

# MAG

#80 APRIL 2020



# JAGO GEERTS THE CONTENDER





ARMINAS  
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The Icing on the Cake



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Kees Van der



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# WINNING STARTS HERE

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**David Luongo**  
CEO of Infront Moto Racing

Dear MXGP Friends,

We have all been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

In such challenging time that brought the entire world to shut down for some weeks, my first words will go to all the medical care people, all around the world, that are fighting the virus and helping people that have been affected. Motorsports and medical care have always been linked, maybe more than any other sport, we all know somebody that is working and dedicating their life to help people, so I wish to all of them, on behalf of the MXGP family to keep strong and I give them all our respect!

The last weeks have been very special and busy. After the successful MXGP of The Netherlands in Valkenswaard where we witnessed the victory of Jeffrey Herlings in the MXGP class fighting with Tim Gajser but also the victory of Tom Vialle in the MX2 class, which is more open than ever, we had to face a lot of challenges due to the wide-spread of COVID-19 cases worldwide and the decision of many countries to shut down their economy and to close their borders.

## **THE MOTORSPORT FAMILY PROVED TO BE UNITED TO FIND THE BEST SOLUTION FOR PRESERVING THE 2020 MXGP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP**

In the last 2 weeks, we managed to postpone 9 Grand Prix that were supposed to take place between now and July and I would like to thank all the organizers (Argentina, Arco di Trento, Portugal, Spain, France, Germany, Maggiora, and the two GP in Indonesia), their national federations and the FIM for their help and understanding in such challenging time.

Here again the motorsport family proved to be united to find the best solution for preserving the 2020 MXGP World Championship.

The season should start again in Russia on the 6/7th of June and finish in Argentina on the 21/22th of November. It will be a very challenging season with a high rhythm during the summer period, sometimes 5/6 Grand Prix in a row. This current calendar

still depends on the politics of each country regarding the evolution of the virus. We are in constant communication with the authorities to be updated regarding the situation and as you can understand, it evolves on a daily basis.

I want to confirm to everybody that the main intention of Infront Moto Racing is to do all what is possible, and sometimes also impossible, to deliver a complete, professional and worldwide championship. Our aim is to preserve the more than 3000 jobs present in the paddock, from journalists, mechanics, exposition partners, riders, trainers to logistics, organizers etc., and to go through this perfect storm with the less impact possible for MXGP.

On a more positive touch, our digital team is working to deliver some nice archives on our different platforms, including YouTube's platform MXGPTV. You will be able to watch some of the most historical Motocross of Nations from the nineties up to now.

I wish to all of you, to all the riders, their family and to all our industry to stay in good health and remain positive.



COOL SHOTS









**COOL SHOTS**





SALLE

SALLE

25

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cam

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COOL SHOTS









**FOX HOLESHOT**



**FAST LIKE  
A FOX:  
VALKENSWAARD  
EDITION!**

WITH THE FIRST GP OF THE SEASON DONE AND DUSTED, THE FIM MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP THEN MOVED ON TO THE DEEP SAND OF VALKENSWAARD FOR THE MXGP OF THE NETHERLANDS!





In the world of motocross, the Euro circuit of Valkenswaard is considered to be a crown jewel in MXGP's glistening history dating all the way back to 1974 when the Dutch track made its debut to the motocross world championship. Since then the Dutch Grand Prix has become a big favourite amongst riders, with many considering it to be a home round, as most of the teams and riders spend their time training between Belgium and Holland.

Coming into the weekend, the competition was fierce, with plenty of riders capable of challenging for the podium in both MXGP and MX2. Many were keen on making up for mistakes made in Great Britain, so getting a good result was more important

than ever and getting the perfect start was one way to ensure that!

The second round saw another wave of the FOX Holeshoot competition, and it was time to see who had been doing their homework since Matterley Basin.

### **MXGP**

In MXGP, the defending MXGP Champion, Tim Gajser of Team HRC proved that getting a good start is possible even from the far side of the gate and it is all down to confidence. Although he got a good jump out of the gate, he was beaten to the white chalk line in both MXGP races.

In the opening race, it was Red Bull KTM Factory's Jorge Prado who claimed his first FOX Holeshoot of the season, and the weekend, closely followed by fellow KTM Factory rider, Jeffrey Herlings and Monster Energy

Yamaha Factory MXGP rider Jeremy Seewer.

Then it was time for race two, and the second time around it was Herlings with an absolute flyer out of the gate, also securing his first holeshoot of the 2020 season! Gajser followed Herlings' KTM with Rockstar Energy Husqvarna rider Arminas Jasikonis there in third, showing he'd been doing his homework, getting his best start of the season so far.

In MXGP, there are currently four riders in the running for the prize, with Herlings, Prado, Seewer and Henry Jacobi of SM Action M.C Migliori – J1 Racing all on one point!

### **MX2**

Meanwhile in MX2 the competition is a little different, with a one rider clearly showing he has his starts dialled!



Red Bull KTM Factory rider Tom Vialle with the perfectly timed starts in Valkenswaard as he crossed the white chalk line first in both race one and two. In race one, Vialle got out first, then came his Red Bull KTM Factory team-mate Rene Hofer, followed by the Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory rider Jed Beaton.

In race two, it was once again Vialle with a perfectly timed start, adding two more points to his competition chase. The KTM Factory rider was followed by Hitachi KTM fuelled by Milwaukee rider Bas Vaessen who got a fantastic start, behind him was the Diga Procross GasGas rider Jeremy Sydow and Honda 114 Motorsports' Nathan Crawford.

In MX2, Vialle leads the way with an impressive three holeshots out of a possible four to his name, followed by his team-mate

Hofer who claimed his first FOX Holeshot in Matterley Basin.

With a long season ahead, it will be interesting to see if Vialle can continue his dominance, or if he will be challenged by the other 39 riders in the group. It will also be interesting to see who will edge forward in MXGP and go on to claim the awesome FOX prize... We will find out as the season continues!

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Jorge Prado	1



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# HOLESHOT



**JORGE PRADO**



**JEFFREY HERLINGS**





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RACING  
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# A TRIP TO THE SANDPIT





**FOR THE SECOND STOP OF THE EPIC FIM MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CALENDAR, WE HEADED BACK TO AN OLD FAVOURITE, THE DEEP SAND OF VALKENSWAARD FOR THE MXGP OF THE NETHERLANDS.**

The Dutch circuit has played a big role in the history of MXGP, dating back to the 70's when the circuit made its first debut. Since then it has hosted a total of 34 Grand Prix's and has consistently appeared on the MXGP racing calendar every year since 1989, only to miss out in 2005 and 2006, making it one of the most historic venues of the motocross world championship's glistening story.

Based in the southern part of Holland, the Eurocircuit of Valkenswaard has seen some big names victorious in the Dutch sand, including the likes of Sylvian Geboers, who is the first ever winner, with other legendary riders including Dave Thorpe, Stefan Everts,





Michael Pichon, Joel Smets and more recent names like Jeffrey Herlings, Antonio Cairoli and Romain Febvre also winning at the circuit.

The MXGP of the Netherlands can be considered a 'home' Grand Prix for many of the top riders and teams, with a large portion of them residing in either Belgium or Holland. Both countries are known as the centre of motocross in Europe known for their incredible tracks favoured by many of the top riders in the world, so it's fair to say that the majority of the world championship riders have spun plenty of laps around the Dutch sand-track.

### **MXGP**

Coming into the weekend, all eyes were on Red Bull KTM Factory of Herlings to see if he could make it two on the bounce,

in the sand and in front of his home crowd. There was no doubt that the 3-time world champion was capable of finishing on the podium, but the real question was who would be joining him.

The story began on Saturday, which gave us all a taste of what we could expect during the races the following day. As the gates dropped, it was the Monster Energy Yamaha Factory MXGP pilot Gautier Paulin with a flying start, closely followed by Team HRC's Tim Gajser and Red Bull KTM Factory rider Jorge Prado. Gajser moved quickly into the lead where he looked super comfortable, surprising many who did not expect to see the Slovenian flying in the sand. The battle was heating up behind though, with the battle between the top 6 extremely close, meaning there was no room to relax.

On lap 6, disaster struck the #243 of Gajser, who was forced to retire from the race with an

electrical issue. This allowed the rookie Prado to take the lead, with Herlings on his tail pushing for the race win. With the end of the race nearing, Herlings put a charge on for Prado, meanwhile Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory rider Arminas Jasikonis sensed a good opportunity to follow and leave the Spaniard behind him as he chased the #84.

With just four laps to go, the battle for the win was on, as just 1.407 seconds separated both riders. With Jasikonis absolutely flying, it was clear that he was on a mission, as he stormed past Herlings and secured his first qualifying race win of the 2020 MXGP Season. Herlings was forced to settle for P2, while Prado finished 3rd.

Sunday brought in another day of challenges, with similar weather conditions that we all witnessed a week prior in Great Britain. With the rain pouring, it was clear that getting a good start was more important than ever.



In race one, it was Red Bull KTM Factory's Jorge Prado with the FOX Holeshot, closely followed by fellow KTM factory rider Jeffrey Herlings and Monster Energy Yamaha Factory MXGP rider Jeremy Seewer. Just a couple of moments later though, Seewer made a mistake and crashed out of the race.

One big surprise was Gajser's top 5 start, despite his poor gate pick. His positive jump out of the gate was one of the main advantages to being able to take the lead early on in the race and run away with it. Despite some creative riding by Herlings, who pushed to find new lines in order to gain on the Honda rider in front of him, he was unable to do so and was forced to settle for P2. Meanwhile having a fantastic ride in third was Jasikonis. The tall Lithuanian carved his way around the deep sand, to claim his best result of the season so far, making up for his results in Matterley Basin.

Also having an impressive ride was the SS24 KTM MXGP privateer Shaun Simpson, who got off to a good start within the top 10 and had found himself battling with the MX2 World Champion, Prado, for fourth position towards the end of the race. He may have pushed a little too hard though, as he took a pretty big fall to finish in 25th. Despite not finishing where he had ridden all race long, it was a clear message to the rest of the field that he is capable of challenging in the top end of the pack.

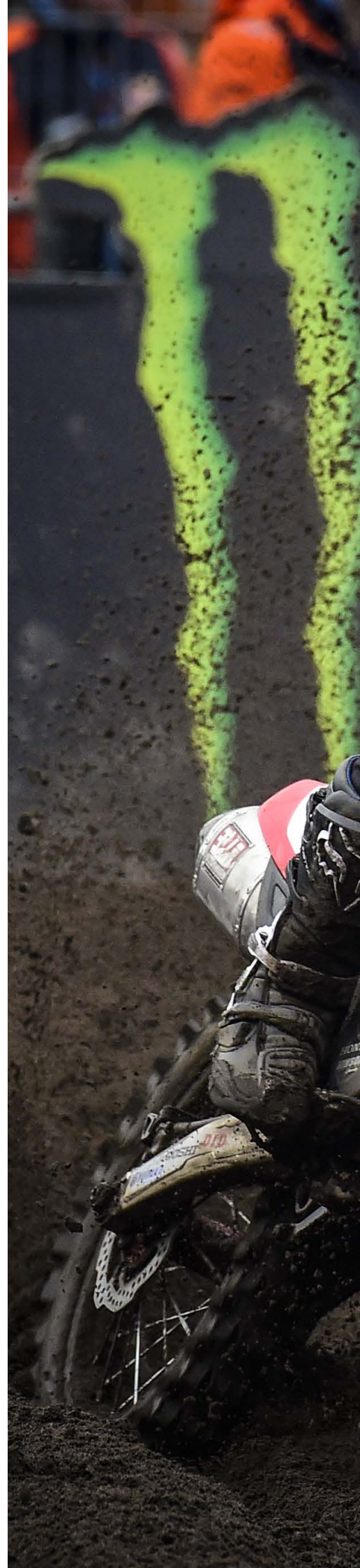
Race two saw Herlings out front, as he crossed the white chalk line first. Red Bull KTM Factory rider Antonio Cairoli followed, with Gajser and Jasikonis there close by. Knowing what was at stake, Gajser wasted no time in this race, knowing he couldn't let Herlings run away just yet, as he had been known to do in the past. Gajser made quick moves, putting his head down to chase the 'The Bullet' who was leading the way.

Jasikonis once again was fighting out front, as he was able to make a move on Cairoli for P3. Pushing not to lose the leaders ahead, the tall Lithuanian was improving his sectors lap-by-lap, eager to secure his spot on the podium. All the while, Gajser had his sight set on the win, as he took a chunk of time out of Herlings, with just 2 seconds separating 1st and 2nd. While it was obvious that Gajser was keen on securing a win in Valkenswaard, he may have been pushing a little too hard at times, as he made several mistakes which lost him precious time.

Keen on making up for his crash in race one, Simpson was looking impressive and his determination paid off, as he was able to catch and pass Cairoli, who had been struggling with a knee injury since round one, pushing the KTM factory down to 5th and moving into 4th. As Herlings continued to lead the way with two laps to go, it looked like Gajser had found a second breath of air and by the following lap had already halved that gap between him at 1st place, and that's when the race for the win was really on. Though Gajser pushed hard, it wasn't quite enough, and it was Herlings who took the second race victory, to take the overall win in front of his home fans in Valkenswaard. Gajser finished second, with Jasikonis able to hold on to third, despite a big crash and a pit-stop to change his goggles.

Race two results also determined the overall podium, with Herlings taking the top step, along with Gajser in 2nd and Jasikonis making his much-anticipated return to the MXGP podium, occupying the third and final step.

With another overall win under his belt, Herlings now leads the way with 94 points, followed by Gajser on 85 and Cairoli further down with 68 points.











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## MX2

In MX2, the attention was on the Monster Energy Yamaha Factory MX2 rider Jago Geerts, who came into the Dutch GP as the series leader. Many were also expecting big things from the F&H Racing squad, who were impressive in Britain.

The MX2 qualifying race saw Monster Energy Yamaha Factory MX2's Jago Geerts out in front, as he got a fantastic start and led the way from early on in the race. Out of the start he was followed by F&H Kawasaki Racing's Roan Van de Moosdijk, Red Bull KTM Factory rider Tom Vialle and Hitachi fuelled by Milwaukee rider Bas Vaessen.

Moosdijk came under pressure early on in the race, with a mistake from the Kawasaki rider allowing Vaessen to move through into 3rd. As Geerts continued to lead, with Vialle on his tail, the two had already made a run for it, gapping Vaessen and Moosdijk. With 3 laps to go, Hofer moved past Moosdijk to secure P4 in the race, but in the end, it was Geerts who took his first qualifying race win of the season, finishing with an impressive 14.408 second gap to Vialle and Vaessen who rounded out the top 3.

Looking confident for the first race, Geerts took first to the gate, but it was Vialle who claimed the FOX Holeshot in the opening MX2 race. Then came his Red Bull KTM Factory team-mate Rene Hofer, followed by the Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory rider Jed Beaton. Meanwhile Geerts was down in 6th, looking to charge forward and end the weekend with top results.

Just a few laps later, Vialle had already formed a 5.969 second lead over SM Action M.C Migliori – J1 Racing's Maxime Renaux and Geerts was already up in third. So, the battle for the top three was fairly close. While Beaton battled within the top 5, his team-mate Thomas Kjer Olsen was making his way back up to the points following a crash in the early stages of the race. Not a position that the Dane wanted to be in, as this is the season that



could see him be crowned world champion. But he rode smart and managed to salvage some important championship points.

Meanwhile at the front, Geerts had managed to pass Renaux for second and was 6 seconds down on the race leader, with Vialle next on his agenda. By lap 9, Geerts was taking some time out of Vialle, as the leader started to make his way through traffic. With 2 minutes + 2 laps to go, the race for the win was on and all to play for. Geerts managed to catch and pass Vialle, winning race one here in Valkenswaard.

In race two, Vialle really showed that he had his starts dialled to perfection, as the young Frenchman flew out of the gate ahead of the field. The KTM Factory rider was followed by Hitachi KTM fuelled by Milwaukee rider Bas Vaessen, who got another fantastic start, behind him was the Diga Procross GasGas rider Jeremy Sydow and Honda 114 Motorpsorts' Nathan Crawford. Meanwhile, the race one winner, Geerts, was about a minute down on the rest of the riders, following a crash that left him winded. After taking a few minutes to regain his composure, the Yamaha rider jumped back onto his factory machine and got going.

Renaux was having another good ride in second, but found himself in trouble, which saw him drop down the field in 8th. This allowed Mathys Boisrame of F&H Racing to inherit his position. By lap 3, Vialle was already leading by an impressive 13 seconds gap, before Vaessen had an issue and was forced out of second place, a heart-breaking end to his race in which he was looking really strong in. Just a few more laps and Geerts was back up into the points and nowhere near where he needed to be.

With 4 minutes and two laps to go, Geerts was already up into 13th and a couple of laps later was inside the top 10. For the following 3 laps the Yamaha Factory rider put his head down and pushed















hard passing Boisrame and Sydow on the last lap finishing the race in an impressive 7th place. It was a truly striking ride from the young Belgian, who with this result was able to secure his spot on the podium. But it was Vialle who took the race win and with it secured the overall Grand Prix victory here for the MXGP of the Netherlands. To make the victory even sweeter, he also took the red plate from Geerts, becoming the new championship leader going into round 3. Renaux finished 2nd, with Geerts filling the third position on the podium.

The MXGP and MX2 riders were not the only ones to take on the challenge of the Dutch sand, as the Women's World Championship riders lined-up for their second round, as well as the EMX250 division, who began their 2020 campaign that same weekend.

#### **WMX/EMX250**

In WMX it was Larissa Papenmeier who secured her first overall victory of the season and she did so in style with a 3-1 result. Finishing second was the number #8 of Kiara Fontanesi, who won the opening race on Saturday and finished 6th in race two, meanwhile the Dutch rider, Nancy Van De Ven had to settle for third at her home round, with a 2nd and a 3rd place finish in the races. Despite missing out on the podium, Courtney Duncan still leads the Women's World Championship, with just a 5-point advantage over the Papenmeier.

Meanwhile, young talents from all over Europe gathered at the Dutch track for the opening round of the EMX250 Championship. Getting off to a perfect start was Bastian Beogh Damm of W-Z Racing who not only was declared the official winner of both race one and two, but also secured his first overall and podium victory and with that the championship leaders red plate. Second overall was Isak Gifting with a 2-9 results, closely followed by Andrea Adamo who occupied the third step of the podium.



# RESULTS



## MXGP CHAMP. STANDINGS

1. J. Herlings (NED, KTM)	94 p.
2. T. Gajser (SLO, HON)	85 p.
3. A. Cairoli (ITA, KTM)	68 p.
4. C. Desalle (BEL, KAW)	60 p.
5. G. Paulin (FRA, YAM)	58 p.
6. G. Coldenhoff (NED, KTM)	56 p.
7. A. Jasikonis (LTU, HUS)	53 p.
8. J. Prado (SPA, KTM)	47 p.
9. J. Seewer (SUI, YAM)	42 p.
10. J. Van Horebeek (BEL, HON)	39 p.

## MX2 CHAMP. STANDINGS

1. T. Vialle (FRA, KTM)	87 p.
2. J. Geerts (BEL, YAM)	82 p.
3. J. Beaton (AUS, HUS)	74 p.
4. M. Renaux (FRA, YAM)	61 p.
5. R. Hofer (AUT, KTM)	54 p.
6. M. Haarup (DEN, KAW)	52 p.
7. T. Olsen (DEN, HUS)	51 p.
8. B. Watson (GBR, YAM)	48 p.
9. C. Mewse (GBR, KTM)	48 p.
10. J. Sydow (GER, GAS)	35 p.



## MXGP MANUFACTURERS

1. KTM	94 p.
2. Honda	92 p.
3. Yamaha	66 p.
4. Kawasaki	60 p.
5. Husqvarna	56 p.
6. Gas Gas	56 p.

## MX2 MANUFACTURERS

1. KTM	90 p.
2. Yamaha	88 p.
3. Husqvarna	75 p.
4. Kawasaki	63 p.
5. GasGas	38 p.
6. Honda	29 p.

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# MXGP SOCIAL



**@enduro\_dipendenti**

We actually miss riding a lot and we're looking for anything that reminds us of riding a motorcycle!



**@mxjuly**

Valkenswaard 2020 - @mxjuly  
#mxgp #allaroundtheworld #photographer



Enjoy the ultimate trip down memory lane, as we take a look back on the FIM Motocross of Nations over the last two decades and relive the best moments that shaped the history of our sport.

Re-live NOW the Best Moments from the Motocross of Nations in Indaiatuba, Brazil



**@motillonquentin15**

What a weekend I will never forget. Thanks @tomvialle28 for the happiness you bring in the @ktmfactoryracing.



Second Round of the 2020 FIM Motocross World Championship took place in Valkenswaard. Don't miss the Best Actions from the incredible MXGP of The Netherlands!



**@yokoeurope**

A few days on and we're still so stoked for AJ! There's more to come...



**@mason.d61**

With @tiga243 at MXGP Valkenswaard!!! #thechamp





**@danielleback\_**

In all the doom and gloom here's a little repost from @mxgp ! Thank you for sharing my face (+crazy hair from this years opening round, never worked through weather like it but it was amazing



**@gettysport**

Taste the rainbow!



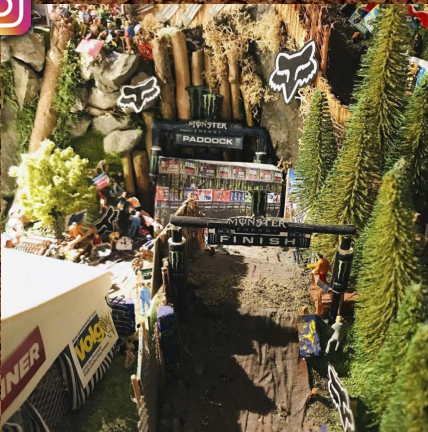
2020 FIM MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

**MXGP**

**NEWS**

VALKENSWAARD - THE NETHERLANDS  
8 MARCH 2020

News highlights from the MXGP of The Netherlands for the race catch up



**@jost9656**

The MXGP of Switzerland is coming together

IN THE WORLD OF

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**MONSTER  
GIRLS**









**MONSTER  
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# RIDER OF THE MONTH







**YAMAHA**

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**JAGO GEERTS:  
THE CONTENDER**





OF GREAT BRITAIN  
MATTERLEY | 1 MARCH







**SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE FIM MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP IN 1957, BELGIUM HAS PRODUCED NO FEWER THAN 52 WORLD CHAMPIONS WITH THE LAST PREMIER CLASS WINNER BEING STEVE RAMON IN 2007. HOWEVER, SINCE THEN, BELGIAN DOMINANCE HAS DECLINED AND EVEN THOUGH RIDERS SUCH AS CLÉMENT DESALLE, KEVIN STRIJBOS, KEN DE DYCKER AND JEREMY VAN HOREBEEK HAVE ALL SECURED SILVER AND BRONZE MEDALS AMONG THEM, THE QUEST FOR GOLD GOES ON. AS WE HEAD INTO THE 2020 SEASON THOUGH, THAT COULD ALL CHANGE AS MONSTER ENERGY YAMAHA MX2 RIDER JAGO GEERTS LOOKS TO CAPITALISE ON HIS LIGHTENING START AT MATTERLEY BASIN AT THE END OF FEBRUARY WHERE HE CAME AWAY WITH HIS FIRST EVER CHAMPIONSHIP LEADERS RED PLATE. WILL HE BE ABLE TO SUSTAIN THAT KIND OF FORM OR WILL THE WEIGHT OF A NATION PROVE TOO MUCH?**

### **The Early Years**

Born in Geel, Belgium, in April 2000, Jago Geerts now resides in Balen, about a twenty-minute drive from his birth town and ten minutes or so from the motocross mecca, otherwise known as Lommel. His father, Herman Gevers was a former racer himself and was even crowned national champion in the junior ranks when he walked away with a 125cc title, but after chronic arm pump problems and numerous operations to try and halt the issue, papa Geerts called time on a possible motocross career before it had even got started. As a racer, Herman raced alongside some of the sports greats, riders such as the late Eric Geboers,









John van den Berk and Davy Stribos, to name just a few, so we will never know how far the diminutive Belgian could have gone had he been given the opportunity to do so.

Unable to race as a pro, Herman turned his attentions to becoming a world class mechanic instead, and as a result, found himself working for some of the best riders in the world, riders such as Jacky Martens (1990 - 1991), Bob Moore (1993) and Marnicq Bervoets (1994-1998), so it's fair to say that Jago Geerts was more than likely going to find himself riding dirt bikes at some stage of his life.

'When I was growing up my dad was not a GP mechanic anymore; I think he stopped around 2000, the year I was born, but he was still working a lot on other people's bikes so yeah, I really grew up with bikes and with racing. I used to go quite a lot to the races and watch so I really grew up with it. My first race, I was maybe 5 years-old and it was at the Kieheuvel race in Balen. Did I win? No! I had a lot of crashes (laughs) but it was a fun race, and that's when it all really started, from there.'

Fast forward to 2014 and Geerts was crowned EMX85 champion with an emphatic double-moto win as he edged out Roan Van De Moosdijk at Hyvinkää Finland, and by 2016, he'd added the EMX125 title to his growing list of achievements as well as the FIM Junior World Championship, where he once again went toe-to-toe with Van De Moosdijk in Russia.

His first foray into MX2 ended abruptly as a wildcard at his home GP at Lommel in 2017; after qualifying in 10th on Saturday, he fell victim to the first turn in Race One. Game Over! A broken collarbone put paid to that. He did however line up at Assen for the penultimate round where he scored a 15th in

race two to secure his first MX2 world championship points.

A change of scenery saw him switch brands from orange to the blue of Kemea Yamaha Official MX2 for 2018 to race full time as a professional in MX2 whilst still in school, and even though there were no real expectations on the youngsters shoulders, it was hoped that during the course of the season the results would improve significantly to show his potential to be a title contender in the making. In short, he did not disappoint and climbed the second step of the podium in Latvia, the seventh round of the season on his way to 8th overall in the championship, but how difficult was it adapting to a new team, and such a high profile one at that, and did it help that there was already a link between his dad and Bervoets?

'Yes, it was nice, but also the team is based here in Belgium, so I already knew Hans (Corvers) a little bit and then Marnicq also, so I didn't need to really adapt to the team; also my dad knew them already for a long time so it was really easy to adapt and I felt good with the team straight away.'

In 2019, he improved to 3rd overall, picked up an impressive race win after a head-to-head battle with eventual champion Jorge Prado in France and increased his podium tally to seven by the season's end. Of course, it goes without saying that his top ten race-finish average from 2018-2019 increased as well, rising from 52.5% to 77.7%. He also helped his country to 2nd overall at the MXoN in Assen, rounding his season off nicely.

### **The Surprise Package**

After his stunning season in 2019 and with more than a handful of riders jumping up to the MXGP class for 2020, Geerts finds himself as one of the main contenders for this year's





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vacant MX2 crown, and after such a strong end to 2019, how much of a boost has that been for the Yamaha ace?

'I had a really nice season last year; before the season I didn't expect to finish 3rd so that was nice and then to top off a good season we had a really good Motocross of Nations with Team Belgium, so that was also a nice end to the season and so I went into the winter with a lot of confidence for this year. I've had a really good winter and most of the time I stayed close to home; I trained a lot in Holland, Belgium and Germany, so it was good. I didn't have any injuries and between Christmas and New Year we went to Italy for one week, but for the rest I stayed here and had really good training in the best conditions. I didn't really change my programme so much, it was almost the same as last year actually, only just a little bit more riding on the bike, but I'm one year older, I feel better on the bike, and I feel a little bit stronger physically.'

In racing as well as in life, who you surround yourself with can make a world of difference and from the beginning, Geerts has had the right people around him, every step of the way. His father was chief mechanic for Marnicq Bervoets from 1994 – 1998 and it just so happens that Bervoets is the Team Manager at Monster Energy Yamaha MX2. There are also two other influential figures in Jago's corner as well; his riding coach and his physical trainer.

'I have been with Steve Ramon (125cc world champion 2003 and 2007 MX1 World Champion) since the end of 2016 and so now it's the fourth year working together, but he does only the bike training with me, not the physical training.'

The funny thing here is that both Geerts and Ramon are possibly the most quiet, shy individuals you are ever likely to meet, so how does this relationship even work?

'(Laughing) we get along pretty good actually because we have the same character I think, but we talk about some things, and it's really nice to work with him. I feel really good with him and that's also really important.'

As for the physical side of the sport, Geerts has been under the watchful eye of another former Belgian grand prix star, Dirk Geukens, a two-time 500cc GP winner and bronze medal winner in consecutive years from 1990/1991. He also has eight GP podiums under his belt as well as a handful of race wins, so he knows what it takes to win at the highest level. This relationship has held solid since the end of 2013 when Geerts was still racing 85's and is now in its 7th year.

Usually when 'a kid' is taken into a team, most of the time the parents have been told to take a back seat '... and let us take your kid to the next level ...' and for many parents it is a difficult thing to have to accept; after all, they are the ones that brought them to that level in the first place, but Monster Energy Yamaha MX2 has embraced this father-son relationship from the very beginning and this has been crucially important to their success so far. Even with Ramon and Geukens, Jago can still call on his dad if he needs to:

'My dad helps me during the weekend, he also gives a lot of advice and he still wants to help me and that's still really good. He also has a lot of experience because I think he's been in the motocross world now for thirty years or something, so he has a lot of experience and he can also help me with a lot of things still.'

### **A Nation Awaits**

When the new season finally got underway in Great Britain at the end of February, nobody really knew what to expect, especially from the MX2 class, which was being lauded as possibly the most competitive in recent history. However, it didn't take long to see where the main title challengers









were coming from and one of them was the '193' of Jago Geerts, who took the first race win of the season:

'Last year I didn't have the best race at Matterley but this year I already felt good on Saturday with the 3rd fastest time in Qualifying, so I was happy with that. I was pretty nervous before the first heat because it was the first GP of the year, so I think that was normal. I didn't have the best start in the first race but I felt really good on the track and after fifteen minutes I was in 2nd and then Tom Vialle made a small mistake and I could pass him, so I won. I didn't really expect that and I was really happy to win the first heat of the year.'

However, it's very easy to get caught up in all the emotion of a race win but it's how you deal with it that makes the difference. As a rider you're pumped to get the win, and from the team side, everybody is also buzzing. It can either be a really long, or really fast two hours between the moto's! Even more crucial is the result in the second race. For Geerts, things didn't go exactly as he wanted in what was a very difficult second race:

'I was happy of course with the win but I knew there was still the second heat, so I didn't want to be too confident; I just wanted to do my best and go for the overall win. It was a pretty difficult race, I was in a really good position (in 2nd) but then I had a pretty big crash and hurt my shoulder a little bit, so I needed to work hard again. After the crash I think I re-started in 10th and I came back to 4th so that was just enough for the overall win. It was still a good race, I won the overall so I was happy but my shoulder still hurt a little bit so that was not so good, but in the end it was okay. I was not sure I'd won, but then I saw that Hans and the team were really happy and I then I thought maybe I've won the GP.'

For Geerts, it was his first MX2 GP victory and the first time he had taken possession of the coveted Red Plate that every rider craves

to hold above their head. For Hans Corvers, the team owner, it was his second experience of a GP win – the first was with Benoit Paturel in Switzerland, 2017 – but it was the first time his team had led the world championship, another milestone during his career.

The win also celebrated the first Belgian victory in MX2 since Joel Roelants won the Latvian GP on July 15th 2012 and the first time a Belgian has won the opening GP of the season since Clément Desalle won the opener in Qatar, 2013. For Belgian fans, it was huge!

After the podium ceremony, Geerts already had his attention focussed on the next race at Valkenswaard, a week after Matterley Basin:

'It was a really good weekend for me, the second race I had a big crash but still came back to 4th so it was still ok – I got my first overall so I'm really happy and I'm already looking forward to Valkenswaard next week, it's one of my home GP's for me, I'm really looking forward to it and I hope to do good there.'

### **History Repeating**

After winning the Qualifying Race on Saturday and the first race on Sunday, Geerts was all set to leave The Netherlands with the Red Plate still firmly attached to the front of his Yamaha. However, that all changed through Turn 1 at the start of Race 2, when he fell at high speed whilst in 2nd:

'I crashed by myself, I lost the front and just flew over the bike, landed on my ribs and needed a minute to really get some air again. When I re-started, I was already quite far behind the last rider. In the beginning I wasn't riding that good because my gloves were also full of mud so I didn't have much grip on my handlebars, but then after a couple of laps it started to get better and I could pass a lot of riders. The track was really slow and heavy so it was not so difficult to pass and I started feeling better and better and in the end I was riding pretty





good; my feeling was good and I could pass a lot of riders in the last ten minutes, and I still finished inside the top ten so I think it was a lot of damage control, yeah! But I was also lucky because Mikkel Haarup hit the bike and everything was still okay, so I was really lucky with that.'

Geerts heroic ride to 7th was enough to land him on the third step of the podium, but it wasn't enough to keep the championship lead. The last time the Red Plate was held by a Belgian was Désalle in Trentino 2015, Round 4. By the time he left Valkenswaard, Round 5 that

year, Désalle trailed Max Nagl by 5 points – In a bizarre twist of fate, Geerts also arrived in The Netherlands with the Red Plate but by the time the weekend was over, he too found himself trailing the championship leader (Vialle) by 5 points after leaving Valkenswaard – a very strange coincidence and a case of history repeating, don't you think?

With the first two GP's done and dusted, Geerts and the team now have their sights firmly fixed on the rest of the championship campaign, partly due to the early-season form of Jago himself but also due to the work that the team has put in behind the scenes during the off-season:

'The bike is a lot better, we worked hard during the winter and we worked hard on the starts; in the pre-season races I had a couple of good starts and also one holeshot. In Valkenswaard and Matterley I had two starts that were not so good, but they were a lot better than last year. When we can start riding again, we will work some more on the starts and I hope to be up front most of the time.'

'Of course my goal is to win the world championship this year, but it's also the goal for most of the other riders as well, but I know I had good speed at the first two rounds, so if I can keep continuing like this, I will have a good chance for the title. I just want to keep working hard and eliminate the small mistakes I had at the first round and then maybe I will be close.'



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**SPECIAL  
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**THE ICING ON THE CAKE: A NEW  
TEAM STRUCTURE FOR ROCKSTAR  
ENERGY HUSQVARNA FACTORY MXGP**



**NEW YEAR, NEW LOOK – THAT’S THE EXACT ATTITUDE THAT THE ICEONE ROCKSTAR ENERGY HUSQVARNA FACTORY MXGP TEAM HAS ENTERED THE 2020 SEASON WITH. AT MATTERLEY BASIN, DURING THE MXGP OF GREAT BRITAIN, ALL EYES WERE ON THE TEAM, WITH THE SQUAD UNVEILING A BRAND-NEW, AND VERY IMPRESSIVE, TEAM SET-UP!**

Featuring an all-white clean-cut workshop area, which houses the Husqvarna machines of team riders’ Arminas Jasikonis and Pauls Jonass – probably one of cleanest workshop areas we have all seen – along with a small hospitality area reserved for their friends, family and other guests. The floor-to-ceiling windows that run along the front and sides of the building not only let in extra light, to make the area look even better (we all know what they say, good lighting is key) but also gives fans an even closer look at all the work that goes on within the team as they prepare for a race weekend.

While we’re all used to seeing these F1 style structures as support assemblies, take for example the Red Bull Hospitality truck, but for it to be used as a team ‘awning’ compared to the traditional constructions that we tend to see in the MXGP paddock, this is something quite new, and quickly caught the eyes of many, on site and online. While we were all pleasantly surprised by the team’s new truck, Team Manager Antti Pyrhönen revealed that it was something they had been working on for quite some time.

“This idea has been long time in our minds,” he said. “We wanted to find a way to increase the infrastructure level for the different weather circumstances that we are working with at each GP, the idea was to find a way to cool the work-area during the hot GP weekends, and then a way to heat it during the cold events, but the main thing was to win more time on actual build-up/break-down of the set-up,” he added.

Adding air-conditioning and heating to the list of the cool features, the IceOne team truck could see a new standard of infrastructure introduced to the motocross paddock, with the possibility of other teams

adapting the same principle – something very different from the small tents that we traditionally started off with decades ago.

We asked Pyrhönen if the team will continue to use this type of structure going forward, he answered: “Absolutely. The team has been super happy of it and also our partners, so we are very positive. I always feel good when our team members are happy, they have been really pleased with this idea and to work on it, so then I know we made a good decision”.

The overall reaction has been very positive said Antti “we have had huge amount of positive reactions at the paddock, social media etc. It has only brought good attention and I think the fans are pleased to see something new in the paddock and still are able to see the bikes and the work around the riders, so everyone is excited”.

While the new truck may look awesome, it does come with its own set of benefits, the main one being the set-up and break-down time. If you’ve ever helped build a team awning, you know how long it can take, and if you’re doing it in extreme weather conditions, well then you’ve really lived through it all. But imagine going to sleep knowing you no longer have to do it, that must be a great weight off anyone’s shoulders, jokes aside though, the traditional awnings can be time consuming to build and take apart, especially after a long weekend when you just want to head back home or to the hotel for some rest. Antti says the new structure gives the team that extra time that the team needs.

“The main benefit is the time we win, previous set-ups (awnings) took always a minimum of three people and several hours on Thursday for





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building and Sunday to break down. With the new structure we only need one person and approximately less than an hour to have it all done," he explained.

"This is very important these days when the calendar is very busy and we are always in need to find more time at the workshop for testing, development, next GP preparations, overseas preparations and eventually for traveling to the races. Of course, you need to sacrifice on the space which we are ok with, we learned at many overseas events that the actual space we need to do our job is

not that big, so I knew we were going to be fine".

### More about the team...

The team still fairly new to the industry, but with plenty of years of experience in motorsports, are spearheaded by Team Manager Antti, a former GP racer, and the Finnish F1 superstar, Kimi Räikkönen as the team owner. The team made its debut in 2013 and a year later was the official Husqvarna factory MXGP Team. Now IceOne is represented by Baltic talents, Arminas Jasikonis and Pauls Jonass, two riders hoping to leave their mark in the motocross world championship history.

Jonass, a former MX2 World Champion, has not had the best start to his season, getting

caught up in plenty of drama in both Matterley Basin and Valkenswaard, where he finished 18th and 12th overall. But with plenty of races still left on the calendar, the Latvian is more than capable of turning things around.

But it's not been all doom and gloom for the team, as they recently celebrated a podium finish at the MXGP of the Netherlands. Following a 12th overall in Britain, Jasikonis was keen on making things better in Holland, and he did just that. A couple of 3rd place finishes were enough to buy him a ticket to the final step of the podium, a fantastic celebration for the entire team.

Now with a small break ahead of them, the squad are more motivated than ever to keep the ball rolling and carry on with making improvements and developments for when the series makes its return.



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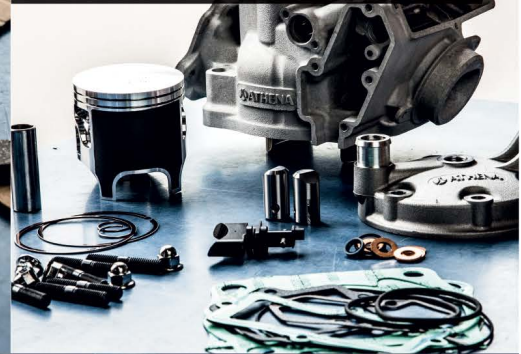
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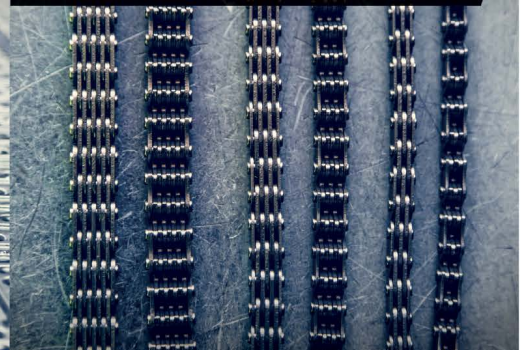
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# HALL OF FAME





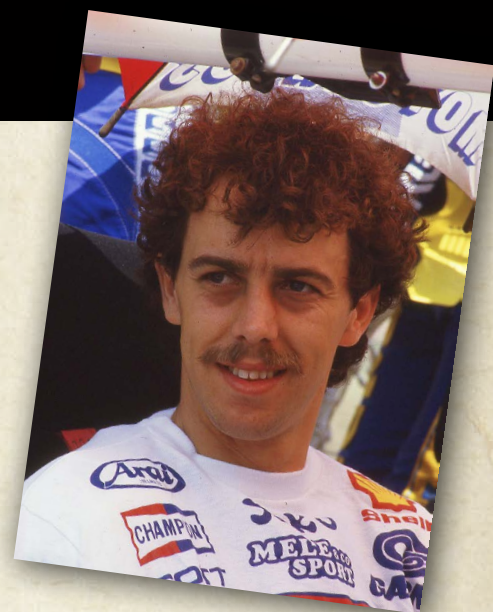
# KEES 'SANDMAN' VAN DER VEN

**KEES VAN DER VEN HAS BEEN ONE OF THE TOP RIDERS IN THE 80'S, WINNING A TOTAL OF EIGHTEEN GRAND PRIX IN ALL CLASSES AND CLAIMING A TOTAL OF SIX MEDALS IN THE 125CC, 250CC AND 500CC FIM MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS.**

Considered as one of the best sand riders in the history, the smart Dutchman never claimed a world title as a rider, but finally got several as a team manager after he retired from racing in 1992.

Born on 16th June 1957 in Bakel, Kees and his parents discovered Motocross thanks to one of their neighbours, Frans Sigmans, who was racing GP's and was also a local hero! To support him the Van der Ven family travelled to local races in St Anthonis, Venray, Erp or Valkenswaard when he was racing in the Netherlands, and one day Kees also got a bike to practice and finally entered his first race on a 50cc Sachs when he was fourteen years old. With the support of his family and friends Kees moved successfully to the 125cc class and later the 250cc with a friend as mechanic, while his brothers Toon and Jan helped him as suspension technician and timekeeper. In 1978 Kees clinched his first Dutch title and entered the first two GP's of his career, scoring five points in Austria.

With a better support from the Dutch Maico importer, Kees was able to enter the 250cc



World Championship in 1979 and was the rookie of the year with a GP win in Finland and a final top five position in the series. He was also selected by the Dutch team for the Trophy of Nations and he finished on the podium, and he won another Dutch title – the second of a total of ten during his career – in his first season as a pro rider.

In 1980 he confirmed his potential and his sand abilities when he won again in Hyvinkaa, Finland, and added two more GP victories to his records, one in Poland and another one at his home GP in Hengelo. That year he finished second of the series and signed with KTM for the following seasons. He managed to finish on the podium at a regular basis and he also won several GP's every season, which helped him finish third in the 250cc Motocross World Championship for three years in a row.

His first attempt at the famous 'Enduro du Touquet' was not successful and he retired from that race with broken



vertebras, but he would come back stronger and would dominate this prestigious event with five wins in a row from 1982 to 1986!

In 1984 Kees raced the 125cc Motocross World Championship for the first time and added another silver medal to his profile. That year he also won two events with the Dutch team, the Cup of Nations and the ISDE – Six Days Enduro – organised in Assen. After another season in the 125cc class, Kees finally moved to the 500cc category in 1986 and on 4th May he became the first ever 'Mister 875' as he won the 500cc GP of Sweden in Vimmerby after several 250cc and 125cc victories!

In 1987 Kees was back on the final podium of the World Championship and he continued racing the 500 GP's during several seasons. In 1989 he won his last GP in Sweden and his tenth Dutch title in 1990. Van der Ven retired from professional racing in 1992, but remained involved in the sport as he created the Champ KTM team with the official support of the factory. Representing them in the 125cc class, he brought three World titles to the company with Grant Langston (2000), Steve Ramon (2003) and Ben Townley (2004).

Text & Photos: Pascal Haudiquert

- 1976 -** 27th in the 250 World Championship (Maico).  
Dutch 250 champion
- 1979:** 5th in the 250 World Championship (Maico).  
Winner of 1GP  
Dutch 250 champion  
3rd at the Trophy of Nations with the Dutch Team
- 1980:** 2nd in the 250 World Championship (Maico).  
Winner of 3GP's  
Dutch 250 champion
- 1981:** 3rd in the 250 World Championship (KTM).  
Winner of 2 GP's  
Dutch 250 champion  
3rd at the Trophy of Nations with the Dutch Team
- 1982:** 3rd in the 250 World Championship (KTM).  
Winner of 3 GP's  
Dutch 250 champion
- 1983:** 3rd in the 250 World Championship (KTM).  
Winner of 1 GP  
Dutch 250 champion
- 1984:** 3rd in the 125 World Championship (KTM).  
Winner of 3 GP's  
Winner of the Enduro du Touquet  
Winner of the ISDE with the Dutch Team  
Winner of the Cup of Nations (125 class) with the Dutch Team
- 1985:** 4th in the 125 World Championship (KTM).  
Winner of 1 GP  
Dutch 500 champion  
Winner of the Enduro du Touquet  
2nd at the MX of Nations with the Dutch Team
- 1986:** 5th in the 500 World Championship (KTM).  
Winner of 1 GP  
Dutch 500 champion  
Winner of the Enduro du Touquet
- 1987:** 3rd in the 500 WC (KTM).  
Winner of 2 GP's  
2nd at the MX of Nations with the Dutch Team
- 1988:** 4th in the 500 World Championship (KTM)  
Dutch 500 champion
- 1989:** 8th in the 500 WC (KTM). Winner of 1 GP
- 1990:** 7th in the 500 World Championship (Honda)  
Dutch 500 champion
- 1991:** 13th in the 500 World Championship (Honda)
- 1992:** 32nd in the 500 World Championship (Honda)



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# Paddock Talks







- 1 Julien Lieber onboard his Honda machine ready at Valkenswaard
- 2 Photo time! Valentin Guillod giving his best 'model' pose...
- 3 Exciting news! Yamaha joins the MXGP Family as the official ATV and SSV Partner
- 4 Thumbs up for a good show! MXGP's very own, Paul Malin and Lisa Leyland were joined in the Studio Show by F&H Racing's Mikkel Haarup & Monster Energy Yamaha Factory MX2 Team Owner, Hans Corvers...



- 5 Happy Team! All smiles from the on-site Medical team.
- 6 Are you ready for the Monster Energy FIM Motocross of Nations? The team were onsite in Valkenswaard to promote the most epic race of the season.
- 7 MXGP Fans are the best! Crowds rolled into the paddock to check out all the new team set-ups and bikes.
- 8 A special message for Brian Moreau from their orange family in Europe!
- 9 It's always great having former football player and MXGP unconditional fan Sami Hyypia among us!





**SPECIAL  
FEATURE**



# **GREG ALBERTYN 1992 HONDA CR125**

**GREG ALBERTYN IS A 3-TIME FIM MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPION FROM JOHANNESBURG IN SOUTH AFRICA. IN 1990 HE TRIED HIS HANDS IN THE OCCASIONAL 125CC GRAND PRIX SERIES, SCORING POINTS IN HOLLAND AND PORTUGAL AS A 17-YEAR OLD ON A PRIVATE KAWASAKI.**





In 1991 Albertyn landed a ride with Venko Honda and rounded out the season tenth overall. The following season he was crowned world champion for the first time, and it's his 1992 Honda CR125 that we will feature in this issue of MXGP Magazine.

Greg Albertyn's journey to Europe began at the end of 1989 when he was invited to race four of the most popular indoor supercross races in Paris, Geneva, Maastricht and Antwerp. The team he raced for was a bike dealership out of Belgium by the name of FVM Missotten Motoren, run by Eddie and Philippe Missotten, who promised him a shot at some GP's the following season, depending on how he did in those four

events. He obviously did okay as he lined up behind the gate in Italy to experience his first ever world championship race. He barely qualified and finished just outside the points when it came to Sunday's races, but a week later in Holland, he not only qualified well, he also ended the day with 6-5 results, good enough for 5th overall.

At the following round in Czechoslovakia, he broke his wrist and sat out the remainder of the season, before lining up at the final GP in Portugal where he collected a couple of points. From there, Albee headed back to South Africa and waited for news of some kind of deal for the following season, but it never quite panned out that way, as he recalls:

I went back home at the end of 1990 with nothing, I had no

ride, no opportunities; nothing was going on and I was very disillusioned, not sure if I even had anything for the following year. The next minute this fax came through from Venko Honda, but because it was a Dutch team and had Dutch sponsors, they were looking for a rider who could race the Dutch championship and do well. Jan de Groot had seen me do well in that one ride in Halle at the GP, and he realised that I could potentially be a candidate for them, but GP's was secondary. The primary thing was that I could ride the Dutch championship for him, so yeah, he hired me then to do the Dutch championship as well as the GP's.

### **Take Two**

Greg's first impressions of his 1991 Honda settled his nerves immediately, and of course it helped that Jan de Groot 'was an excellent tuner, and that bike was just really, really quick and good









to ride and a lot of fun ..' compared to the Kawasaki, which 'was good, but it was all or nothing; it was like a light switch man, it was either full-on, or full-off. It was a little more-tricky to ride, for sure.' For now, it seemed that 'Albee' had found his new racing home and was keen to crack on with the season. After two 3rd place finishes and two visits to the podium, he ended the year 8th overall, but lost out in a 3-way tie and was classified as 10th, but he'd gained massively in confidence and was keen for more of the same in 1992.

With Honda releasing an all-new CR125 in 1990, the '91 and '92 bikes were very similar, albeit for one or two revisions here and there, but for 1992, it would appear there were quite a few upgrades from fairly high places, as Greg's mechanic, Ian Harrison recalls:

'We used HRC kits in combination with Jan's porting. Other HRC parts included the piston, cylinder head and gear box where 1st and 2nd gears were longer. The rest of the gears were stock. The con rod and crank were stock and balanced by Jan. We also used some 250 parts, like the 38mm Keihin carburettor that came standard on the 1992 CR250 and we also used the gas tank, sub-frame and plastic from the 250 on the 125. Jan and I welded the different mounts on for this to work. These modifications made it to the 1993 production bike. The 250 sub-frame and air box really helped the power down low from what I remember. We also used Elf race fuel, and that stuff was insane. We tried many reed blocks but, in the end, we opted for the stock one. When it came to handling, we ran Showa kit suspension and we had three sets for the season, to cover practicing and racing. Our wheels and brakes were all stock and all the bolts, axles and fasteners were also stock, and we were the only team running Bridgestone Tyres, which were also good. Finally, when it came to exhaust pipes and silencers, Greg preferred standard, even though we tried at least twenty different pipes'.

As for the performance, the bike was still very quick although not









too dissimilar to the '91 bike that he raced:

'I don't think there was a huge noticeable difference on the bike, but for me personally there was a huge difference in my confidence level, because I think I got 2 podiums in '91, with the turning point coming in Japan at the final round where I led for about 20-25 minutes. That's when I thought 'I can do this' so I went into the '92 season with good confidence and preparation. As for the bike though, any 125 doesn't really have much bottom at all, right, it's all mid-top, but it was definitely a more rideable bike, just great, but as Ian said, and I will never forget the one day we tested 20 pipes, and every time we'd go back to the stock one for a base line, and at the end of those 20 pipes the stock one was still the best. It was just a good bike, there's no question about it, I thought it was a pretty good bike, it handled well and **cornering was good.**'

### **Going for Gold**

Greg's teammate for 1992 was Dave Strijbos, and the two spent the winter in South Africa and were able to ride almost every day, unlike most of the other European riders who struggled to ride due to poor weather conditions, so it goes without saying that both riders were very well prepared going into the first GP in Spain at Jerez. For Albee, it was a dream start, going 2-2-1 for his first race win and overall victory on the same day. Before long though, he knew he was in a 3-way battle with Strijbos and his fellow countryman, Pedro Tragter. By Round 6, Albee had scored just three race wins and was now 3rd in the championship on 258 points, as Tragter led the way on 289, with Stijbos on 265. But then, Albertyn suddenly caught fire, and from the next two rounds in Czechoslovakia and Poland, he won five races in a row, and with it, took a commanding 36-point lead, with four rounds remaining.

By the time the 125cc GP circus had arrived at Mill in Holland for the penultimate round, Albee still led, but with a handful of Dutch sand flies eager to impress the home crowd,





the series leader was in real danger of being reeled in. However, with a blatant display of authority, the Honda rider stormed the sands to win the overall with a 1-3-1 as he put in one of his finest performances of the season, and his lead was now 59 points over Stribos, with 60 points still up for grabs. Had he scored one more point, he'd have been world champion with a round to go:

'Yeah, 59 points! I was 1-point shy of wrapping up the championship! It was huge you know because we were actually supposed to have been in Brazil that week but the GP got cancelled and they ended up switching to Mill, and the Dutch guys, they all thought 'ok, here's our opportunity to take the championship back' but I ended up riding really well.'

A week later in Japan, Greg Albertyn was crowned world champion at Suzuka and became the first South African to win a

world motocross championship, his 6th place finish enough to bring the title home, although with so much at stake you can only imagine the amount of pressure that built up prior to the first race. It must have been a huge relief when it was all over?

'What a weight off my shoulders; nobody from South Africa or Africa had ever won a world championship, this is all I'd ever dreamed off since I was 12. It was just such a huge, huge moment to wrap it up. It was an absolutely incredible feeling.'

On his way to the world championship, Greg Albertyn won 11 races, finished 2nd six times and 3rd on four occasions. He also took 4 GP wins, one 2nd and two 3rd places. From the outside looking in you would say the Venko JHK Honda Team he raced for was a private effort, but with all those HRC hard parts, surely there's an argument for being more of a factory team, right?

'I think Pedro Tragter may have been given some factory parts and stuff like that, but we were a hundred percent private! I think almost anything we got was purchased, even if it was Showa Suspension, it was just suspension that we purchased. I think, it was only in '93 that Honda actually gave us a few cranks and that and sponsored us with cranks because up until then Jan was buying everything.'

And if there was a stand-out moment from the year, other than winning the title?

'I will never forget Czechoslovakia; you know when you have those moments when you are so in the zone, you can literally feel every little pebble, every clod of dirt, your timing is so perfect that you hit the same spot every single lap? Czechoslovakia was one of those days and I remember it to this day; it was like I was perfection that day, and I won all three motos!'

Photos: Haudiquert



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