fireblade CBR1000RR, Donald grabbed the holeshot, and comfortably led his similarly mounted Uel Duncan Racing team-mate, Scotsman Keith Amor, throughout the ten laps, although less than half-a-second split the pair at the finish.

Ballygowan man Michael Pearson was always third on his Yamaha R1, after he was overtaken by Amor at the start of the second lap, and he finished hot on the Falkirk rider's tail in third.

Kirk Jamison put in a fighting performance to claim fourth on the Jim Angus Contracts Suzuki GSX-R1000, although the Newtownards man was 11 seconds back of the leading trio, and had to keep his head down right to the chequered flag, to get home ahead of Coleraine's James Dickson, aboard the KP Racing Suzuki GSX-R1000.

Jamison found himself down in tenth place during the formative stages, after a coming together with Amor resulted in his brake lever being bent at the start of the race.

Nevertheless, Kirk knuckled down to business and picked off half-a-dozen riders, as he made his way up the leaderboard to fourth position.

Conor Cummins completed the leading sextet on the Millsport Yamaha R1, a couple of seconds behind Jamison and Dickson, and fractionally ahead of Corkman Declan Swanton on the Sky Yamaha R1, with Dubliner Colm Lynch not far behind on his Suzuki GSX-R1000. Lynch finished one second ahead

John Colling, from Ballywalter, finished third in race one and runner-up second time out and also posted the fastest lap in the second race, on his Fifer's Cabs Suzuki GSX-R1000.

**Irish Supersport Championship**  
Cameron Donald opened his account by impressively winning the first Irish Supersport Championship race, ahead of a Manxman, a Scotsman and an Ulsterman.

Astride Uel Duncan's Wilson Craig-backed Honda CBR600RR, Donald led from start to finish, to win by two seconds from Conor Cummins on the Millsport Yamaha R6, with Keith Amor a similar distance back on the second Wilson Craig Honda, after Cummins passed him on lap two.

Adrian Archibald and young Carrickfergus man Mark Cassells had a tremendous duel for fourth place, which went right down to the wire, as Archibald ultimately put his experience to good use, by getting the TAS Relentless Suzuki GSX-R600 across the line, just ahead of Yamahamounted Cassells.

Southern Irishman Shane Connor completed the top six on John Donnan's JD's Motorcycles Yamaha safely ahead of Richie Ryan on the Absol Racing Triumph.

Cummins made no mistake in the second race, when he produced a facsimile of Donald's first race performance to lead throughout the nine laps and win by two seconds from Donald, who demoted team-mate Amor to third, just after half distance.

Amor — who recently won the opening two rounds of the Scottish Supersport Championship, at Knockhill — was ten seconds back in third, hotly pursued by Cassells.

After he failed to finish the first race, James Dickson was a good fifth on the KP Racing Suzuki, while Matthew Percy improved from 13th in race one, to finish sixth in the second race, aboard the Slemish Water Suzuki.

David Finnerty received the Joe Lindsay Memorial Trophy for the best overall performance by a Clubmans' Championship rider in the Supersport races.

The Supersport non-qualifiers races resulted in a brace of wins for Dubliner Emlin Hughes, with Paraic Conway and Stephen Mullan each sharing a win and a second.

**Irish 250cc Championship**  
The return of the Irish 250cc Short Circuit Championship has been much welcomed and there was a good 24-strong entry at Bishopscourt, where there were two excellent races and two new lap records.

In the first race, Ballymoney's Paul Robinson bettered the late Darran Lindsay's lap record, set back in September 2002, when he upped the record from 87.798mph to 88.155mph, and Robinson went even quicker in the second race, in which he hoisted the record to 88.956mph.

Southern Irishman Tim Maher won the first Superbike non-qualifiers race, while Manxman Nigel Beattie won the second.



Kirk Jamison produced a storming ride to win the first ISB race at Bishopscourt. Photo by Gordon Williams

250cc Championship — set the early pace in the first race, tailed by Ian Morrell, from Portstewart, who grabbed the lead on the third lap of eight.

The pair had a ding dong duel for the remainder of the distance, and Morrell held on, to win by less than half-a-second.

Renowned as a 125cc specialist, Robinson made a bad start and left himself too much to do to get on terms with the leading duo, nevertheless, he closed to within a second of the pair at the finish, with a new lap record as considerable consolation.

Chris McAloran was a distant fourth, ahead of Lisburn man Darren Burns on the S-Gas Honda, and Sainfield lorry driver Davy Morgan having his first outing of the season on his Ballygowan Road Racing Supporters' Club-backed Honda, well clear of Bangor man Garry Ferguson, one of the few Yamaha riders in the Honda-dominated class.

Aboard Trevor Keys' Honda, McAloran set the pace in the second race, but Robinson forced the D&P Racing Honda to the head of affairs on lap three and edged away to win by 2.5 seconds.

McAloran drifted back to finish fourth, as Lawlor came through to repeat his first race second, having also finished runner-up in the first two rounds of the championship, at Mondello Park.

Burns took third, Morrell had to be content with fifth, while Morgan was again sixth, as just five seconds covered the leading sextet at the end of a very entertaining race, in which Ferguson was half-a-minute back in seventh.

**Irish 125cc Championship**  
A first lap pile-up, in which thankfully no one was badly injured, brought the first 125cc race to a premature halt, and proved expensive for Ballywalter man Davy Leman.

Leman debuted his newly acquired Aprilia at the St Patrick's Day meeting at Kirkistown, and this was only his second event on the bike, and despite his lack of miles, or time, on the Italian machine, Davy admits he 'loves' it.

He was leading, when the red flags came out to stop the race, but Davy was never a contender in the re-run, after he oiled a plug on the grid, awaiting the restart, and he retired the JDR Properties Aprilia, after completing just two of the seven laps.

Another of the fancied runners was also in trouble, as Paul Robinson took advantage of the delay to switch from his own ailing Honda to cousin William Dunlop's durien.com Honda. However, Paul was not allowed to start, as Clerk of the Course, Sam McMinn, ruled he could not switch from the machine on which he started the race.

William Dunlop was a non-starter, together with Cullybackey man Barry Davidson, after both were excluded from the meeting for contravening yellow flags during qualifying.

Defending Irish 125cc champion Mark Lunney and Nigel Percy from Randalstown fought out a tremendous duel, when the restart

got underway, with Belfastman Lunney always narrowly in front, but Percy putting up a determined challenge.

When the chequered flag fell, 0.097 of a second split the pair, after a titanic tussle.

Teenager James Maguire was eight seconds back in third, on the YRP Honda, just ahead of Newtownards man Stephen Kelly, who was safely ahead of Michael Dunlop, on the Around-a-Pound Honda, and Michael's father, Robert, having his first outing on the Kennedy Equipment Sales Aprilia, which, like Lemon, he bought from a German rider, who contested last year's European 125cc Championship.

The second race produced another epic scrap between Lunney and Percy, but this time Lemon joined in the fun.

Percy was determined to win on the Millar Racing Honda — painted black as a mark of respect to the late Joe Millar, his former sponsor — and perhaps, fittingly, good fortune was on Percy's side.

The leading trio broke clear of the rest during the early stages of the eight lapper, and Lemon led for three laps, before Lunney took over at the front on the KRB Honda.

With three laps remaining, Percy snatched the lead, and on the last lap he managed to negotiate backmarkers better than his two rivals, to make sure of victory by a somewhat flattering 1.2 seconds, as Lunney held off Lemon for the runners-up berth.

Maguire was fourth, while former Irish 125cc Clubmans' champion Kelly took fifth, comfortably ahead of Michael Dunlop.

**Irish Lightweight Supersport Championship**  
Ballyclare man Lee Hill made it four wins from four starts in the Irish Lightweight Supersport Championship, with another double victory aboard his NH Trade Frames Suzuki SV650.

Hill was never headed in either race, although Ballywalter fireman Alan Brown pushed him all the way in the second race.

The first race was red-flagged, after pole position man Alan Glasgow crashed heavily at Dunsfort on the second lap, and took Brown down with him.

Brown was forced to sit out the six laps restart, due to the damage to his Suzuki SV650, and it was Eglinton's Kieron Egerton who offered the only challenge to Hill.

Egerton stayed with Hill, until he tried too hard to keep his little RSV250 Aprilia on the pace with Hill's Suzuki, and Egerton tumbled out of contention on the final lap.

That handed Hill a clear win by 18 seconds, from 400 Kawasaki pair Johnny McCay and Michael McKinley, and Gerry Daniel on another 650 Suzuki, with that trio separated by less than one second.

In race two, although his Suzuki was somewhat second hand after his first race prang, Irish National Pre-97 Championship leader Brown closed down Hill's substantial early lead to get within less than a second of the winner at the finish, but the Ardsman was never in a position to

make a serious overtaking attempt. Belfastman McCay was third, safely ahead of Daniel, with McKinley fifth.

**Irish Sidecar Championship**  
The third and fourth rounds of the Irish Sidecar Championship doubled as the opening two rounds of the Northern Sidecar Championship, which continued at Kirkistown on Monday, with the remaining rounds at East Fortune in Scotland, on April 21/33; Croft in Yorkshire, on July 28/29; and conclude at Mondello Park, in Co Kildare, on August 25/26.

Banbridge man John Clarke and his passenger Karl McGrath pulled a second a lap on the next best crew, English visitors Phil Bell/Jonathan Neave, to win the first race by eight seconds, with Scots pair Jim Hamilton/Malcolm Knox a distant third, in an 1000cc LCR Suzuki clean sweep.

The second race was a thriller, and at the conclusion of eight pulsating laps, Bell/Neave got the nod by less than half-a-second, from Clarke/McGrath, with English crew Ken Knapton/Jason Miller third in their 1000cc Baker Suzuki.

**Results**  
Enkalon Trophy: 1, C. Donald (1000 Honda) 91.52mph; 2, K. Amor (1000 Honda); 3, M. Pearson (1000 Yamaha); 4, K. Jamison (1000 Suzuki); 5, J. Dickson (1000 Suzuki); 6, C. Cummins (1000 Yamaha); 7, D. Swanton (1000 Yamaha); 8, C. Lynch (1000 Suzuki); 9, A. Archibald (1000 Suzuki); 10, M. Johnston (1000 Yamaha). Fastest lap: Pearson 93.54mph.

Irish Supersport Championship, 3rd round: 1, C. Donald (Honda) 90.00mph; 2, C. Cummins (Yamaha); 3, K. Amor (Honda); 4, A. Archibald (Suzuki); 5, M. Cassells (Yamaha); 6, S. Connor (Yamaha); 7, R. Ryan (Triumph); 8, J. Burrows (Honda); 9, E. Haddock (Suzuki); 10, N. Beattie (Yamaha). Fastest lap: Donald 91.21mph; 2, Donald; 3, Amor; 4, Cummins; 5, Swanton; 6, Amor; 7, Cummins; 8, McCormack; 9, Kingham; 10, Archibald. Fastest lap: Donald 94.16mph.

Irish Sidecar Championship, 3rd round/Northern Sidecar Championship, 1st round: 1, J. Clarke/K. McGrath (1000 LCR Suzuki) 85.48mph; 2, P. Bell/J. Neave (1000 LCR Suzuki); 3, J. Hamilton/M. Knox (1000 LCR Suzuki); 4, S. Killough/P. Marley (1000 Baker Yamaha); 5, S. Pullan/K. Morgan (1000 Baker Yamaha); 6, D. Lynch/A. Galligan (750 Baker Yamaha); 7, P. Farrelly/H. Matthews (600 Reptile Ireson); 8, S. Charlton/L. Donnelly (600 Honda); 9, C. Laverty/P. Carvill (1000 Yamaha); 10, G. Kennedy/C. Smyth (1000 Baker Suzuki). Fastest lap: Clarke/McGrath 87.50mph. 4th round/2nd round: 1, Bell/Neave 84.70mph; 2, Clarke/McGrath; 3, K. Knapton/J. Miller (1000 Baker Suzuki); 4, Lynch/Galligan; 5, Pullan/Morgan; 6, Killough/Marley; 7, Farrelly/Matthews; 8, Charlton/Donnelly; 9, A. Johnston/K. Young (1000 LCR Suzuki); 10, Laverty/Carvill. Fastest lap: Clarke/McGrath 87.04mph.

Superbike non-qualifiers, 1st race: 1, T. Maher (1000 Suzuki) 86.53mph; 2, M. Lennon (1000 Suzuki); 3, J. Colling (1000 Suzuki); 4, K. Pringle (1000 Kawasaki); 5, J. Higgins (1000 Suzuki); 6, J. Coates (1000 Yamaha). Fastest lap: Maher 88.32mph. 2nd race: 1, N. Beattie (1000 Yamaha) 85.94mph; 2, Colling; 3, Pringle; 4, Lennon; 5, W. Griffiths (1000 Honda); 6, S. Clarke (1000 Kawasaki). Fastest lap: Colling 88.24mph.

Supersport non-qualifiers, 1st race: 1, E. Hughes (Yamaha) 84.45mph; 2, P. Conway (Yamaha); 3, S. Mullan (Suzuki); 4, W. Cowden (Honda); 5, K. Costello (Yamaha); 6, W. Kennedy (Suzuki). Fastest lap: Hughes 86.28mph. 2nd race: 1, Hughes 83.00mph; 2, Mullan; 3, Conway; 4, Costello; 5, K. Connelly (Honda); 6, M. Jordan (Honda). Fastest lap: Mullan 85.87mph.

of the only previous Enkalon Trophy victor in the race, Ballymoney man Adrian Archibald, on the TAS Relentless Suzuki, who won the trophy in 2002.

**Irish Superbike Championship**  
Despite suspension problems with his new Yamaha during practising, and still awaiting the arrival of a new exhaust system, Michael Pearson lined up in pole position for the Irish Superbike Championship races.

Pearson and Kirk Jamison arrived at Bishopscourt separated by only 2.5 points, after the first two ISB Championship races at Mondello Park, over the St Patrick's holiday weekend, and in the first race Pearson set a pace which only Jamison could match.

Pearson made a perfect start, while Jamison was fourth at the completion of the opening lap of nine — using new wheels and tyres for the first time, Kirk's tyres were slippery on the first lap of each of his three races, before he began to get adequate grip.

Kirk explained: "We changed from 17 inch to 16.5 inch wheels and all my lines were wrong and the bike just felt wrong. I was nowhere in qualifying and I was struggling with the front end."

"Dad [Norman] raised the front of the bike up to make it the same height as for the 17 inch wheel, but you could see from the tyres that I was not even using the edge of the front tyre, and the 16.5 inch wheels are all about corner speed."

By lap three, Pearson had made a break on the pursuing pack, with James Dickson running second, ahead of Adrian Archibald, but Jamison was turning up the wick, and a lap later Dickson found himself demoted to fourth, as Archibald and Jamison both passed him.

By lap five, Jamison had overtaken Archibald, and although Pearson was still the clear leader, Jamison was

fastest man on-track — on lap six, Kirk posted the fastest lap of the race, and was visibly closing on the leader, having lapped 1.2 seconds quicker than Michael.

A lap later, Jamison snatched the lead, and once in front he pulled away to win by over two seconds, with Pearson unable to mount a counter attack, due to his arms 'pumping up'.

Keith Amor charged through to take third. After some barging at the start, the Scot ran wide on the first and second corners and was down in fifth, but he regained his composure to finish a safe third, as Archibald had to settle for fourth.

Early front-runner Dickson slipped back to finish tenth, as Conor Cummins held off Gerard Kingham, Declan Swanton and Brian McCormack to fill fifth.

With the technical problem that forced him to sit out the first race resolved, Cam Donald stamped his authority on race two, in which Dickson also made amends for his first race disappointment.

Pearson again set the pace, but a broken fork seal caused severe handling problems with his R1, and after Michael led for three laps, he was overhauled by Donald, and a couple of laps later, Dickson also came past.

After he hit the front, Donald scorched away to win by four seconds, while Dickson put a similar buffer between himself and Pearson, who had to stay alert to fend off a determined late challenge from Jamison, who again made up ground after a slow start, with Swanton hot on Jamison's tail in fifth.

Amor rounded off the leading half dozen, with Cummins a somewhat distant seventh, ahead of McCormack, Kingham and Archibald.

Southern Irishman Tim Maher won the first Superbike non-qualifiers race, while Manxman Nigel Beattie won the second.



Ian Morrell leads Thomas Lawlor in a 250cc race at Bishopscourt. Photo by Deek McCoubrie

## A few 'Q' tips!

As always, last Saturday's Enkalon Trophy ISB meeting at Bishopscourt was slickly organised by the joint promoters, Motor Cycle Road Racing Club of Ireland and Killinchy and District Motor Cycle Club.

But was it really necessary to keep spectators in vehicles — including some who are disabled — waiting in the outfield to cross to the infield, until all practising, qualifying, and the first three races had been completed?

It was an unfortunate 'first' in my experience. No one with the interests of the sport at heart wants to delay the progress of any meeting, particularly when racing can be prolonged and curtailed by events for which the organisers cannot legislate, such as weather conditions, accidents, or oil spillage.

But while spectators — and some motor cyclists — were permitted to cross to the infield, during breaks in qualifying, those in vehicles were not. Some spectators queued for over two hours in their cars/vans/motorhomes, before they were permitted to make the short trip across the track to the infield, at the start/finish. And when the gate was opened, there was an almighty, unmarshalled scramble to get there.

Surely provision could have been made for a few vehicles to cross during each interval? Irish short circuit racing has been starved of spectator interest for too long. The racing is superb and those who do patronise the events should be accommodated, not alienated.

Nevertheless, congratulations to the organisers — and particularly the competitors — on producing a superb day of entertaining and exciting racing.

But a few 'queue tips' might make tempers less frayed, amongst the 'punters' who pay at the gate. Bishopscourt is not a military base any longer — it's a racing circuit!



Lee Hill has won all six rounds of the Lightweight Supersport Championship. Photo by Deek McCoubrie



Ardsman Stephen Kelly had a consistent weekend on his 125 Honda. Photo by Deek McCoubrie