

MOTORSPORT

BRITISH JUNIOR SUPERSPORT CHAMPIONSHIP

Aughnacloy teen unveils new bike at past and present schools

BY CHRIS CALDWELL

THE pupils of Aughnacloy College and Aughnacloy Primary School got the first up close and personal look at Andrew Smyth's mount for the 2019 British Junior Supersport Championship.

The 15-year-old will race on the eye-catching 400cc Kawasaki Ninja at famous circuits like Silverstone and Brands Hatch this year as he takes on the best racers aged 13-22 from the UK, Ireland and further afield.

He is currently a GCSE pupil at Aughnacloy College, having formerly attended Aughnacloy Primary School from P2 to P7, and he felt there was no better way to unveil his new wheels than at his past and present schools.

His new bike has quite the pedigree, having been ridden to the Junior Supersport Championship title in 2018 by Team 109 rider, Eunan McGlinchey, and the kids who got to see it on Thursday morning were certainly impressed.

"It was very enjoyable and the kids really lapped it up, putting their hands up and asking questions, it was very, very good," explained Andrew's dad, Kenny.

"It was class because you're taking something to them that they might not normally get to see and maybe give them an interest."

The primary school kids certainly seemed to have an avid interest in



Aughnacloy Primary School council members and principal Jane Clarke with Andrew Smyth on his new bike.

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Andrew and his bike, grilling the Aughnacloy teenager on all aspects of his racing.

They asked the former Ulster Ju-

nior Cup champion about pre-race nerves, how much his new bike cost, how fast it goes, why he had stickers all over it, about the races, his tro-

phies and medals.

They even managed to stump him on one occasion when one pupil asked him who his favourite teacher

at Aughnacloy Primary School was. Andrew answered astutely, claiming not to remember!

Apart from that one awkward moment, the level-headed teenager got as much from the experience as those in attendance.

"I really enjoyed it, I thought it was great fun talking to the kids," he beamed.

Aughnacloy Primary School principal, Jane Clarke, was delighted to welcome her former pupil back through the doors.

"We're very proud to see a past pupil achieving what he has," she said.

"The kids really enjoyed it, they loved it. It was something different for assembly and they were fascinated by the bike and Andrew's leathers and they asked lots of questions."

Andrew's British season gets underway way Silverstone on Easter weekend, but he will open his campaign in the Ulster Superbike Championship on March 30 at Bishopscourt.

Meanwhile, Andrew would like to thank his sponsors in 2019: Huey Brake Lines; Millers Oil; McBride Lubricants; Risk Racing; Pro Green; R&G; 151's; RST; Pipe Werx; Colin Adams; R&R Kitchens; R Topping; Walsh Gardening; Aquarius couriers; Fast Lane Motors NI; McBrides On The Square; Paints Online; John Beers; JOG Tuning.

BRITISH SUPERBIKE CHAMPIONSHIP

Keith's 'Farm'ing for funds and support at Todds Leap

BY CHRIS CALDWELL

ANY bike riders out there who fancy taking on one of the UK's top short circuit riders should get themselves to Todds Leap Activity Centre on Sunday, February 10 for the first Farmers Enduro Bash.

The event is the first of three being organised to help raise funds to help Clogher native Keith Farmer during his maiden British Superbike Championship campaign with Monymore-based outfit, Tyco BMW.

The 31-year-old four-time British champion has got high hopes for the season ahead, but with all kinds of motorsport, competing at the highest level doesn't come cheap. And even when contracted to a top team in the BSB, he requires additional

funds to enable him to feature at the sharp end of races.

As part of his fundraising drive for 2019, Keith and Todds Leap have joined forces to hold three Enduro race days where anyone with an off-road capable bike can turn up, pay the £33 entry fee and ride for up to three hours individually, as a team of two or three, against some of the sport's big names in an attempt to win some superb prizes, like paddock passes to a round of this year's BSB. The entry list for the first Farmers Enduro Bash, which will get underway at 8.30am on Sunday, February 10, and will be followed by a question and answer session with Keith in the on-site restaurant, is already eye-catching to say the least.

Alongside Farmer and his crew chief, a former top British Enduro rider in his own right, Phil McLaughlin, local enduro star, Barry Donaghy, and former British 600cc short

circuit champion, BJ Toal, are signed up, as is top enduro man Jordan Scott, former Moto GP racer Jeremy McWilliams and road racing legend, Ryan Farquhar, is believed to be making an appearance.

"There's going to be quite a few big names and a good turnout, so if nothing else it will be a bit of a laugh!" beamed Keith, whose championship winning BMW from 2018 will be on display on the day.

"And afterwards, in the restaurant, we'll get a bite to eat and a bit of a chat, which will be good."

Anyone interested in attending or taking part in the first Farmers Enduro Bash at Todds Leap can sign up on the day, or can enter in advance by contacting the Ballygawley-based centre. Spectators can also attend free of charge.

Dates for the second and third events will be announced after February 10.



Keith Farmer, centre, and his crew chief, Phil McLaughlin, will be in action at Todds Leap on Sunday, February 10.