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Issued on behalf of the Dundrod & District Motorcycle Club

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## MCE Ulster Grand Prix organisers focus on safety with training for newcomers



The organisers of the MCE Insurance Ulster Grand Prix have run a special seminar for racers who hope to compete at the world famous Dundrod circuit for the first time this August.

A group of six riders from across the UK and Ireland have taken part in a half day training session led by MCE Ulster Grand Prix Clerk of the Course Noel Johnston and MCUI accredited trainers Michael Swann and Stephen Ferguson.

The event, which was funded by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, aimed to fully brief this year's newcomers on what they can expect when they come to race at the world's fastest road race.

"The Dundrod circuit is technical, it's fast and it can be unforgiving for those who haven't taken the time to learn it before they get here," said Clerk of the Course Noel Johnston.

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“The idea behind the newcomers induction was to give these guys an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the 7.4 mile circuit, lapping it several times, scrutinizing every corner and getting the benefit of Swanny and Stephen’s considerable expertise.

“It’s even the little things that newcomers to Dundrod, regardless of their level of experience elsewhere, might not expect when they get here. Things like why you’ll need to bring helpers, what parts will be available to buy locally and what you must ensure you have with you.

“We covered all of that and more in the session and I know that the group found those insights extremely useful,” he added.

The newcomers who attended the special training event were Callum Paterson (Scotland), Jay Bellers Smith (Wales), Euan Meston (Scotland), Francis O’Hara (Ireland), Matt Donaldson (N.Ireland) and Barry Sheehan (Ireland)

Johnston added: “The principle reason for doing this was one of safety, and I’d like to thank Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council for recognising why we wanted to do this and for subsequently providing the funding required to bring these young riders over. We hope this will be the first of many events of this kind.

“You’ve heard us say many times that this is the fastest road race in the world and the commitment to race it shouldn’t be taken lightly. It needs some respect, and that means learning it like the back of your hand before you line up on the grid and knowing your limits when you take off down the Flying Kilo for the first time.

“The last thing I want to see is a group of newcomers setting off hell for leather without proper consideration to the task at hand.

“I think the guys who took part will come back in August with the right approach, and I wish them all the best of luck,” he finished.

Councillor Tim Morrow, Chairman of the Council’s Leisure & Community Development Committee, said: “Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council has sponsored the ‘New Rider Programme’ which has been designed to familiarise new competitors with the Ulster Grand Prix circuit.

“The expectation is that this will help to improve the safety of the event as all riders, new and old, will know the restrictions of the course in terms of speed and taking corners. I hope these new riders enjoyed their familiarisation trip and I look forward to seeing them on the starting grid in August.”

Fans can buy tickets to attend the MCE Insurance Ulster Grand Prix and Dundrod 150 via Ticketmaster. Tickets will also be available to buy on the roads approaching the circuit during Bike Week and in the race office.

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The international MCE Ulster Grand Prix Bike Week will run between 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> August in Dundrod, County Antrim. Tickets are available to purchase now via [Ticketmaster](#).

## Ends

### Media enquiries

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### Photo captions

1. A group of six riders from across the UK and Ireland have taken part in a half day training session ahead of their first 2017 MCE Ulster Grand Prix.

L-R: Stephen Ferguson (MCUI trainer), Ken Stewart (MCE Ulster Grand Prix), Callum Paterson, Noel Johnston (MCE Ulster Grand Prix), Jay Bellers Smith, Euan Meston, Francis O'Hara, William Dunlop, Matt Donaldson, Barry Sheehan, Eddie Johnson (MCE Ulster Grand Prix) and Michael Swann (MCUI trainer).

2. A group of six riders from across the UK and Ireland have taken part in a half day training session ahead of their first 2017 MCE Ulster Grand Prix.

L-R back row: Ken Stewart (MCE Ulster Grand Prix), Callum Paterson, Jay Bellers Smith, Euan Meston, Francis O'Hara, Matt Donaldson, Barry Sheehan, Eddie Johnson (MCE Ulster Grand Prix).

L-R front row:

Stephen Ferguson (MCUI trainer), Noel Johnston (MCE Ulster Grand Prix), William Dunlop and Michael Swann (MCUI trainer).