

Issued on behalf of The Dundrod & District Motorcycle Club

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Gary Dunlop admits pressure is on for second Dundrod outing

Ballymoney's Gary Dunlop has outlined his intentions ahead of the Charles Hurst Dundrod 150 and MCE Ulster Grand Prix next month, saying it will be tougher this year as he tries to improve on his debut performance.

The 33-year-old, who made his road racing debut just last year, recently claimed his first podium spot for the 125GP/Moto3 race at the Skerries 100 after leading the race for three laps before finishing in second place behind Derek McGee.

Speaking at the launch of the Charles Hurst Motorcycles Dundrod 150 partnership, Gary said: "My first Dundrod experience exceeded all my expectations.



"It was easier to learn than I'd expected, I already felt like I knew it well, but

you never really learn a track until you're on it and using both sides of the road and travelling at speed but I was surprised how well I took to it, like a duck to water really.

"I didn't enjoy the first day because the weather wasn't so great and I was a wee bit nervous but whenever it came to the dry sessions it was by far the best place I've ridden a motorbike round.

Dunlop, whose specialism is the ultra lightweight / lightweight category came in fourth in both the Dundrod 150 and MCE Ulster Grand Prix races in 2016.

Gary continued: "I didn't expect to get anywhere near to fourth place, it was awesome, I couldn't speak for about 10 minutes whenever I got back into the paddock.

"I have to admit though I was a bit disappointed as I had two absolutely shocking starts that I can only put down to nerves, and I think if I could have got away with the front boys right at the start then maybe I wouldn't have finished any higher, but I'd have been closer.

"The challenge this year is not to let nerves get the better of me, it's going to be tougher this year just down to putting pressure on myself...I need to get a few pounds off and get into a bit of shape if I'm going to do as well or better this time.

"I wasn't actually going to bother going out again this year but the only thing that's making me do a couple of other races is for the Ulster Grand Prix. It's hard to explain why I love it so much, there's just a feeling about it.

"Every proper road racer knows it is the best track out of them all," he added.

Clerk of the Course at the MCE Ulster Grand Prix Noel Johnston said: "Gary made a great first impression at the Ulster in 2016, and I know he is really pushing himself to up his game this year.

"I'd love to see him get a podium finish and I don't think I'm the only one – the crowd in the Joey Dunlop grandstand gave him an amazing reception as he crossed the finish line in fourth place so I can only imagine the cheer if he places this time.

"Riders like Gary, Paul Robinson, Christian Elkin and Nigel Moore are what the Dundrod 150 and the ultra lightweight / lightweight class is all about. There's still a fantastic appetite both to race and watch the smaller bikes and for me it will always be important to give that it's place at the world's fastest road race," he added.

Bike Week runs from the 6th – 12th August 2017 and include the Charles Hurst Motorcycles Dundrod 150 and the MCE Insurance Ulster Grand Prix road races. Tickets are available now on Ticketmaster.

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Photo caption

L-R: Road racers Christian Elkin and Gary Dunlop pictured ahead of the Charles Hurst Motorcycles Dundrod 150 races with Mark McCully, Charles Hurst BMW Motorrad, Tracey Smyth, Charles Hurst Honda, Noel Johnston, MCE UGP Clerk of the Course and David White, General Manager at Charles Hurst.

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