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Laverty to return to the grid for 2021

FOLLOWING a few weeks in the wilderness of the World Superbike circus, the news came through at the end of last week that Toomebridge rider Eugene Laverty will be back on the grid for the 2021 season.

After being dropped from the official BMW Factory team at the end of the shortened 2020 season, he will be back on BMW machinery in 2021, albeit for a satellite team.

Two BMW satellite teams will be competing alongside the BMW Motorrad World SBK Team in the upcoming 2021 season, the Italian RC Squadra Corse team and the Bonovo Action team from Germany.

Both teams will be racing with one BMW M 1000 RR. Laverty will ride for the RC Squadra Corse, and he will be combining appearances in the World SBK with his role as BMW test rider. Bonovo Action will continue the successful cooperation with German rider Jonas Folger.

Both satellite teams will work closely with BMW Motorrad Motorsport and the BMW Motorrad World SBK Team. Markus Schramm, Director of BMW Motorrad said: 'Cooperation with satellite teams represents another important step for our involvement in the FIM Superbike World Championship. It is great to have two more BMW M 1000 RRs in the field alongside the two motorbikes from our works teams, the BMW Motorrad World SBK team with riders

Tom Sykes and former Yamaha rider Michael van der Mark. I would like to extend a warm welcome to the two satellite teams in our World SBK project.

'The Bonovo Action team with Jonas Folger is the first German team to register to compete in the World SBK with a Bavarian rider on a Bavarian motorbike, and that is a special combination. I am also delighted that Eugene Laverty will remain an integral member of our BMW family, applying his talents and his knowledge of BMW Superbikes in our satellite team RC Squadra Corse'

'I hope that they will all enjoy a successful 2021 World SBK season, and we are really looking forward to the partnership with Bonovo Action and RC Squadra Corse,' adds BMW Motorrad Motorsport Director Marc Bongers. 'The cooperation with these two teams allows us to diversify our World SBK project even more. They will communicate closely with the BMW Motorrad World SBK Team.

'The benefit for us is that we can access yet more collective feedback.

'The teams are also very strong as far as the riders are concerned. Jonas Folger and Eugene Laverty are not just fast, but their many years of experience allow them to make important contributions to the further development of the BMW M 1000 RR. It is great that Eugene will still be on board, and

to welcome Jonas to the BMW family.'

Headed by team owner Roberto Colombo, the RC Squadra Corse team will be appearing under a new name in 2021 but has been present in the World Superbike paddock for some time. The team has been competing in the World Superbike Championship since 2016 and also appeared in the 2020 Supersport World Championship.

The 34-year-old Laverty is one of the most experienced riders in the World SBK. 2020 saw him complete his first season with BMW as a rider for the BMW Motorrad World SBK Team. Right from the start, Laverty was closely involved in development of the BMW M 1000 RR and brings plenty of experience to the RC Squadra Corse team.

Laverty took his first pole for a few years at a wet Magny-Cours followed by his team mate Tom Sykes, but they were both taken out at turn one by American rookie Garrett Gerloff, and literally had to have their bikes re-built overnight in order to compete in the final races of the season in October, and hopefully the experienced gained during his short time with the German manufacturer will stand to him with his new team, and it's great to see that the talented Laverty will be once more on the grid alongside his Antrim neighbor and six times World Champion, Jonathan Rea. Keep 'er lit!



Adam McLean in action at Cookstown, and he will be back with the McAdoo team for 2021. Photo: Baylon McCaughey.

Tweed teams up with McLean for McAdoo

WINSTON McAdoo announced his team plans for the 2021 road racing season last week, and the McAdoo Kawasaki/Gortreagh Printing team will field two riders, Adam McLean and Darryl Tweed. McLean has been the team for the past three seasons, and in the press release they say, 'We believe Adam is one of the best road racers in the world, with massive potential and oozes natural ability on a motorcycle.'

'He has been very unlucky with injuries over the last couple of

seasons, but hopefully 2021 will bring the results that we know he is capable of producing'

'We are also excited to team up with Darryl Tweed next season. Darryl had a race on one of our Supertwin Kawasaki's at the Cookstown and produced a fantastic performance.'

'Again we believe Darryl has huge potential and we are confident the MSS prepared Kawasaki Supertwin and ZX-10RR will help him gain the success he's capable of.'

'He will continue to run in the 600 class with his own sponsor. Obviously the pandemic has curtailed all sporting events, but god willing, the New Year will see better times ahead.'

Adam McLean set a new lap record at Cookstown leading his team mate Tweed over the line by 3.73 seconds, with Micko Sweeney in third, and there is no doubt that if we get racing next season, the McAdoo team will be a hard one to beat.



Winston McAdoo announced his team plans for 2021, with Adam McLean (left) and Darryl Tweed. Photo courtesy of McAdoo Kawasaki/Gortreagh Printing.

New-look calendar for Irish Minibikes

The Irish Minibike Championship (IMC) has just released their race dates for the 2021 season. The new-look calendar will include a new venue, four two-day meetings in an eleven round summer series, a compressed Snowflake Showdown Winter Competition and an evolving class structure.

Changes for 2021 include a re-jig to the Junior Elite Class which will see the class limited to Pitbike & MX Style machines only. The hope is to encourage the growth

of youth competing on Stock 140cc Pitbike Style machines. Mini GP machines, who were afforded their own class within the championship in late 2019, will be omitted from the class.

Organisers believe that the re-structure will produce competitive classes with riders competing on like-for-like machines and will continue their drive to produce a level playing field for all, regardless of budget.

Round 1; Kirkistown 20th March,

Round 2; Athboy 10th April, Round 3; Nutts Corner 8th/9th May (King of the Corner) Round 4; Mondello Park 22nd May, Rounds 5 and 6 12th and 13th June Athboy, Round 7; Kirkistown 17th July, Rounds 8 and 9 Kartworld 31st July and 1st August, Round 10; Athboy 28th August, and Round 11; Nutts Corner 26th Sept.

The Snowflake Showdown Winter Series will be held at Nutts Corner 30th/31st October.



Pit bikes will have an extended championship for 2021. Photo courtesy of IMC.

Online booking for Cookstown 100

WITH the 2021 Cookstown 100 again being held as a 'closed event' and running with a limited number of spectators spaces available, the club has now opened an online booking system for the next few weeks in the run-up to Christmas for those searching for that extra gift idea.

Club PRO Baylon McCaughey said 'Our voucher covers a full weekend package, which includes programme purchase, weekend wristband and a 2021 badge. The voucher is priced at £25, and you can get your voucher, via PayPal and make payment to Cook-

stown100@hotmail.com Please use the family & friend's option, and make sure to leave your name and address for postal requirements.

Please note, that the one day package is the same price as a weekend package in 2021'

'We also have Annual membership & badges available. Membership that includes a badge is £11.00



including post and packaging, and the cost for southern members is slightly dearer at £12.00 including post and packaging.

Badges are £6.00 including p&p, with the cost for southern postage £7.00. Please use the PayPal address, and again don't forget to leave your name and address for postal requirements'



Eugene Laverty #50 and BMW team mate Tom Sykes #66 lead the start of race one at Magny-Cours with World Champion Jonathan Rea #1 on the outside, just prior to the crash that saw both Laverty and Sykes taken out just after this photo was taken. Photo courtesy of World Superbike/Dorna.