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Press Release

New Cross-Border Road Racing Championship Aims for the Stars

Road Racing Clubs from Armoy and Kells have joined forces to launch Ireland's first ever Cross-Border Championship event on 17th/18th July and 6th/7th August. The initiative is the brainchild of committee members from both the Armoy Motorcycle Road Racing Club and Kells & District Motor Cycle Racing Club Ltd and aims to attract a high calibre line-up of competitors from GB and both Northern and Southern Ireland taking part in both sporting events.

Road racing stars aiming to put their names on the grid include Lincolnshire duo Guy Martin and Gary Johnston alongside Scotsman Keith Amor, Dunlop brothers William and Michael, Dungannon rider John Burrows, Ballymoney's Adrian Archibald and Paul Robinson as well as Michael Pearson from Ballygowan. Also planning to enter is last season's Ulster Championship winner Ryan Farquhar, Wayne Hamilton - winner of Armoy's first race of the programme in August 2009 and Crumlin's Stephen Thompson.

The Northern Ireland launch hosted by ardent bike fan and Northern Ireland MLA Ian Paisley Jnr at Parliament Buildings, Stormont was supported by Sports Minister Nelson McCausland and attended by top officials from both Kells and Armoy Clubs, local councillors and executives from both Moyle District Council and Kells Town Council. Top names in road racing William Dunlop, Ryan Farquhar, John Burrows, Adrian Archibald and Wayne Hamilton also helped launch the new cross border championship at Stormont.

The Cross-Border Championship has attracted the backing of prestigious sponsors motorcycle insurance specialist Adelaide Insurance Services and waste management company Coleraine Skip Hire and Recycling who have already lent their names to both individual events – the Armoy and Kells Road Races – as well as this brand new joint venture.

Outlining details of event logistics Armoy and Kells Clerks of Course Bill Kennedy and Lester Ferguson said: "Round One of the Championship will take place at Kells, Co Meath on 17th and 18th July whilst Round Two is at the Armoy event on 6th and 7th August. Riders in the Kells Road Race Open, the 600cc and the Senior Support Race will all be awarded points depending on their finish positions. First place attracts 25 points down to 12th position."

"Then it's on to Armoy on 6th/7th August when riders will compete in the equivalent three races – the Coleraine Skip Hire & Recycling Open, the Moyle 600cc and the Senior Support races and once again points will be awarded from

1st to 12th place. The combined points total from Kells and Armoy will generate an overall winner in each class who will be presented with a unique Cross-Border Championship Trophy and a cash bonus of £700. The Championship will deliver a total prize fund of £6000." concluded Clerks of Course Ferguson and Kennedy.

The new Cross-Border Championship trophy has also developed into an exciting community festival event as rugby and GAA clubs in both Armoy and Kells have established strong links and set up special sporting fixtures during both road racing events, whilst Armoy and St Olcan's Primary Schools are organising exchange visits with their Kells based counterparts in Co Meath. The extensive range of cross-border initiatives are set to complement the annual "Adelaide Kells to Kells Ride-out" on Saturday 17th July. It starts at the Community Centre in Kells, Co Antrim where a festival of activities is planned from 10am to 3pm with the ride-out departing at 2pm and finishing at Fairgreen, Kells in Co Meath where the family oriented Fairgreen Extravaganza is scheduled to give all who take part a warm welcome.

Armoy Clerk of Course Bill Kennedy said, "The Armoy Club is delighted to team up with Kells to help promote a quality line-up of riders at both events creating a more exciting event for both competitors and spectators alike. Fans will have to wait until 7th August to see who will be our first ever winner on the podium and I anticipate a very interesting and challenging championship. I'd like to thank Sports Minister Nelson McCausland and his department for all their help and of course Ian Paisley Jnr whose support and enthusiasm for road racing has been hugely invaluable. I'd also like to thank Lester and Aileen Ferguson for all their hard work in putting together this 'first ever' in road racing and of course all the fabulous volunteers in both Clubs."

Lester Ferguson, Kells MCRC Clerk of Course echoed Bill's words saying, "We are pleased and honoured to be at Stormont to launch the historic Armoy/Kells Cross-Border Championship. It's another positive step forward for the family of Motorcycling on the island of Ireland and we hope that this 'joining' of the two clubs will continue in many positive ways. We are indebted to our sponsors Adelaide Insurance and Coleraine Skip Hire and to all relevant Government departments who have backed the venture and last but not least the M.C.U.I."

Co-sponsors Adelaide Insurance Services and Coleraine Skip Hire & Recycling also outlined their support for the new initiative. Said Packie Laverty MD of Coleraine Skip Hire, " We were very pleased to fund last year's inaugural and historic Armoy Road Race. Living in the locality and getting involved in this Race of Legends meant a lot to me personally and I'm delighted to further the partnership with the Armoy Club by backing this new venture."

Sam Geddis, Director of Adelaide Insurance Services said, "Motorcycling is a sport that genuinely has no boundaries throughout Ireland and we're delighted to increase Adelaide's involvement in yet another cross border initiative."

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Editors' Notes:

- The Adelaide International Kells Road Race Festival Week-end takes place from 16th to 18th July (Race Day Sunday 18th July). Visit www.kellsroadraces.com for more details.
- The 3rd Annual Adelaide Kells to Kells Ride-out in aid of charity "IAM" leaves Kells, Co Antrim at 2pm on Saturday 17th July and travels to Kells Co Meath. Visit www.adelaideinsurance.com for more information.
- Billed as 'The Race of Legends' the Coleraine Skip Hire Armoy Road Race takes place on Saturday 7th August (Practice day is Friday 6th August). For more information visit www.amrrc.com