



Royal Automobile Club announces contenders for the coveted Torrens Trophy at Motorcycle Live



Each year the Royal Automobile Club awards a series of historic trophies and medals to individuals and organisations, celebrating and recognising outstanding achievements, technical skills and innovation in the motoring and motor sport industries.

The Torrens Trophy recognises an individual or organisation considered to have made an outstanding contribution to motor cycling in Britain. The Trophy was first awarded in 1978 in memory of Arthur Bourne, a motor cycling journalist and Vice Chairman of the Royal Automobile Club who wrote a column under the name Torrens. It has only been awarded eight times in its history and only when the club feels that the achievement justifies it.

Its last recipient was four times British Superbike Champion Shane 'Shakey' Byrne. Shakey, upon receiving it said 'It's a great achievement to win the Torrens Trophy and be recognised by such an established and respected organisation as the Royal Automobile Club'.

This year, with such a strong crop of potential worthy recipients, the Club's Torrens Trophy Nominations Committee - consisting of Royal Automobile Club member Ben Cussons, Torrens Nomination Committee Chairman and ex-bike racer Barrie Baxter, well-respected motorcycle journalist Mat Oxley, former racer and commentator Steve Parrish and Arthur Bourne's son Richard Bourne - debated long and hard. The overall winner of the Torrens Trophy will be awarded at the prestigious Pall Mall clubhouse in January. In no particular order, the shortlist of nominees for the 2015 trophy is:

Ian Hutchinson

Ian Hutchinson has bettered Isle of Man TT greats like Stanley Woods, Mike Hailwood, Joey Dunlop and John McGuinness by winning five TT races in one week. That was five years ago. Since then Hutchinson has been to hell and back. Just weeks after his unique achievement the Yorkshireman broke his left leg badly. Surgeons prescribed amputation but Hutchinson resisted and has since undergone 30 operations to retain the limb. His comeback is an awe-inspiring tale of triumph over adversity, climaxing with his return to winning form at the 2015 TT, when he won another three races.

Danny Kent

Britain has enjoyed plenty of success in the World Superbike Championship over the past few decades but none in motorcycling's premier MotoGP series. Until Danny Kent came along. On November 8th the 22-year-old from Gloucestershire became this country's first Grand Prix World Champion since Barry Sheene in 1977. Honda rider Kent won his crown in the harum-scarum Moto3 title, MotoGP's junior championship, which launched the careers of Valentino Rossi, Marc Marquez, Jorge Lorenzo, Dani Pedrosa and many others. Next year Kent moves up to Moto2, with the MotoGP class itself his eventual target.

Jonathan Rea

Years of hard work paid off for Northern Irishman Jonathan Rea when he secured the World Superbike Championship in September. Rea had been a race winner in the series for six seasons, but it took a change of manufacturer to fully realise his potential. The 28-year-old utterly dominated the 2015 campaign, taking his Kawasaki to victory in 14 of the 28 races and finishing on the podium in all but four races. Rea follows in the wheel tracks of fellow British World Superbike champions including Carl Fogarty and Neil Hodgson and former Torrens Trophy winners James Toseland and Tom Sykes.

Tai Woffindon

Speedway is one of the few surviving racing disciplines in which the rider's right wrist is effectively connected to the rear tyre, untrammelled by a little black box of electronics making win-or-lose decisions. Not only that, speedway bikes run on methanol and have no brakes! Twenty-five-year-old Woffindon has climbed to the top of this most visceral of motor sports twice in the last three years, winning the 2013 and 2015 World Speedway Championships. The Australian-born Britain, known for his stylishly aggressive riding and cast-iron bravery, is also a multiple British Speedway Champion.

The Torrens Trophy

The Royal Automobile Club has always had a close association with the motor cycling world. The Club formed the Auto Cycle Club in 1903, which went on to become the Auto Cycle Union in 1947. The first Tourist Trophy race was held on the Isle of Man in 1905 for cars - two years before the first TT for motorcycles.

The Torrens Trophy recognises an individual or organisation considered to have made an outstanding contribution to the cause of safe and skilful motorcycling in the United Kingdom OR to have made an outstanding contribution of technical excellence to further the cause of motor cycling in the UK OR to have shown outstanding skill in international motor cycling sporting events in the United Kingdom.

The Torrens Trophy was first awarded in 1978 in memory of Arthur Bourne, a motor cycling journalist who wrote a column under the name Torrens. Arthur Bourne was also a Vice-Chairman of the RAC.

Previous winners of the Torrens Trophy include BMW in 1989 in recognition for their contribution to motor cycle safety through their development of their anti-lock braking system and in 1998 to Ian Kerr of the Metropolitan Police for 20-years of tireless work in promoting safe and responsible motorcycling. In 2008 World Superbike Champion James Toseland was awarded the Trophy for his immense contribution to raising the profile of motorcycle racing in this country. In 2013 Tom Sykes was awarded the trophy for being crowned the fifteenth World Superbike Champion, the fourth from Great Britain and only the second rider to win for Kawasaki in the series for twenty years. The last recipient was Shane 'Shakey' Byrne for his unique achievement of securing a fourth British Superbike Championship.

The Royal Automobile Club:

The Royal Automobile Club was founded in 1897 and its distinguished history mirrors that of motoring itself. In 1907, the Club was awarded its Royal title by King Edward VII, sealing the Club's status as Britain's oldest and most influential motoring organisation.

The Club's early years were focused on promoting the motor car and its place in society, which developed into motoring events such as the 1000 Mile Trial, first held in 1900. In 1905, the Club held the first Tourist Trophy, which remains the oldest continuously competed for motor sports event. The Club promoted the first pre-war and post-war Grands Prix at Brooklands in 1926 and Silverstone in 1948 respectively, whilst continuing to campaign for the rights of the motorist, including introducing the first driving licences.

Today, the Club continues to develop and support automobilism through representation on the Motor Sport Association (MSA), Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and RAC Foundation, while continuing to promote its own motoring events, such as the free-to-attend Regent Street Motor Show and the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run, which are two of the highlights of the Club's London Motor Week, which next year runs from Monday 31 October to Sunday 6 November 2016

The Royal Automobile Club also awards a series of historic trophies and medals celebrating motoring achievements. These include the Segrave Trophy, the Tourist Trophy, the Simms Medal, the Dewar Trophy and the Torrens Trophy.



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