



PRESS RELEASE



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MANX GRAND PRIX LEGENDS - CAOMHAN CANNY

THE 2025 SENIOR MANX GRAND PRIX SAW ONE OF THE CLOSEST RACES IN RECENT MEMORY WITH THE MARGIN OF VICTORY BEING JUST 0.529 OF A SECOND.

For Caomhan Canny that day was the culmination of his racing career in just his second year racing around the Mountain Course the Gleneely man.

The 31-year-old first began riding a bike in 2019 after meeting his now wife Katrina.

He said: "I started riding the bike in 2019 because she had one, and then in 2021 we decided we would do a few short circuits and whatnot.

"We didn't really know what was going to happen. We were just doing it for a bit of a laugh, you know."

Three years later after the COVID-19 pandemic he noticed his times were improving and began competing more regularly on short circuits like Mondello Park before progressing onto the Ulster Superbike Championship in 2022 so that he was able to get his road racing license.

He said: "My first road race I done was Cookstown in 2023 obviously with all the issues that they had themselves with insurance in '23, then I thought, what are we gonna do? Because you only had Cookstown and Armoy, I think, that year.

"In 2023, my aim was to do the National Roads at Home.

"I never thought, never said, never really gave it a second thought about going to the Isle of Man because I just thought it was mad.

"I didn't think that I would ever be good enough to do it.

"We just kind of took it as it was coming and it really wasn't a thought about entering anything in the Isle of Man."

However after seeing some of his friends entering the Manx in 2023 he decided to put his entry in Manx Grand Prix.

Caomhan added: "Once I started watching it and all of course you wanted to do it whenever you started watching it.

"You've been racing week in, week out with a few lads that were accepted to do it, so I thought, well, if they can do it, I can do it.

In 2024 Caomhan entered the Manx Grand Prix completing his newcomers lap behind Johnny Barton in what he called a "nerve-wracking" experience.

He added: "After my first lap, I came in and just like everybody else, it's just pure, I don't know, like ear-to-ear excitement, I was over the moon, just ecstatic."

Despite the excitement of his first lap Caomhan made sure that his first year was more cautious than fast.

He said: "I don't like to push the boat out.

"I like to think that if I'm going to have a long career at this, I can take a couple more years, and I'm not panicking because I'm never going to make a living out of it.

"In year one, I just thought to myself, you know what? I'll go there with my standard R6, it's not going to be competitive, I'll just go and I'll enjoy myself and try and take it all in and enjoy the event as a whole."

Though he treated his first year with caution he still managed to lap at 114mph.

He said: "I thought, if I can do 114 like this, then I believe 120 is possible so going back in 2025.

Heading into the 2025 Manx Grand Prix he ramped up his preparation, first to make sure he was on top of the best machine and second to make sure he knew as much as he could about the 37.73 mile long course.

He said: "I put a lot of effort in, learning and doing laps with a few legends in Irish road racing like Micko Sweeney.

"You're chatting to them lads for the knowledge they can just give you, something so silly and a couple of corners could give you a minute in times."

However just 50 days before the start of the Manx Grand Prix, he suffered an off at Tandragee which saw him hospitalised due to his injuries.

Heading into the Manx, Caomhan was just looking to get as many laps under his belt as he could with an aim of returning in 2026 to challenge for victory.

He said: "When we went there, we actually went there with no expectations and we didn't even care about lap times and what we could do because I couldn't really move off the bike."

Despite his injuries he showed serious pace early on, notching a second place finish in Saturday's Supersport race.

He said: "I had a pit board in Union Mills, so I saw plus six seconds at Union Mills in the last lap but with my injuries I had nothing left in me to give.

"With second I was delighted and whatnot, but as the evening went on, as a motorbike rider, I was actually disappointed with second then because I feel like I had more pace and I was just shy of the 120 and 119.997, I think I'd done.

"I was a wee bit more gutted that evening than I was actually happy.

"I knew I still had loads left in me, and even now I still feel the same but I had no more to give after the one race in the morning fitness-wise."

Heading into the second race day of the meeting, following a Junior race which he used as a way to get his eye in for his afternoon push, Caomhan set off down Glencrutchery Road with the aim of recording a 120mph to secure his place in the Tommy Club and nothing more.

He said: "It was nothing to do with winning the race, I had no expectations to win the race because I naturally thought that Jamie Williams and Chris Cook and the lads would lift it [the pace].

"I thought they would lift the pace to 121, 122, the lap record pace so I thought if I can slightly lift mine, get into the Tommy Club, do it from a standing start would be a huge achievement with the fitness that I have at the minute.

"On the last lap I got to the Gooseneck and I had a couple lads up there giving me a board.

"Once I saw the board was, I think it was plus four or maybe plus six again, and I was like, no, not this time.

"So I really did give it everything I had over the mountain.

"I thought, right, I have to do something here but the wind was really bad.

"It was funny because a lot of my braking markers, I pushed them all on, and the wind was really blowing you back a lot.

"So there's places where I was braking very little and maybe just rolling a bit earlier.

"My last sector was really, really fast, which was good."

Unknown to him at this point, Caomhan had taken victory in the Senior Manx Grand Prix by just half a second.

He said: "Once we got over the line, I didn't honestly know if we had done enough or not.

"Whenever we pulled in, I kind of looked at the crowd and I was like, put two hands up and they were just clapping and nobody knew what I was trying to say.

"I ripped back up and I kind of accepted second and then just as I was like maybe a quarter of the way up the return road I could just spot Micko Sweeney coming running.

"He jumped up on top of me and he started roaring at me saying, 'you won it, you won it, you won it by half a second.'

"The emotions were just mad, I could not believe it."

"What is it roughly at 151 miles or slightly more, 0.529 seconds, it's just absolutely crazy what separated me and Chris that year over the course of the race."

Looking back on his victory, Caomhan wanted to thank all those close to him for his support.

He said: "This is no exaggeration, when I say the life savings that my wife lets us invest in this.

"We have no home, we have nothing that most people want and she fully wants me to invest in the opportunities of going to the worlds biggest road races and I can't thank her enough for that there.

"Not only herself, like when I won the Manx Michael Curran, Keith Richardson, two very close mates of mine who were there.

"I sincerely mean that, I felt as if whenever it was over, when I won the senior, I felt like they had won it.

"Like everybody, that as a team was the impression of the atmosphere around, and it was just phenomenal.

"The toughest one was this year I lost one of my best mates at Tandragee, James Walsh, so it's just nice to look back now on the memories that we had and him on the podium and the winners enclosure celebrating with us

because James had actually been my mechanic in 2024 when I went there as a newcomer because he didn't get an entry.

"It's just that it's great that James, Michael, and Keith were a huge part of it.

"If not for the lads, I could never have done it and Katrina herself, it's something that I'll never forget.

"It's a great memory that I have with a very, very close friend that I sadly have lost."

Following his victory in 2025, Caomhan entered the TT races for the first time but withdrew after practice week, but looking ahead to 2027 he will be back on the big bike and 600 around the Mountain Course.

For the 2027 season he will be running a big bike and a Supersport at both the Northwest 200 and TT.

Looking back once again on his 2025 victory, he finished by saying: "The Manx Motor Cycle Club there'll always be something with me towards them now after everything and how welcoming and how great everything was with the club and winning the senior.

"Don't get me wrong, I would have loved to have won more in the senior, but with the fitness levels and the state we were in six weeks previous, to come away from there with the second and the first was fantastic."

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