

I thought rally drivers were tough. And we are. But what I saw this week changed my mind a little bit about being *really* tough. If you want to know what is really tough, try TT week.

I know I'm not really allowed to swear here, but, f***** hell! These guys are in a different race. Seriously, this thing is a little bit crazy, these guys a little bit nuts.

I was invited to the island with Monster Energy for the Evening of Speed event with some other drivers, riders and a whole load of fans. It was amazing. The atmosphere at this thing was on another level. The whole island was totally taken over by motorbikes and people from all around the world – and they never stopped revving their engines and cheering. For the whole day and a lot of the night, the noise and the mood just didn't change: everybody was having fun and a big party. It was fantastic. When you were in the middle of it – like when you were watching the bikes – it brought the hairs to the back of the neck.

But when the racing came, the focus from the riders was amazing. I know what it's like to start a stage, you go into a place for yourself to prepare – I saw that when I was on the grid. But to then open the throttle and go down Bray Hill at more than 300kph... that took away my breath.

I like motorbikes – I have a Harley-Davidson which I was given after winning Gymkhana Grid in 2019. It's a very cool bike and I'm really happy to have it in my workshop with my collection of cars.

I've ridden it sometimes and had some fun, but bloody hell... I've never even thought about doing what guys like John [McGuinness, 23-time TT winner] was doing. You have this idea in your mind when stand somewhere to spectate. You think you know what's going to be coming and what sort of speed the bikes will be doing – but then they arrive and you have to take a step back. It's totally another dimension to do what they're doing on bikes. The speed was unbelievable.

The bikes are amazing, really interesting to look at all the technology they have on them. And the lap is fantastic. I remember Mark Higgins driving this place in the Subaru, that was something special. It's a shame Mark wasn't here – he could have taken me for a lap!

But I still met his neighbour from when he and David lived on the island.

It was really cool to be around Monster Energy athletes and see people like Luke [Woodham] who won Gymkhana, world speedway champions Greg Hancock and Tai Woffinden, Tarran MacKenzie (British Superbike Champion) and Baggsy (Steve Biagioni, British drift champion). But when Randy Mamola came along, that was something different. Randy Mamola, I mean... come on! I remember staring at the TV when I was young, just watching what he could do with a bike.

The Isle of Man is a very cool place. The roads are fantastic and this event, the TT, was so interesting for me. The atmosphere was amazing and the riders are big heroes, but everybody has their feet on the floor. I love that. They were all just there having a good time. It was so interesting to talk to John and to listen to some of his story, there was a lot of respect between us. We're the same really, we live for motorsport and his son's really into rallying. Everybody there was so passionate about what they're doing and the Isle of Man. It was fantastic to meet Mitch [Covington, director of motorsports] from Monster Energy in America. It's not so often we get to say hello to these kind of guys, the people who are really making the decisions, but I was so happy to see the passion he has and he shares with all of us.

Will I be back to the TT? Definitely! The atmosphere, the people, it's something I can't forget. Will I go on the back of a bike for a lap? Definitely not! Well, maybe. Let's say it like this: never say never!

