

#81 MAY 2020

EUROPEAN MOTOCROSS CH

THE NEXT GENERATION





ARMINAS
JASIKONIS



PAULS
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WORLD POWER

JED
BEATON



KAY
DE WOLF



THOMAS
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GOES INTO EVERY EXHAUST WE
MAKE PERFORM BETTER.



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Kiara Fontanesi



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Corrado Mad...



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World Trade Center II
Rte de Pré-Bois 29
1215 Geneva 15 Airport
Switzerland

MXGP Mag #81 May 2020

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WINNING STARTS HERE

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David Luongo
CEO of Infront Moto Racing

Dear MXGP Friends,

First of all, I hope all of you and your family, beloved, friends are in good health.

The last months have been probably the most challenging ones for the world since a very long time. Up to now half of the people in the world are forced to stay home to fight the propagation of the virus. We have been obliged to modify our way of life drastically. We are missing our past life but the indications in many countries are showing that the peak should be behind us and that the upcoming weeks, months will be more positive.

For sure, in such time we are realizing that the things we love are missing, going out freely, having dinner with friends, visiting our family, traveling across the world, practicing our favorite sport and for sure watching or attending professional sport events. MXGP is no exception to this state and we cannot wait to come back to our normal life when we were listening to laughs, engines revving and fans screaming!

We managed during the last months, thanks to all the different organizers, federations and governments, to postpone more than 10 Grand Prix. This is the first time ever and we witnessed a fantastic collaboration between

WE CANNOT WAIT TO COME BACK TO OUR NORMAL LIFE WHEN WE WERE LISTENING TO LAUGHS, ENGINES REVING AND FANS SCREAMING!

all the stakeholders to find the best way to deliver the FIM MXGP World Championship in the best way possible. Unfortunately, we still depend on the regulations and choices of the different governments regarding the timing of re-opening of the economy and the fact to organize again activities with mass spectators sport event. We are on a more positive dynamic right now with the decrease of the new cases in many countries but probably that more changes will come in the future to adapt the championship.

Related to the above, I would like to thank again the FIM, all the National Federations, the different organizers, but also all our manufacturers, teams and partners for their comprehension, help and motivation to deliver the best to the fans.

The championship should start again in Russia on the 4/5th of July and end in Argentina on the 21/22th

of November, but those dates are still depending on the different restriction about traveling and the end of the shutdown country per country. About this matter I strongly advise you to listen the official release from FIM and Infront Moto Racing and not listen to rumors.

The Monster Energy Motocross of Nations taking place on the 26/27th of September in one of the most prestigious tracks in the world, Emée in France will also be very special and we cannot wait to celebrate a kind of revival all together!

On another hand the Infront Moto Racing media team developed a live studio show that takes place weekly on our different social platforms to interview riders, team managers and MXGP personalities during the shutdown. They talk about their daily routine during the shutdown and the way they are training and preparing themselves to the reopening.

I can assure you that all our team is ready and motivated to arrive to the end of such challenging time to deliver what will probably be the most intense MXGP Championship ever.

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

COOL SHOTS





COOL SHOTS



FIN

25:00





COOL SHOTS

Monster Energy
Jago Geerts 193
YAMAHA FACTORY RACING
3
ALE
TE
CRONE
HAN DER POL

ZEEY



BOISFRAME

172

10

TE

RTSI
Rider & Tank
Services
International



**RACING
CATCH UP**





**THE 2020 SEASON
SO FAR**



Once again, this season has already seen plenty of fresh faces and new talents emerging into both the MX2 and MXGP divisions, so let's discuss who are the stars on the rise, the surprises and more...

MXGP

In MXGP, the chase for the 2020 title is heating up with the added pressure of new young talents moving up from the MX2 class. At the opening round of the 2020 FIM Motocross World Championship, MXGP rookie, Team HRC's Mitch Evans showed that hard work during his off-season had certainly paid off with the young Australian battling with

STARS ON THE RISE, SURPRISES AND MORE! TWO DOWN

AN ENTIRE SEASON TO GO! THOUGH WHILE WE HAVE ONLY WITNESSED TWO ROUNDS OF THE 2020 FIM MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP, THERE HAS ALREADY BEEN PLENTY TO TALK ABOUT, AND PLENTY OF RIDERS WHO HAVE LEFT US SURPRISED AND WANTING TO SEE MORE!



the likes of Red Bull KTM Factory's Jeffrey Herlings and Monster Energy Yamaha Factory MXGP's Jeremy Seewer for an impressive third place in race one, followed by a seventh in race two which gave him his first MXGP top five overall, on the very first weekend that he line-up in the premiere class. Though an unfortunate injury at Valkenswaard saw Evans miss out on the races. With the current global situation means the HRC rider has plenty of time for recovery and it will only be a matter of time before we see him battling for top results once more and could even see him on a podium this season, who knows!

Next on the list is none other than the 2019 MX2 World Champion, Red Bull KTM Factory pilot Jorge Prado. With two world championships under his belt and his time in MX2 behind him, the off-season seemed to be going well for Prado. Our first glimpse

of what can be expected from his rookie year in MXGP came with his notable performance at the 2019 Monster Energy FIM Motocross of Nations in Assen, where he finished third and seventh in the races.

With preparations underway things were looking good for the young Spaniard until he suffered a broken femur while training in Italy and had to undergo surgery. No one expected to see Prado line-up at Matterley Basin, the earliest most people were expecting to see him back racing was around April, so many were shocked to see Jorge Prado's name on the entry list for the MXGP of Great Britain. That weekend he finished 9-12 in the races for a top 10 overall, not a bad start to the season, considering he was just a couple of months post-op following quite a big injury.

Then we moved on to Valkenswaard for the MXGP of the Netherlands where the Spaniard

finished 9th overall. In fact, in race one he finished 4th after battling with Team HRC's Tim Gajser, fellow Factory KTM rider Jeffrey Herlings and the Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory Racing MXGP rider Arminas Jasikonis. The second race Prado started outside the top 20 but made his way back to 13th for another top 10 finish. With some positive results in the first two Grand Prix's, Prado is currently 8th in the championship standings, with plenty more to come from the two-time world champion as he takes on the MXGP stars.

Then there's Arminas Jasikonis, one of the two Baltic riders for the Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory Racing MXGP squad. In the past Jasikonis has shown that he is a rider to watch as he matured into a full-fledged MXGP pilot. Having worked hard throughout the off-season, pre-season races showed he had the speed and this year could see tall Lithuanian make quite a few podium appearances.

At the opening GP in Matterley Basin, Jasikonis got off to a

positive start on Saturday as he clocked in the second fastest lap-time putting him second on the gate for Sunday's races behind the defending world champion, Tim Gajser. Though as the gate dropped for race day, things seemed to have turned sour as he failed to reach the top 10 in both races and was forced to settle for 13th overall, not where he expected to be. Back for more in the Netherlands, the 22-year-old was keen to rectify his mistakes and make up for the poor results a week earlier. A boy did he deliver, a win in the qualifying race against none other than the sand master himself, Jeffrey Herlings, set the tone for Sunday's race which saw the Lithuanian carve his way around the deep sand of Valkenswaard for two solid 3rd place finishes which bought him a ticket onto the third step of the podium. Could he carry this momentum for the rest of the season? It's hard to predict, but he is one rider who will without a doubt give it 110%.

Now let's move on to the Tim Gajser, Jeffrey Herlings and Red Bull KTM Factory's Antonio Cairoli supremacy. Ahead of the season, there is no argument that these were the top three riders most of us expected to see at the fore-front and locked in battle for the win. And at Matterley Basin, we saw just a small glimpse of that. The first race wasn't so lucky for Gajser, who found himself in trouble on more than several occasions and was forced to settle for an 8th place finish, not a result he would have wanted. Meanwhile things were looking much better for Jeffrey Herlings who crossed the line in first, with Antonio Cairoli finishing 4th. The second race though was much better for Gajser who took the chequered flag, while Herlings followed behind in second, with Cairoli in third. Though still struggling with numerous injuries, Cairoli still managed a spot on the podium, finishing third behind Gajser and Herlings who claimed the first victory of 2020.

Then things moved on to Valkenswaard, home GP of Herlings, who was motivated to put on a show in front of his home crowd, as well as claim his 9th victory at the Dutch circuit. Though he wasn't the only one keen for a victory, as Gajser was more fired up than ever and the weekend looked to have started on a positive note for the Honda rider who was leading the early stages of the qualifying race and was looking at home in the sand. But moments later a bike issue forced him out the race, allowing Herlings to jump into the lead, though as we already know the victory went to Jasikonis after he made a move on the Dutch rider towards the end of the session.

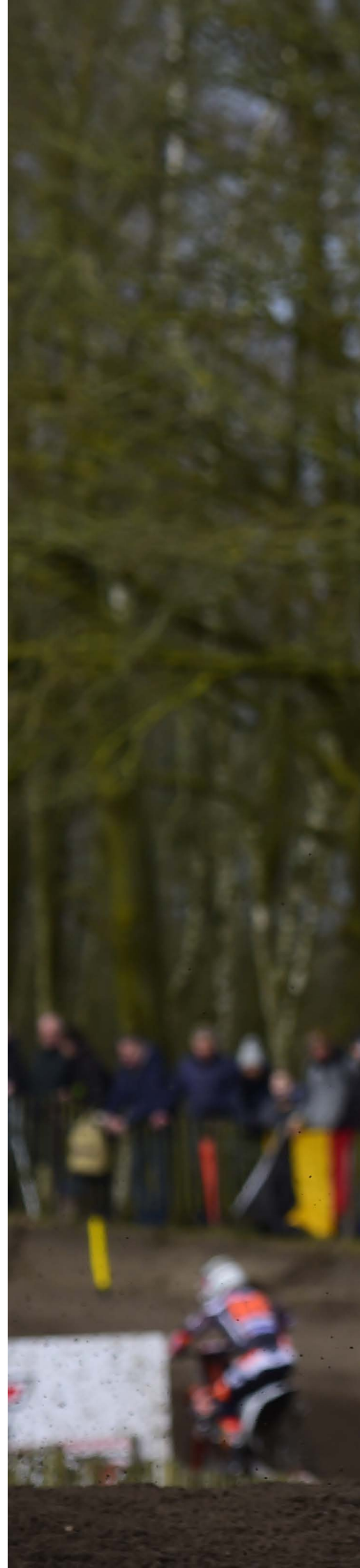
The biggest surprise of the weekend would probably go to Gajser's incredible starts from the far side of the gates. Both races the Slovenian managed to start within the top 5, which played a key role in his 1-2 result, which once again gave him another 2nd overall. For Herlings the weekend couldn't have gone better too, he finished the races 2-1 and took the overall victory at his home Grand Prix, succeeding with what he came there to do which was make it 9 wins. He now continues to lead the championship with a 9-point margin over Gajser.

Cairoli is currently third in the world championship standings, so despite his struggles with injuries, the 9-time world champion is clearly far from giving up, with a 3rd overall in GB and a 4th in Holland, it is clear that the Italian is still more than capable of running within the top-end of the field.

MX2

While many focused their attention on the potential battles in the MXGP class, fans were left surprised by how intense and exciting the MX2 championship is shaping up to be.

Let's start off with the current championship leader, Red Bull KTM Factory rider Tom Vialle. This is Vialle's second season









in MX2 and right from the off, we can see that he is following in the footsteps of previous MX2 World Champions, Jorge Prado and Pauls Jonass. Prado who was known for his incredible starts – this season it seems that Vialle has fallen right into the same position as his team-mate, showing the rest of the field how it's done.

At the opening round Vialle had a mixed weekend, and though luck wasn't on his side, he clearly showed that he was capable of race wins, with just a few silly mistakes costing him points and positions. In race 1 he led the rest of the field before making a mistake and being caught by Monster Energy Yamaha Factory MX2 rider Jago Geerts. The second race though, he turned things around, once again battling with Geerts but this time coming out on top. Vialle crossed the line first, scoring enough points for a second overall.

Then we moved on to Valkenswaard, in the Netherlands, where Vialle once again showed he is a strong contender for the title. A second in race one and a race win in race two, was enough for 1st overall and not only that, it was enough for the young Frenchman to overtake Geerts in the championship standings and leave Holland with the red plate.

Now with Factory KTM leading the MX2 championship once again, thanks to Vialle, there's also his team-mate, Rene Hofer, to talk about. Hofer, Red Bull KTM's newest recruit lined-up at Matterley Basin to begin his first season in the class, having moved up from the EMX250 division. His first race of the season was definitely a positive one, as the young Austrian battled well within top 10, to finish the first race in 8th and then following his team-mate to an impressive 2nd in race 2! He left Matterley Basin with a 5th overall along with the confidence to do more in Holland.

Though the Dutch Grand Prix didn't go quite to plan for the young rider, who had a positive result in the opening race where he finished 4th, but in race 2 found himself in trouble, following a couple of

crashes that left his bike in a bad way. With a 4th and a 26th in the races, he did however still manage a top 10 overall. There is still a long season ahead, and it will be interesting to see how both the KTM boys will mature into strong championship contenders.

And then there's the Monster Energy Yamaha Factory MX2 pilot Jago Geerts. The first two GP's have been a mixture for the young Belgian, as he was caught out by a big crash while chasing for the lead in Matterley Basin and yet still managed an overall win, and then again in the Netherland's when he had a huge crash out of the start, leaving him dead last and with a big job on his hand if he was to get back into the points and within a fighting chance of a podium. And he did just that. He managed to come back from outside the top 30 to 7th, which was highly impressive considering the difficult track conditions and how far back he was from the rest of the field. A win in the opening race and then a 7th in race 2 gave him enough points for a 3rd overall in Valkenswaard, though he did lose the number 1 spot in the championship standings.

Geerts is without a doubt one of the strongest title contenders for the 2020 season, as within just two GP's he has proven that not only has he got the speed but more importantly the desire and determination to fight back from any situation, which is a true mentality of a future champion. It will be interesting to see how the rest of the season will unfold and whether or not Geerts will be able to stay out of trouble – but all is looking good so far for the Belgian.

Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory Racing MX2 rider Jed Beaton is another noteworthy competitor in the class, with the Australian getting extremely close to a podium finish in both Great Britain and the Netherlands. While many were expecting to see his teammate Thomas Kjer Olsen among the top riders, it was actually Beaton who has been mixing it up at the top end. In Great Britain,









in race 1 he crossed the line 2nd, making it one of his best results in MX2, and then in race 2 he finished 6th, which gave him 4th overall, just 3 points shy of the podium. He then repeated the same results again a week later in Valkenswaard, with a 6th and a 2nd, which gave him another 4th, this time just a mere 2 points off the 3rd step. So while he is yet to claim a podium, he has been pretty consistent, getting the exact same result in the first two GP's, so if he continues the way he has, it will only be a matter of time before we see him leave a race weekend with a trophy and let's not forget, consistency is great when chasing top positions in the overall standings.

Another pleasant surprise this season has been the F&H Kawasaki squad, made up of Mikkell Haarup, Roan Van de Moosdijk and Mathys Boisrame. The entire team line-up has been impressive so far, with all 3 riders having their run inside the top 5. Though the team's first and only podium of 2020 so far has come from Haarup, who put on a showstopping performance in Matterley Basin to claim third overall at the British Grand Prix, his first MX2 podium during his first official season in the class. Meanwhile team-mates Moosdijk and Boisrame finished the weekend 8th and 10th.

Though things quickly turned sour for the team, as they headed for their home Grand Prix in Valkenswaard. Three DNF's, one for each rider, meant that the team failed to leave the weekend with a top 10 overall. Though this is only the start of the season, and it's better to get all the bad luck out of the way early doors and focus on the rest of the calendar ahead. If things continue the way they did at Matterley Basin, it will not be the only time that we see a Kawasaki at the front of the pack.

Then there's Maxime Renaux of SM Action MC Migliori – J1 Racing. Renaux is not new to the MX2 class, in fact he finished last season in 7th position, a remarkable result from the Frenchman who had made the move up from the EMX250 class. This season he enters as the underdog of the group and while his

results in Matterley Basin weren't the best, with a 13th and an 8th he was just a few points shy of a top 10 overall and he did turn things around in Valkenswaard. Two solid results of 3-3, bought him a first-class ticket to his first podium of the 2020 season, something that he was extremely happy about. This was not his first podium appearance, as the former Junior World Champion made his first career podium last season in Imola with a 3rd overall. It will be interesting to see what the season has in store for the Frenchman.

WMX

The Women's Motocross World Championship has once again seen the main top runners battle with one another for top scoring positions. The opening round was dominated by the DRT Kawasaki and defending champion Courtney Duncan who went 1-1 to claim the first victory of the championship and start the season off as the series leader. Though at the second round in Valkenswaard, in the Netherlands, she wasn't able to run away with it, like she did in Britain a week earlier. A 4-2 result was not enough for Duncan to place within the top 3, though she did however manage to hold on to the red plate and is the current championship leader.

Second in the championship is the German, Larissa Papenmeier of Yamaha Racing 423 Team who has had a really strong start to the season. She was second overall at the opening round in Matterley Basin and then claimed the overall win at the Dutch round. She was 3rd in race 1 and in race 2 after being chased by Duncan, Kiara Fontanesi and Nancy Van De Ven, the Yamaha rider was able to hold her cool and win with an impressive 21 second lead.

Third in the championship and a rider who has surprised quite a few people, including herself is the MX Fonta Racing Syneco rider Kiara Fontanesi. Following a year off the bike due to her pregnancy with her daughter Skyler, Fontanesi wasn't sure herself

whether she would be ready by Matterley Basin. Much to her surprise, she was more ready than she expected to be. She managed a third overall which was a fantastic start to her 2020 campaign. And then a week later, she claimed her first race win of the season which helped her to a second overall, just 2 points off the top step of the podium. It will be interesting to see whether she can carry the momentum throughout the entire season as she chases her 7th world title.

Then there's Nancy Van De Ven of Ghidinelli Racing s.s.d.s.r.l and Lynn Valk from JK Yamaha Racing who are currently 4th and 5th, with Van De Ven just a few points behind Fontanesi. Van De Ven had a mixture of a weekend in Matterley Basin where she finished 4th overall tied on points with Valk. Then a week later she arrived at her home round, where she took to the podium with a 3rd place finish, with a 2-3 result. Though she did find herself in trouble a few times with a crash costing her a chance of a possible overall victory. Meanwhile Valk finished 7-5 for 6th overall, which was not the result she was looking for, following her strong rider in Great Britain, where she managed a 3rd in race 1 and a 5th in race 2. Both riders have shown that they have what it takes to challenge the front-runners, and for Van De Ven the main thing will be staying out of trouble.

EMX250

So far this season we have also had the opening rounds of the European Championships. In the EMX250 class, Bastian Beogh Damm of W-Z Racing is the early season leader, who got off to the perfect start with a perfect 1-1 score in Valkenswaard to claim the red plate. Sitting second is Isak Gifting who had finished 2nd in race 1 and was a little unluckier in race 2, where he finished 9th, despite that he still managed to pick up enough points for a second. Then there's Andrea Adamo who with an 8-3 result occupies the third spot in the championship. A noteworthy





competitor is Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory Racing's Kay de Wolf who finished 4th in race 1 and in the second race was on track for the race win, and a possible podium finish, but a penalty cost him the victory and he is currently down in 8th in the championship. Though it's obvious that race wins are something that can be expected of the young Dutch rider.

EMX125 Presented by FMF Racing

And then there's the craziest bunch of them all, the EMX125 Presented by FMF Racing. The first round of the championship took place in Matterley Basin and it was a historic weekend for the Everts Family, as KTM Liamski rider Liam Everts secured his first overall victory in the class, putting the red number plate on the #72. In the opening race, Everts led every lap, taking the chequered flag and his first win of 2020. In race 2, he battled with Kevin Brumann in the first 4 laps before being able to make a pass on Swiss rider to take another win.

Kevin Brumann has also been impressive this year, quickly becoming one of Everts' main competitors. He finished second behind the #72 in the opening race and as already mentioned led for a few laps in race 2, clearly showing that he has the pace to run with the leader. He finished last season 33rd, so it will be interesting to see what he can do for his first full season in the championship.

Third in the championship we have Miot Florian. Last season, Florian, much like Brumann didn't contest in the entire series, and finished 17th in the standings. As it stands, he is 3rd, following a good ride in Britain with a 6th and a 3rd. It will be interesting to see what a full season in the European 125cc class will do for the Frenchman and whether he will continue to chase down the leaders.

But now it's time to continue to look ahead and see what the year has in store for us all, as we continue with one of the most unpredictable and exciting seasons of the FIM Motocross World Championship.





FINIS



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.

LIVE STUDIO SHOW FROM HOME

#MXGPatHome LIVE!

Over the last couple of weeks, we have been bringing LIVE content for our viewers at home, including our Tuesday Talk's with Paul Malin and Thursday Catch-up with Lisa Leyland on Instagram Live, as well as our famous Studio Show, all from the comfort of our home!

So far we've had some incredible guests featuring 4 episodes of the LIVE Program USA

MXGP Studio Show from Home on Youtube

Views: 18,745
 Impressions: 259,800
 Watch time (hours): 1,560.2



MXGP Facebook LIVE Studio Show

Peak LIVE viewers: 1,079
 Minutes viewed: 80,185
 Engagement: 7,786

Instagram LIVE Average Viewers: 3.527

Instagram LIVE Interviews Peak views: 356

MX72 times
world champion
SCORPION MX

TIM GAJSER
2019 MXGP World Champion

JORGE PRADO
2019 MX2 Champion



“WE SELL WHAT WE RACE, WE RACE WHAT WE SELL”

photo by @shotbybavo - Bavo Swijgers.

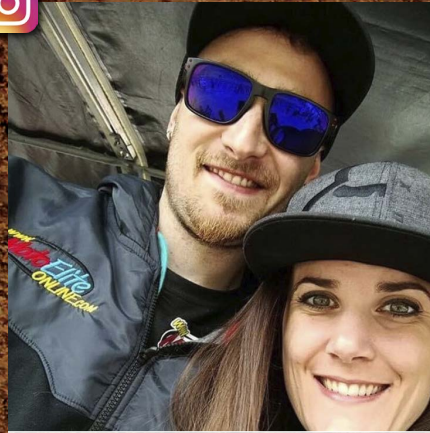


POWER IS NOTHING WITHOUT CONTROL

MXGP SOCIAL



@giorgiamontini131
#tbt exactly 3 years ago today



@giadamarini
Ricordi indimenticabili
#tbt MXGP of Trentino 2017

#mxgp #vip #vipgold
#skybox #mx #motocross
#foxhead #foxracing



Let's take a look back at some of the most impressive crashes from Valkneswaard as we re-live the season so far.



@ss24_ktm_mxgp
HAPPY EASTER FROM OUR LITTLE Angus might be using this time to lay some moto's down but for everybody else it's tools down Whats everybody doing to pass the weeks?



In this tough time it's important to stick together and keep positive! Over the last few weeks, we have collected many clips from our FIM Motocross World Championship riders who were keen to share motivational messages with our awesome MXGP fans, this one's for you all, enjoy!



@kidartmx
Jorge Prado - colored pencil
#mxart #mxgp #redbullktm
#moto #jorgeprado
#whipitwednesday @jorgeprado61



From our team, to yours!

All the team at MXGP are sending their best wishes to all of you working hard from home! Let's stick together, stay strong and stay safe so we can all get back to doing what we love very soon!



MXGP #MXGPofficialatHome **unfront**

@mxgp
From our team, to yours!



@matteobrambilla_sbrem

Tim Gajser 243 - Honda
HRC MX-GP 2020
@tiga243 #243 #timgajser
#tiga243 #honda #hrc
#pilot #riders #slovenia
#mx #mxgp #motocross



@fedebizzi

Today is a very special
#MonsterGirlMonday
Exactly today, one year
ago we were in Trentino
for the first @mxgp race
of the year for the Italian
#monsterenergygirls
team



@missvickilund

Take me back! I've got so
many #MonsterMemories
but @mxgp of Indonesia is
one of my favorites!



@vasilis_dimitriou24

#ktm #mxgp



STUDIO SHOW FROM HOME

Don't miss the second
episode of the Studio Show
from Home with the 4-time
Motocross World Champion
Jeffrey Herlings #84!

IN THE WORLD OF

#MXGP

**MONSTER
GIRLS**

NOVEMBER 20

...Arena,





Clement
DESALLE

25



ER

MOTOCROSS

MONSTER GIRLS





**RIDER
OF THE MONTH**





**THE NEXT
GENERATION**

MAXIS

PRESENTED BY



OF GREAT BRITAIN

MATTHEW BASIN MARCH 2020





IN MOTOCROSS CIRCLES, THE NAME EVERTS IS ABOUT AS FAMOUS AS IT GETS; HARRY WON FOUR WORLD TITLES AND BETWEEN 1974 AND 1983 AMASSED A TOTAL OF 46 RACE WINS AND NOTCHED UP 55 PODIUMS ALONG THE WAY, CELEBRATING 23 OF THEM FROM THE TOP STEP. WHEN HARRY'S SON STEFAN TOOK TO THE RACE TRACK, THERE WAS NO DOUBTING THAT HE HAD SOME SERIOUSLY BIG BOOTS TO FILL AND IF 'DAD' WAS WORRIED, HE NEEDN'T HAVE BEEN AS HIS SON TOOK THE FAMILY NAME TO ANOTHER STRATOSPHERE. SIMPLY PUT, STEFAN BECAME THE MOST FAMOUS AND THE MOST SUCCESSFUL RACER IN HISTORY WITH 10 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES, 101 GRAND PRIX VICTORIES, 169 RACE WINS AND 166 PODIUMS.

Enter Liam Everts, Stefan's son. For those who have been around the paddock long enough to remember when Liam was born, you will remember he was a regular fixture on the podium from the world 'go' as Stefan celebrated his wins, and really, it was only a question of when, not if, 'Liamski' would follow in the footsteps of his legendary father and grandfather. Eventually that day came and after his double-race win at the opening round of the EMX125 Championship, presented by FMF Racing at Matterley Basin on March 1st 2020, history was re-written in the pages of the Everts dynasty, the most significant thing being that fourteen years after Stefan

EURO 2st
MXGP

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OF GREAT BRITAIN

SIN | 1 MARCH 202





went 1-1 at his last ever race, the MXoN, Liam repeated the win with the same results. And it doesn't end there; Harry has also stood on the top step of the podium in England when he won the British GP in 1975 at Lady's Mile, Chalton, near Portsmouth – 30 mins drive from Matterley, in the same county of Hampshire.

By winning his first overall, Liam ensured that the championship leader's Red Plate would be mounted to the front of an Everts bike for the first time since 2006, but to do it at the same place as his famous father, to make a pass on a rival in the same corner and with the same kind of style was something you would only ever witness in a fairy-tale; and this is exactly what it was. Moments after the race, Liam commented that 'I've been waiting a long time for this one, it's been hard work of course but to finally pay off for the first win is really nice; I won't stop working, I'll keep on working as hard as I can.'

In what was a triple-Everts interview after the podium ceremony, it was clear to see what this meant to the whole family with Stefan saying 'it forgets all the misery from last year, my last podium was here before I retired and now it's Liam's first win here at Matterley as well, it's fantastic and it's a great celebration in our family to see this happening; he did a great job both days.' On what was an emotional day, there was perhaps no-one prouder than grandfather Harry, who even shed a tear during the podium ceremony:

'This means a lot. When I was watching Liam riding today, I was thinking of the last race that Stefan did here and I see Liam in that same corner with completely the same style like Stefan had ... he was riding so

clever and it did something for me, yes.'

As Covid-19 continues to put everyday life on hold, we thought it would be a good time to catch up with the most famous family in motocross, for a quick catch-up and to see how and what the journey has been like up until now.

MXGP Mag: (To Liam) How's that New Zealand accent coming along?

Stefan: (laughs ...) He's getting out of it a little bit; he still can do it if he wants to but lately, he's doing other imitations of 'Deelan Ferrandees', Christophe Pourcel and The Pink Panther, Inspector Cluseau and Antti Pyrhönen – actually, that's the one he can do the best, Antti Pyrhönen!

MXGP Mag: Liam, what was your first bike and when was your first race?

Liam: Yamaha TTR50, with electric starter, 3 gears, half automatic. My first race I don't really remember; I remember when I started riding. The place where we were living, there were some friends who lived across the road from us and they had a track in a field and that's where I really started riding.

Stefan: His first 'metres' that he did was I think 2008, I recently put it on Liam's YouTube channel, one of the videos from his first day riding. I filmed him a lot when he was small, but I think his first race was something with a 50cc automatic KTM.

MXGP Mag: So, you don't remember if you even won a trophy that day then?

Liam: It was one of the local races you know ... I remember the first one I won, I won without a seat, I remember that one ...



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MXGP Mag: Who was the bad mechanic?

Stefan: Well, that 50cc had that special screw where it has just a half-twist before it locks in, but it came loose and he lost the seat, and so I wanted to stop him to put the seat back on it, but he wouldn't stop ...

Liam: (laughing ...) I just continued riding ...

MXGP Mag: Going into that first race, who was more nervous – you or dad?

Liam: It was me; I think! I remember we did two races that weekend, and I won both, but it was more of a fun thing back then. I was nervous as a little boy, but it was fun anyway.

MXGP Mag: Stefan, you have a very impressive trophy room – does that first trophy of Liam's sit next to your first trophy?

Stefan: No, I think it's better that he keeps his trophies separate from mine, like we never mixed up the trophies from me and my father, we kept them separated and I think that Liam should also do that so we know what's his and what's mine, but he has a really nice place when you come inside the house, there's a little place where he can put his best trophies so that he can see it and we all can see it and enjoy it.

MXGP Mag: In the beginning, who did most of the 'coaching' – was it grandad because you were always busy with GP's Stefan, or have you managed to balance that right from the beginning?

Stefan: In the beginning it was mainly me who was busy with him and I was a little bit his mechanic as well, but then my nephew Rico came in when Liam was doing the 65cc races. When I moved to Suzuki, I was very busy so I was lucky that grandfather took care of Liam and he could go riding and practicing. There are some races I missed and also that Liam

could not do because neither of us could go with him, but when the Suzuki story stopped, I had a lot of time for Liam, so I came back in the picture to work with him closely. When I got Malaria, grandfather stepped in again in the winter of 2019, Harry could take care of him when I was in the hospital. It went a little bit back and forth, but most of the coaching has been with me.

MXGP Mag: Liam, how much pressure did you feel in the beginning, being the son of a 10-time world champion – and do you feel this pressure more now or actually, is it less now?

Liam: When I began riding it was just the local races and I was just riding for fun, I didn't really care what was going on. But once I got to the 85cc class, yeah, then it started to pick up. Once I got on the Suzuki and then the KTM and then last year also, it was a tough three years for me, but I think I did okay. Now, I can really zone-out before the start and then I can just go and do my race.

MXGP Mag: How old are you now?

Liam: I'm 15 now, turning 16 in August.

Stefan: What we also did since last year, the beginning of the summer we started working with a sports psychologist to work a little bit on that (pressure), but also the communication between myself and Liam. Also, some general things like the Everts name, learning how to think differently. For me personally, it helped us to get along better. Of course, when things are going good, then everything goes well, but it's in the difficult days and the difficult moments when it's not easy.

MXGP Mag: Did you have a psychologist as a rider, Stefan?

Stefan: No, I was mainly my own psychologist; I figured

it out myself over the years but that's now an advantage for Liam, that I can help him with that. But, I still went to somebody else, a professional to ask also a little bit help; there's many things for me as a new racing father to learn and so it's been very interesting to work with this guy to have a lot of confirmation of what I learned through the years, how to prepare myself mentally and to think, that this comes back from the professional who says a lot of the things that I know. But, sometimes it's difficult to tell it in a normal language to Liam, and he can do that really well.

MXGP Mag: You seem to have taken a different route with Liam's racing than some other parents let's say – you haven't rushed his development – why?

Stefan: One of things that I've always told the riders and the parents that I've worked with in the past is 'try not go faster than the clock is ticking' and it's so easy to do that because you want to move forward really fast; many occasions, they go too fast and what happens? Many injuries, you start to struggle, go down mentally, you go downhill and then it's over! It's a very important rule to remember and sometimes I even have to tell it to myself, especially when you want to move on faster, like last year when I decided to stay another year in 125cc to give Liam the chance to try to compete the whole year, to compete for a title because he's never experienced that, and that's important to learn that now. Plus, riding the 2-stroke 125cc is a good bike to learn a lot with, it gives a lot of basics (skills) for the future. It would have been easy for us to say, let's already jump to the EMX250 class; in Valkenswaard it gave me a good confirmation of what he could do, but still, I think

we've made the right decision to stay on the 125cc this year, not going faster than the clock is ticking. It takes times to grow, to come stronger, to build up experience, and it's the same thing for Liam; Herlings and Roczen they skipped all that part, they had it already but not everybody is a Herlings or a Roczen, and Liam at this moment is not like them, so we have to give him that time.

MXGP Mag: Is this something you learned as a parent because maybe Harry pushed you at a younger age – you were 16 when you had your first GP – didn't turn 17 until later that year in '89?

Stefan: He didn't push me at all when I was a young kid but when we started to ride the 125cc, it went really quick, from being a Junior to doing the GP's and at that time it was normal to do that. Normally you would do the Junior, and then National followed by Inter; you do all these classes to build up and then finally you go into the GP's but after just one year of riding the 125cc, I went straight to the GP's. For me, it was a very big step, but I managed to come through it; it was not easy. I also got injured mid-season after my first podium in Dalecin, Czechoslovakia, in 1989, but I remember it was a lot for me to deal with. Racing with these experienced riders who were much older, stronger, physically they were really strong, doing the long 45-minute moto's at that time, there were so many things to deal with, so that what's I think, it's much safer and more important to do it step-by-step.

MXGP Mag: What have you been most impressed with, with Liam's riding and where have you seen the improvement from last year to this year for instance?









Stefan: Well, for me, at Matterley Basin; the whole weekend I was impressed by many things. The way he rode in the mud on Saturday and then also on Sunday and how he managed to stay calm in the first half of the race; and then he started to push through and went for the lead because Kevin Brumann was riding really well in the first 15-minutes, even on Saturday from what I saw. Also, the way Liam was able to make the passes; all weekend he impressed me a lot, I was speechless to see it all happening. For a long period we haven't seen a lot of him, he's just been riding, racing, preparing and we didn't see any good outcome and finally we came to the point where he made a huge step forward and that's again being patient; letting him grow and develop as a person, his personality, his mindset, his physical fitness, his weight. It's slowly coming now and hopefully we will see many more things, hopefully soon when the season re-starts again.

MXGP Mag: Liam, would you say you listen to everything dad says? And how is his advice different to grandfathers – do they pretty much say the same thing?

Liam: In a way, they say pretty much the same, mostly about the track, like 'at that point on the track it's pretty wet ...' because on Saturday at Matterley it was quite a sloppy race, so we didn't have a sighting lap ... 'so watch out for sure on the first laps'. Also, as a rider, from Time Practice you sort of know how it's going to be but then they still have those extra tips that you need to know to get those little extra details in your riding.

MXGP Mag: Are you able to separate racing life from normal life when you are at home?

Liam: For me to switch off completely from riding is not possible, it's always motocross after motocross. You go riding,

go home and then you still want to watch something on TV, and sometimes a race from the past will come on, so I think: 'cool, I must watch that.' It's never over, you know? You need to keep on working for it and keep improving also, mentally.

MXGP Mag: Stefan, you also have a daughter, Miley – she is also very talented in gymnastics it seems – you must be a very proud dad, with two kids who are so competitive?

Stefan: Yes, I am very happy; at the moment we are a very happy family, we had a very difficult year last year, but we came through it with some ups and downs. Liam has made a good step forward and Miley is 9 years old now and doing well in gymnastics and it's good to see that both of our kids are doing things that they love to do, and hopefully it will stay like that! But you never know what's around the corner; we saw that with my illness, and we see it now at this moment with Covid-19. Life can change quite fast and that's why I always keep saying, life in ice hockey can change quick, it's a bit my saying to be prepared for everything and to be prepared for the next thing, so we enjoy the moment now that we've got and hopefully it will last a long time.

MXGP Mag: Where do you think this need to be competitive comes from with Liam and Miley?

Stefan: Well, I see that Liam has it more than Miley, I think she is competitive in a way but differently than Liam. But I don't know, it comes from the parents of course; it's in the genes, you cannot just put inside someone that doesn't have the ambition to be the best and you cannot force to them to get that ambition and to be the best. But it's in there, it's a natural thing that they have in their blood.

MXGP Mag: What's Kelly's role in all of this, for both Liam and Miley – is she the calm parent or the most stressed parent?

Stefan: She is a very big part of the puzzle of the whole structure that we have here, a very big important one. On one hand she keeps things in balance but on the other she can also be stressful; she can be hard and very direct but she helps out with all the normal everyday things and how we raise our kids; she has a school background because she has been a teacher in the past so in that way she can now help Liam with his home studies. She is also there on race weekends, she has to be there to do the things that she needs to do; the racing part is mainly between us (Liam and myself), she will not interfere that much into the racing side, like bike set-up, the track or whatever, it's not her thing, but in general if she wasn't there for one weekend, we would be okay, but if she was not there over the whole season then we would have a problem.

MXGP Mag: Liam, during the week, how often do you speak to grandfather?

Liam: Well, during this time we speak a lot on the 'phone, but he's always been a funny guy and always sends these funny videos to me all the time so then, automatically I text him when it's funny or call him now and then. He's still doing well and I hope that still goes on for a while.

MXGP Mag: Who is your racing idol?

Liam: Right now, it is Jorge Prado; he was outstanding last year and this year already with his leg, how quickly he recovered, and he is racing now for the top five. When I was growing up, I always looked up to Ryan Villopoto.

MXGP Mag: EMX125 Round 2 looks like it will be in August, it's a long time to stay sharp. How will you deal with this new calendar – both of you?

Liam: I will still do my physical training because I do this automatically, but maybe I will do a little less. At the moment the next race on the calendar is the 2nd of August but we still don't know for sure, which is a bit strange. It's a difficult situation which none of us experienced in the past.

Stefan: Like Liam said, it's hard to set up your goals for that date because now it starts back in August, but (with everything changing on a daily basis) is it going to be August? Maybe they will even have to cancel August if things keep going in the wrong way. The main thing now is to stay in a good physical shape but maybe just take it down a bit and as soon as we have more clarity then we can turn it back up, more intensive, but now we are still guessing. The most important thing is to keep his basic condition sharp.

Stefan: (On Harry)

Basically, all three of us have a really good relationship and like Liam said, grandfather can sometimes be a really funny guy, he keeps a good atmosphere in our group, in our family. It's nice to have him around, I hope we can enjoy his company for a lot of years because he is not getting any younger, he will be 70 soon. We enjoy his company a lot and sometimes he still has some interesting things to teach us. When he starts his stories, he is busy for a few hours. I know a lot of them already (laughing) but I know that Liam also likes it when he tells them.

Harry's World

'For me, it's easy to work with Liam; he always does as we say and when he is riding, I don't know why, but I am not nervous







like I was before when Stefan was riding. Okay, I get nervous but not like before. When he went from 85cc to 125cc, he was still small and was not strong enough, but he was talented and had a lot of technical qualities, just not strong, so that's the thing we were waiting for. But he is stronger than we think. In the beginning of the season when he was winning in France and in England in the international races, we didn't know about a lot of the other riders, so I was thinking maybe he will be in the top five when he is riding like that. But he is so good with the bike, man! Technically, he is so good

and he can ride everything; he can ride hard pack, he can ride in sand and the mud, so that is good. When Liam won at Matterley Basin it was a big moment for me because I was not thinking that he could do that, but when I saw the first heat, I didn't expect it, but he was so far in front. And when I saw on the same place where Stefan passed James Stewart at the Motocross of Nations, Liam did the same thing and I said 'woooaah! It's completely the same as Stefan!' That was a special moment for me.'

Family History Report:

Harry Everts

4 World Championship titles

1974 – 1983: Won 46 races

55 podiums

23 wins – 21 x 2nd – 11 x 3rd

Stefan Everts

10 World Championship titles

1991 – 2006: Won 169 races

166 podiums

101 wins – 40 x 2nd – 25 x 3rd

Liam

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1 EMX85cc bronze medal

1 Red Plate (EMX125)

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**KIARA FONTANESI:
MOTHERHOOD AND RACING**

**HOW THE 6-TIME WOMEN'S
MOTOCROSS WORLD
CHAMPION IS MANAGING HER
ROLES BETWEEN SUPER-MUM
AND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
RACER...**

Following a year off the bike, Kiara Fontanesi put on a remarkable performance at Matterley Basin as she secured her first podium of the season, just three months after the birth of her baby daughter Skyler. This left many stunned, including the 6-time world champion herself.

Before the start of the 2020 season, many weren't sure what to expect from Fontanesi, though she had always been a very strong athlete, no one was sure how the pregnancy and especially a year off the bike would affect the Italian. While pregnant, she didn't waste any time sitting around and doing nothing in fact, her workout regime was much like before, with a few tweaks to accommodate the changes her body was going through.

"I trained more or less throughout the pregnancy, apart from the first month and a half in the beginning because I was feeling really sick, and I was out of power, but then I was back in the gym," Kiara explained. "I tried to adapt the training with the changes of my body during the pregnancy and I trained right up until a month before giving birth".

The training she did throughout the pregnancy really paid off and was a key factor to helping her secure third overall in Matterley Basin at the opening round of the Women's World Championship. Fontanesi lined-up at the English circuit just three months after the birth of her daughter, finishing second in the opening race and sixth in race two.

"I always had in my mind that I would be back on the bike and I knew that I wanted to be back as quick as possible. I wasn't sure when I would be able to jump back on the bike, because giving birth is something that nobody can

really tell you how your body will react so, I was surprised that I was able to get back and be so fit already after two months of training but I really wanted it," she said, adding "for sure what helped me be back on the bike so quickly was not giving up during my pregnancy because I'd been training almost every day, so that helped a lot".

While the Italian worked hard to ensure she was behind the gate in Britain, both her and her team never expected such a positive result so soon. Then a weekend later in Valkenswaard, she took another step forward, taking a win in the opening race around the sandy Dutch circuit, following some close battles with Nancy Van De Ven and Larissa Papenmeier. In the second race, she finished fourth which once again bought her a ticket to another top three overall finish, and this time the Italian occupied the second step of the WMX podium.

"To be back racing was my goal this year and it was a really big challenge because having a baby and being one year off is something really big, because your body changes a lot during that time so, getting back behind the gate exactly three months after giving birth is something really special, so I was really happy to be able to line up at the first round, it was already a victory for us especially training two months on the bike and going racing with a different machine has been something really crazy for us but we knew we could do it and we wanted to already be on the top, even if we found out we were much more ready than we thought," she recalled.

"We did two races that were really good for us and the victory in Valkenswaard just felt amazing for me and being already back on the podium at



the first round and back again on the podium at the second round, it's something that a lot of people couldn't believe so we are just really happy, and having Skyler with me on the podium at the first round in England is something that I can't even explain in words, she was already my trophy but taking her on the podium of a world championship is something that I cannot even describe".

Now as a new mother, Fontanesi has two very important roles to juggle, managing her role as mum and a motocross world championship racer, not a duo that many people can boast about. This undoubtedly has changed her daily and race weekend routine, but this has not stopped her in achieving what she has set out to do.

"My routine has changed because I added a person that is my daughter to my life, but it didn't really change a lot, I mean, what I'm doing is basically what I was doing before. I wake up, I feed her, I have breakfast, get changed, go riding, come back and spend time at home with Skyler. The difference now from before is that I try to do my stuff much quicker than before, so when I go riding, if she doesn't come with me, I go, I ride and I come back as soon as possible, I don't waste extra time around, I try to get changed quick, to train quick, I try not to go so far to train."

While her routine at home is much of the same, her race weekends don't look much different either. In between sessions you can usually find Kiara feeding Skyler or changing dirty diapers, before pushing the stroller to the start line and throwing her leg over her bike to line-up alongside some of the best riders in the world.

"Our practice is at 7:50am normally on Saturday, so more



Women

OF GREAT BRITAIN

TATTERLEY BASIN | 1 MARCH 2020





or less I wake up at 6, I have breakfast and I breastfeed Skyler in the meantime. Then I get changed and warm-up," she explained.

"After the practice I go back to the van, get changed, take care of my stuff, so food for example and normally my race is around 1, so I breastfeed Skyler again at around 12:30 then I go racing, come back and spend time with her. For the rest is the same I just have one little baby to grow up and feed during the day but she's really good, she sleeps almost all day. In Valkenswaard she watched the race with her dad on the skybox, I was pushing

the stroller to the skybox just before the race, so I switch myself in between bike and stroller but this is my life at the moment, and I am loving it," she added.

While her main goal for the season was to make sure she is fit enough to line-up at the opening round, Kiara has now proven herself able to reach for bigger things, with a 7th world title on her mind.

"Having Skyler just added fuel to my fire. For sure I wanted to win but you know, you win, you win, you win, and every year you need to find the motivation of why you really want to win again. So every year I was able to find that motivation, but I arrived at a point where I was really

tired and struggling with a lot of problems in my body, so the year off, during the pregnancy, has been a good medicine for me where I could regenerate my body and my mind and comeback with Skyler who motivated me to do even better than the past years, so this for sure has helped me, even though it's hard to race when you have a daughter because of course as soon as I get to risk something, immediately and unconsciously I avoid risks much more than before".

"My main goal was to arrive and to race the first round, so our first goal was already reached. The other goal was to get back on the podium, so we have already reached that. And seeing how I went in the past two races and how I felt on the bike, I honestly want to fight for the title".

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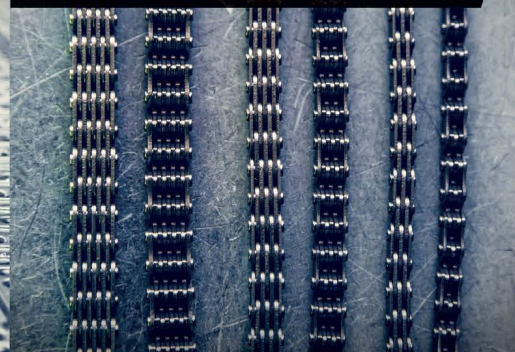
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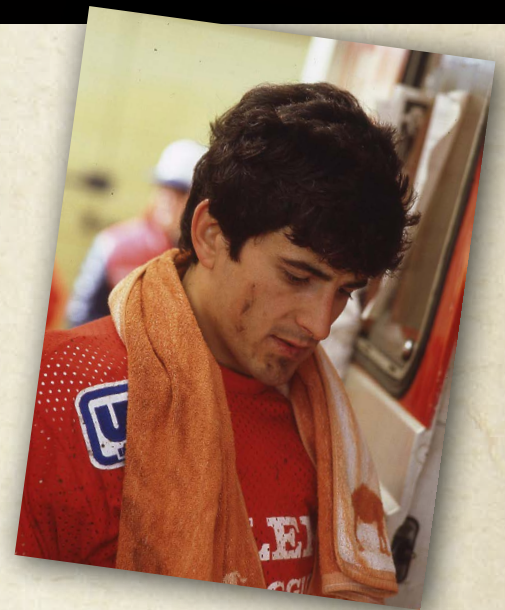
CORRADO MADDII

RACING GP'S DURING SIXTEEN SEASONS AND BEING SO CLOSE TO BE THE FIRST ITALIAN TO CONQUER A WORLD TITLE, CORRADO MADDII HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MAIN PROTAGONISTS OF THE MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS AS A RIDER AND LATER AS A TEAM MANAGER.

At 63 years old he remains involved with passion in the sport, coaching young riders who dream to become champions in the Husqvarna Junior Racing Maddii team.

Born on 28 March 1957 in Levane di Montevarchi, Italy, Corrado had the chance to discover motocross when a moto club built a track in Montevarchi when he was ten years old. He was sixteen when he won his first race, and later finished runner up in the Italian junior championship when he turned eighteen. At the end of the 1975 season he had the opportunity to enter his first International race as he was selected to represent his country in the famous 'Coupe de l'Avenir' in Belgium, where team Italia scored a third overall behind Belgium and Great Britain.

Corrado was riding for Aspes, an Italian manufacturer involved in the 125cc class, and he dominated the 1976 Junior championship and just missed another title in the 250cc class due to a crash on his home track at Montevarchi. During that season he also had a first experience at the GP's as he entered several rounds, including the first one in Austria



where he scored points in both races. By the end of the championship he finished in the top fifteen with a highlight in Spain where he ended third of the first moto, and the following year he was able to enjoy a podium celebration for the first time in the Motocross World Championship after finishing second overall in Czechoslovakia.

During most of his career Maddi worked with Italian brands, and after racing for Aspes and Gilera, in 1979 he signed with Aprilia. He raced three seasons for the company based in Noale, scoring his best result in the World Championship with a fifth overall in 1979 and claiming the Italian titles in the 250cc and 500cc classes during the same year. In 1981 he was part of the winning Italian team at the 'Cup of Nations' and afterwards he joined Michele Rinaldi in the factory Gilera team for the next seasons.

For the first time since he was racing in the Motocross World Championship Corrado was a title contender against his Belgian teammate Eric Geboers. The Italian rider managed to

finish runner up behind Geboers after a very consistent season with eight podiums and just one DNF, and he also added two Italian titles to his score board and another win with Team Italia at the 'Cup of Nations'.

At the end of 1983 Gilera stopped his investment in Motocross and Corrado Maddii entered a new chapter of his career when he signed with Cagiva, another famous Italian brand. In fact, the 1984 season was his best ever; despite not scoring any points at the opening round in Italy, he stood on the podium of all the other rounds, winning two GP's and entering the final race in Luxembourg leading the series by thirty points over Rinaldi. He just had to score a few points to get the title, but the timed practice session was a drama as another rider hit him and broke his leg! Missing the title by three points Corrado would not be the first Italian World Champion and would never be in a position to get this title again.

In 1985 he finished third with three GP wins, but the following year he moved to the 500cc class and helped Team Italy with Rinaldi and Contini to be on the podium of the Motocross of Nations at Maggiora, Italy. After riding in the 125cc class on a private Honda, Corrado retired at the end of 1990, sharing his time among the family olive oil company, his own team and the career of his son Marco.

Corrado Maddii has worked with Italian riders like Chiodi, Traversini, Federici, Puzar, Bartolini, Guadagnini, Forato to name a few, but also foreign athletes such as Parker and Coppins. Corrado remains today involved in the sport with another Italian brand as he joined Fantic last winter for the comeback of the company in Motocross.

Text & Photos: Pascal Haudiquert

- 1976:** 14th in the 125 World Championship (Aspes)
Italian Junior champion
- 1977:** 14th in the 125 World Championship (Aspes)
- 1978:** 10th in the 125 World Championship (Gilera)
- 1979:** 5th in the 125 World Championship (Aprilia)
- 1980:** 14th in the 125 World Championship (Aprilia)
Italian 500 champion
- 1981:** 8th in the 125 World Championship (Aprilia)
Italian 250 champion
Winner of the Cup of Nations with team Italy
- 1982:** 2nd in the 125 World Championship (Gilera)
Italian 125 and 250 champion
Winner of the Cup of Nations with team Italy
- 1983:** 5th in the 250 World Championship (Gilera)
Italian 125 champion
- 1984:** 2nd in the 125 World Championship (Cagiva). Winner of 2 GP's
- 1985:** 3rd in the 125 World Championship (Cagiva). Winner of 3 GP's
Italian 125 champion
- 1986:** 11th in the 500 World Championship (Kawasaki)
3rd at the Motocross of Nations with Team Italy
- 1987:** 4th in the 125 World Championship (Honda)
Italian 125 champion
- 1988:** 7th in the 125 World Championship (Honda)
- 1989:** 27th in the 125 World Championship (Honda)
- 1990:** 25th in the 125 World Championship (Husqvarna)



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KTM wishes to make all motorcyclists aware that they need to wear the prescribed protective gear, only start the electric vehicle for the first time after receiving a high-voltage safety briefing from an authorised KTM dealer and always ride in a responsible manner in accordance with the relevant and applicable provisions of the road traffic regulations. The illustrated vehicles may vary in selected details from the production models and some illustrations feature optional equipment available at additional cost.

Paddock Talks



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- 1 #FlowerBoostChallenge! F&H Racing Team's Team Manager Nathalie Fase, together with their MX2 riders, Mikkel Haarup, Roan Van De Moosdijk and Mathys Boisramé alongside the team coach and mechanics, visited Ter Laak Orchids and brought 200 beautiful Phalaenopsis Orchids that have been distributed to various elderly/nursing homes in the area to cheer up the people during this difficult period and among the staff of F&H Crone as a thank you for their understanding, dedication and flexibility during this time. What an amazing initiative by the team!
- 2 Set-up on point! Red Bull KTM Factory pilot, Tom Vialle, enjoying some racing from home with MXGP the official video game! #MXGPatHome
- 3 Happy Easter! Tanel Leok and his family got creative painting their Easter eggs in team colours.
- 4 SS24 MXGP KTM rider Shaun Simpson trying out a new look – yay or nay to the moustache?
- 5 Happy Easter from JK Racing who celebrate 20 years of racing!
- 6 When you clean out your garage and find some awesome gear... Alberto Forato showing off his weekend outfit!
- 7 Jose Butron made headlines in Spain, as he along with other riders donated some racing goggles to healthcare workers in the local area.
- 8 No racing? No problem! Alessandro Lupino got the perfect set-up at home!
- 9 Happy Easter from the Cairoli family!
- 10 The work doesn't stop – Thomas Kjer Olsen working hard in the gym to make sure he is ready to go when it's safe to get back racing...
- 11 Pauls Jonass doing his best 'Easter Bunny' impression
- 12 Grab your dog, your guitar and your gear and rock on! Thomas Covington enjoying his time at home...



SHAYNE KING'S 1996 KTM SX360

WHEN SHAYNE KING WON THE FIM 500CC MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP IN 1996 HE BECAME THE FIRST RIDER FROM NEW ZEALAND TO DO SO, AND SINCE THEN HIS JOURNEY HAS PAVED THE WAY FOR A WHOLE HOST OF OTHER POTENTIAL ANTIPODEAN STARS TO DO THE SAME.



What was perhaps more remarkable about this historic feat was the fact that King accomplished his mission in 'David and Goliath' fashion, riding a smaller capacity KTM360 against the more established 500cc and 4-stroke machines, and it's his KTM SX360 that we will feature in this issue of MXGP Magazine.

Shayne King's world championship journey began when he left New Zealand for America in 1992, whilst his older brother Darryl took to Europe to try his hand at some 500cc GP events. After qualifying as the second-best Yamaha rider behind Damon Bradshaw at the San Jose Supercross, Yamaha's US boss, Keith McCarthy, was keen on offering Shayne a semi-

support deal for the remainder of the series. A week later though, Shayne received a call from his brother Darryl, who was desperate to convince him to race in Europe. A month later, Shayne King headed home to New Zealand and began regrouping for the next phase of his budding racing career.

'When my brother Darryl 'DK' called me he said, "dude, your dream is to be a world motocross champion, so why don't you just come to Europe, it's so easy." He managed to talk me into it, and my mate Jimmy, who'd been my mechanic for many years, we went and stayed with the Missotten's, Eddie and Philippe at St. Truiden in Belgium and we did a whole load of international races during the year; we stuck a bike in a suitcase, or three actually. We took a YZ250 from home along with a bundle

of wheels and tyres, went to the airport and that was it.'

It wasn't all plain sailing though, as the stocky Kiwi found the 125cc world championship class highly competitive; that was until he finally scored his first world championship point in San Marino:

'Because I was a little guy, I thought that the 125cc would be a better opportunity for me, I wasn't a big dude, so I got on a Yamaha 125cc. My first race was Berghem, in Holland (round 5) but I didn't qualify until San Marino (round 9) and I scored that 1 point in San Marino; it was like I'd just won the world championship! Seriously, I rang everybody back home from the press room, so I suppose it was the highlight of my year and the start of my European career really.'



Dyjesen

The logo features a stylized 'D' with horizontal lines in red and blue, positioned above the brand name 'Dyjesen' in a bold, italicized, black font with a white outline.

STROKE 70



**TAM
RACING**

The logo is embossed on a circular metal cover. It consists of a stylized 'TAM' acronym above the word 'RACING' in a bold, blocky font.



At the end of that 1993 season, Shayne was offered a ride on the Missotten's FHM Honda Team as both Philippe and Eddie believed he was better suited to a 500cc than a 125cc; and they were right.

'They said I'd be a good 500cc rider, so I did an international race at Kester in Belgium and finished 5th and went to the first grand prix and finished 6-1 at Payerne in Switzerland, for 3rd overall.' King had just realised a dream of not only standing on a grand prix podium, but had also won a GP race! It was short-lived though, and at the very next round, King's season pretty much came to an end, and he left Austria with a broken ankle. He would not return until the final two rounds, but by then it was just to get some bike time.

Having proved that he could run the pace of the best riders in the world in the 500cc world championship, his FHM Honda Team were contacted by 'Silent Sport' in Germany to see if they wanted to run KTM's for the '95 season, like a semi-support ride behind former two-time world champion Trampas Parker, who was factory backed through Farioli out of Italy. And suddenly, King found himself on KTM.

His standout ride came at Loket where he placed 3-2 for 2nd overall behind eventual world champ, Joel Smets, a result that carried some gravitas as far as going racing in 1996:

'I think it was the first race where I really felt that everything was the best it could be on a motocross track, where everything was right. The bike was fantastic, everything around me was okay and I guess the track was similar to what I was used to in New Zealand, so everything just sort of fell into place and it just opened up the doors to KTM for me for '96.' King finished the '95 season 9th overall in the championship.

Winning Combination

With factory support via KTM Germany, the 1996 season kicked off in Italy at Asti and King got off to a perfect start, quite literally:

'The first round went pretty good, and I won both moto's. Trampas Parker was the guy that was gonna take the title and KTM put all of their efforts into him. After that first round everything changed; all of a sudden it was a case of doing whatever it took to make it happen from here.'

So, what changed from 1995 – '96 to be so dominant at that first round? Shayne King is one of those people that knows what he wants and when things are right or wrong. He created a team with a specific environment, and it was based on simply having the right people around him for him to do his job. His training went up a level and he also brought in Hendrik Nolting as his mechanic. When he lined up for the first GP of '96, King already knew he would win: 'When I'd won it, I felt like that bullet proof rider I'd always wanted to be.'

As the season went on, King gained in confidence and went on to win 7 races; he also stood on the podium 8 times, with 6 of those celebrated from the top step. The turning point of the season came after he jarred his thumb when he over-jumped a downhill at Sverepce, Slovakia, injuring his thumb. If he was to win the title, he needed to cut out those silly mistakes and from there on, consistency and starts would play a vital role.

Two rounds later, he went on a consistent run which saw him place inside the top three no fewer than 8 times from 10 races. With one round to go, King was within touching distance of winning the title.

What About the Bike?

Having raced the KTM the previous year, the differences were subtle apart from the extra factory parts and support. Going from the 500cc Honda to the 360cc KTM was always going to be a risk, wasn't it? Surely it would be down on power compared to the 500's and the 'coming-back-in-fashion' 4-strokes, where engine capacity was as much as 600cc?

'The KTM 360cc was much nimbler! That feeling you get when you ride a 125cc against a 250cc, if you ride it hard, you can sometimes be faster on a 125cc, so from that side I had to ride it hard. I knew that I had to be faster and I had to be fitter, I had to be stronger; the bike was so much more nimble that I could do so many more things with it and I could put it in places compared to the 500cc or 4-stroke, especially in the corners.'

'There wasn't actually a lot of difference between the '95 and '96, but what we did do was spending a lot of time testing exhausts to make the bike more rideable, because the big thing for me was about getting the starts. I knew that if I could get around the first corner in first, those first two laps were my thing, so if I did that I would just go. Suspension was also important; the bike had enough power, it needed to just have enough power to get me that holeshot every time, especially against those big 4-strokes.'

'For a 360cc it just had lots of torque and it just grew from there; it was so good out of the corners especially in 2nd, so I tried to make sure it was a 2nd, 3rd, 4th gear bike. It was important to put power to the ground and it was so easy to ride.'

A crucial part of the puzzle was King's mechanic, Hendrik Nolting:

'We started with three weeks of engine testing in New Zealand in January. Shayne had a stock 360cc and I had a bunch of parts with me to test. I was worried to be too far away from Austria if something went wrong or additional parts were needed, but the opposite was true. With New Zealand being 12 hours ahead of Europe I would report to Sepp Höllbacher, former head of KTM's two stroke development, in the late afternoon, which was early morning in Austria so we were literally working 24/7.'

'When we returned from New Zealand, we wanted to do some suspension tests with WP, but they were way behind schedule with





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1990 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS



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1996 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

#9

KTM
World Champion

SHAYNE KING

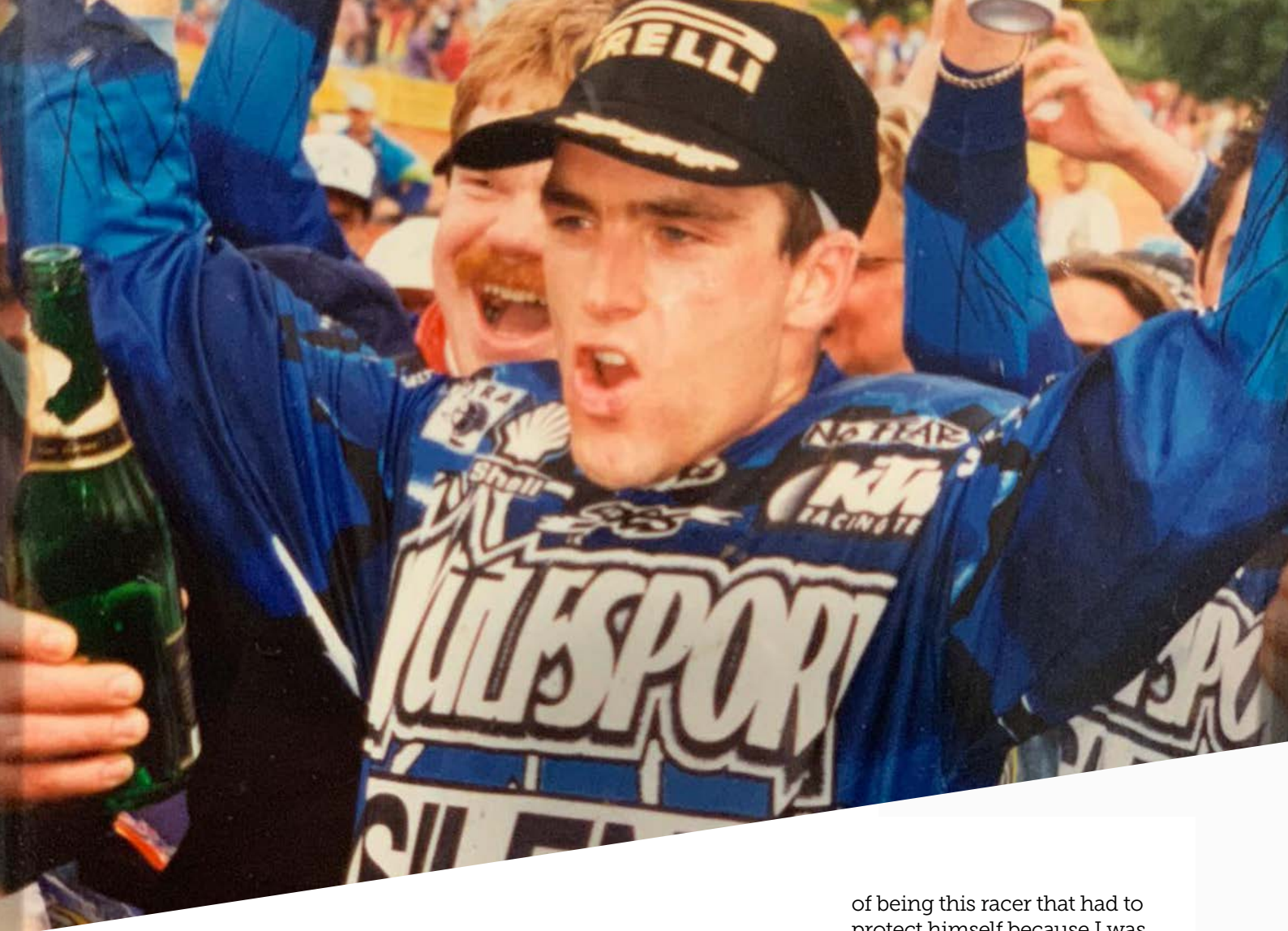


development of the new 50mm conventional forks (standard was 40mm and USD), so we only did one test shortly before the first GP in Asti. Luckily, we had a very good suspension guy, Ari Skog, working for us and the stuff he had prepared for Shayne was almost spot on. The rear shocks were based on the standard shock with coated bodies and shafts.'

'The bikes started out as stock, and most of the special parts we received from KTM were preproduction parts that would become standard the year after; only a few things were really 'factory' as we know it today. Working closely with Sepp Höllbacher, we came up with a couple of items though that only Shayne would get, but most of them were hidden inside the engine, with the only real obvious difference being the 'KTC' exhaust chamber on top of the exhaust port, which basically did the same thing as the chambers do on modern 4-stroke header pipes.'

'The swingarm and linkage were standard and the frame was reinforced with a couple of additional gussets, and these were changed every three GP's, but Shayne was very fussy about his clutch set-up. We used standard clutches with slightly harder springs, but with Honda CR250 clutch perches, levers and cables. It took us a while to find the right combination of all components, and in the end, we found that the SHELL Quatro TX 4 stroke motor oil we ended up using, made the biggest difference for his starts. The 5-speed gearbox and ratio was standard, but the shafts and gears were handpicked for tighter tolerances.'

'The cylinder volume was 368cm^3 (standard was 357cm^3) with a different bore and stroke. Cranks, rods, cylinders and heads were factory and prepared by Sepp Höllbacher only. We started with forged KÖNIG pistons but changed to cast VERTEX pistons halfway through the season. Carburetors were 39mm KEIHIN PWKs, with enlarged float bowls. Reed cages were standard with short-ended opening restrictors and with a



spacer between engine cases and reed cage. The reeds were preproduction carbon. Exhaust pipes and silencers came from SPES in Belgium and we had a couple of different versions to start with, but in the end, Shayne had just one favourite.'

'The ignitions were Kokusan, with CDI's that could also be modified via computer. The radiators were slightly wider than standard for enhanced cooling. The brakes were standard, but the master cylinders and pistons were handpicked by BREMBO. Brake pads front were TOSHIBA sinter and EBC organic rear, and the discs were standard.'

History Maker

Heading into the final round at Gaildorf, Germany, King held a 33-point lead, with 50 still up for grabs. Were there any nerves? No! King's plan was to go out and do what he'd already been doing: 'My thoughts were the same as always,

just go and get the holeshot and run away!'

Thinking about the plan and executing it are two very different things though, and it wasn't long before reality kicked in: 'I got the holeshot and ran away for the first few laps, and all of a sudden I started to have "don't crash" thoughts and I just started going backwards, to 2nd, then 3rd, and 4th then 5th. I thought "not good!" But then I regrouped I guess, and back then the races were 45 minutes long; that's a long time to think about winning the championship.' When King crossed the finish line in 5th, the Kiwi had just realised his dream of becoming world champion, the first ever from New Zealand.

'Probably the hardest race of the year was that first race at Gaildorf, and it showed in my result. It was weird. Up to that point everything felt so natural, but after the first two or three laps of that first race, it all felt so unusual, like all of a sudden I'm in this different zone

of being this racer that had to protect himself because I was afraid of losing everything that I'd done.'

As kids who race motorcycles, we all have this dream of one day becoming world champion, and Shayne King was no different. The reality is that not everybody gets to realise that dream. For King, his dream came true:

'At 16 years-old I wrote down on a piece of paper that I wanted to be world champion before I was 25 years-old. I got my dad to sign it and then I put it away; I've still got it today. The day before my 25th birthday, on September 8th 1996, I won the world championship. I was 24! (The final round of the championship was September 8th, Shayne turned 25 a day later). So, for me it was my childhood dream that became a reality, because I worked hard and fought for everything that you need to fight for when you've got a dream like that; my dream came true.'

Photos: Shayne King's



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