



>> **World Superbikes ROUND-UP**

# Lav is rocking 3rd at Donington

## EUGENE CLAIMS ANOTHER PODIUM

**APRILIA'S Eugene Laverty did not fulfil his wish of securing two podium finishes in the World Superbikes races at Donington Park last Sunday.**

He had problems with his bike set-up all weekend, resulting with the Toome rider only finishing in seventh as he dropped off the pace during the final laps of race one.

However, Laverty did improve and managed to finish third and make it on to the rostrum in race two.

But the rider was left feeling frustrated with his bike and could not find the pace to compete with teammate Sylvain Guintoli, who made it on to the podium twice, and the two 23-lap races were won by British rider Tom Sykes.

Laverty said: "There are definitely things we can improve on the bike. In race one it was really bad, but in race two it was better and it was a bike I could at least race. Certain tracks the bike works well, but a powerful bike on a tight track like Donington it does not really add up."

In the final Superbike race of the day Laverty did progress and was able to out battle GoldBet BMW's Marco Melandri to take the third step on the podium, and in doing so achieved his best Superbike result of his career at

the Leicestershire track. He added: "The first race was not good, as I finished in seventh, and the best I could have realistically done was fifth so I didn't lose so many points. It was important for me to get a podium in race two, as I needed those points. I could not afford to slip any further away, and it is on a circuit I have never really had good results at before so getting a podium I am very happy with that."

"It was nice because Marco is one of the hardest guys to beat out there I got the upper hand over him. It feels good to be standing on the rostrum instead of him."

### CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS AFTER 5 OF 15 ROUNDS:

1	Guintoli 173
2	Sykes 169
3	Laverty 149
4	Melandri 127
5	Davies 112
6	Baz 95
7	Rea 89, 15 Leon Haslam

**NEXT ROUND:**  
**Autodromo Internacional do Algarve, Portugal - 7-9 June**



**THREASIE DOES IT...**  
Eugene Laverty, above, and, inset right, Jonathan Rea at the World Superbikes at Donington



**CONSISTENT..** Jonathan Rea in the World Superbikes

## MAY THE FOURTH BE WITH YOU REA

JONATHAN Rea took fourth place in the first race of the fifth-round World Superbike championship races at Donington Park in the UK.

But there was not much else for his Pata Honda team to celebrate last weekend. Rea's team-mate Leon Haslam was withdrawn following morning warm-up after consultation with the team's management and medical staff.

Haslam broke his leg badly in a practice crash at Assen in The Netherlands four weeks ago and had undergone intensive therapy to compete at Donington, which is his home round.

However, despite qualifying on the fifth row of the grid, his discomfort during warm-up prompted the team's decision. Rea had shown potential during the practice session, qualifying in fourth place on the grid, which is where he finished race one.

However, an electronics sensor failure just before race two restricted him to eleventh place after 23 difficult laps of the 4.023km Donington circuit.

Rea said after the race: "I was pretty happy with my pace at the start of race one but, as soon as my tyre started to go, the electronics were cutting too severely and I lost a lot of pace. I even struggled to compete with Laverty and Guintoli as they came past. Race two was a complete disaster. Already, on the sighting lap, I told the guys that we had a sensor problem on the traction control."

"They said there wasn't enough time to fix it so I went out on a bike that I was really unsure of."

"In reality it was cutting way too much power and I even tried to turn the traction control off, but it wouldn't turn completely off."

"It was the worst 23 laps I've ever ridden. I'm really frustrated after all the work we've done - we struggled at the start of the weekend but made some inroads during warm-up this morning. I feel like we should have been on the podium twice today."



## >> Jonathan MacDonald's RALLY ROUND-UP

**IRISH competitors and spectators have flocked to this year's Sol Rally Barbados and the first event of a week long motorsport extravaganza got underway last Sunday.**

The Scotiabank King of the Hill, which acts as a forerunner to this weekend's two-day Sol Rally Barbados, attracted thousands of spectators who travelled to see the local and international crews commence battle near the north of the Caribbean island.

Amongst those spectators were a large Irish contingent who have made the 5,000 mile journey to support their local stars. They included a group of almost 30 people who booked their trip through Co Mayo's Fly Away Travel, and they were treated to a VIP experience at Sunday's event.

"I wish rallying was like this back home!" commented Wexford's Michelle Stafford, while watching the rally cars from the VIP grandstand. "The amount of people here is incredible. There's a great atmosphere and it's good to be here with so many people from home."

"James Stafford, who won the Carlow Stages a few weeks ago, is also spectating," she added.

"I think he is considering entering next year's event in his Darrian so there could be even more of us here!"

As for the event, the Bajan crew of Neil Armstrong and Barry Ward claimed victory aboard their



**CHEERS...** Irish specators in the VIP grandstand at the Scotiabank King of the Hill

Suzuki SX4 WRC by little more than three-tenths of a second from England's Paul Bird and Welshman Aled Davies, while Irish honours were upheld throughout the field and in a variety of classes.

Eddie Power was the highest placed Irishman, finishing just outside the Top 10 overall in his Toyota Corolla WRC. Meanwhile, his son Keith claimed victory in class M6 in what is his first visit to the island. Navigated by Jonathan McGrath in their Renault Clio S1600, they finished ahead of local driver Neil

Corbin. Tommy Doyle and Liam Moynihan also fared well in their Clio, securing second in class M7, while Martin Donnelly and Brian Doherty claimed third in Group N with their Lancer.

Ballyclare's Glenn Campbell just missed out on a top three class placing in what was his first event with his new car. In the end, his Micra was just a few tenths adrift of class SM11's third placed holders Nigel Worswick.

"I didn't expect to be on such a good pace from the start," Campbell told The Sun. "We were able to push that little bit harder as the day progressed and the car performed faultlessly. I'm really

looking forward to next weekend."

Another Irish crew that claimed a class trophy was the Toyota Starlet belonging to Maurice Moffett and Jason McKenna. They claimed third in class GpB1, entertaining the spectators with a number of sideways moments on their way to the finish, while Danny O'Brien and Barry McNulty - also in a Starlet - secured second in class SM7.

The results of the Scotiabank King of the Hill form the basis of seeding for this weekend's Sol Rally Barbados, which gets underway tomorrow.

The rally can be followed online at [www.rallybarbados.bb](http://www.rallybarbados.bb).

## >> Jim Clark Rally

**MARK Donnelly, the current Pirelli UK Star Driver, is aiming for a podium finish at the second round of the British Rally Championship (BRC) - this weekend's Jim Clark Rally in Scotland.**

The 22-year-old from Omagh, had to retire on stage eight of the Pirelli Richard Burns Foundation Rally but now he feels he is getting the set-up close to right on his DGM-run Citroen DS3 R3 for the tarmac stages tonight and tomorrow.

He had a run out at the Cavan Stages Rally last weekend and feels, after a visit from a French engineer this week, that he should be challenging for some serious Championship points at the Jim Clark.

"We changed a lot with the car before Cavan - it feels transformed," he said. "There's still a wee bit to do but I'm feeling positive. The car is a completely different animal on tarmac, it's a dream to drive when you get the set-up right, but I still think we can get more out of it."

"My main aim this weekend is a podium place. It's the first tarmac rally of the year, it's a long rally and no-one knows where anyone will be until we get going."

The drivers will face two days of testing stages, something which Donnelly won't be taking lightly.

"The rally is notorious for catching people out, especially if the later stages on the Friday are in the dark, but if we get a good clear day that shouldn't be an issue," he concluded.

To keep up-to-date with Mark's progress, visit [www.markdonnellymotorsport.com](http://www.markdonnellymotorsport.com), find him on Facebook (Mark Donnelly Motorsport) and on Twitter.



**CITROEN DS3..**  
Mark Donnelly

