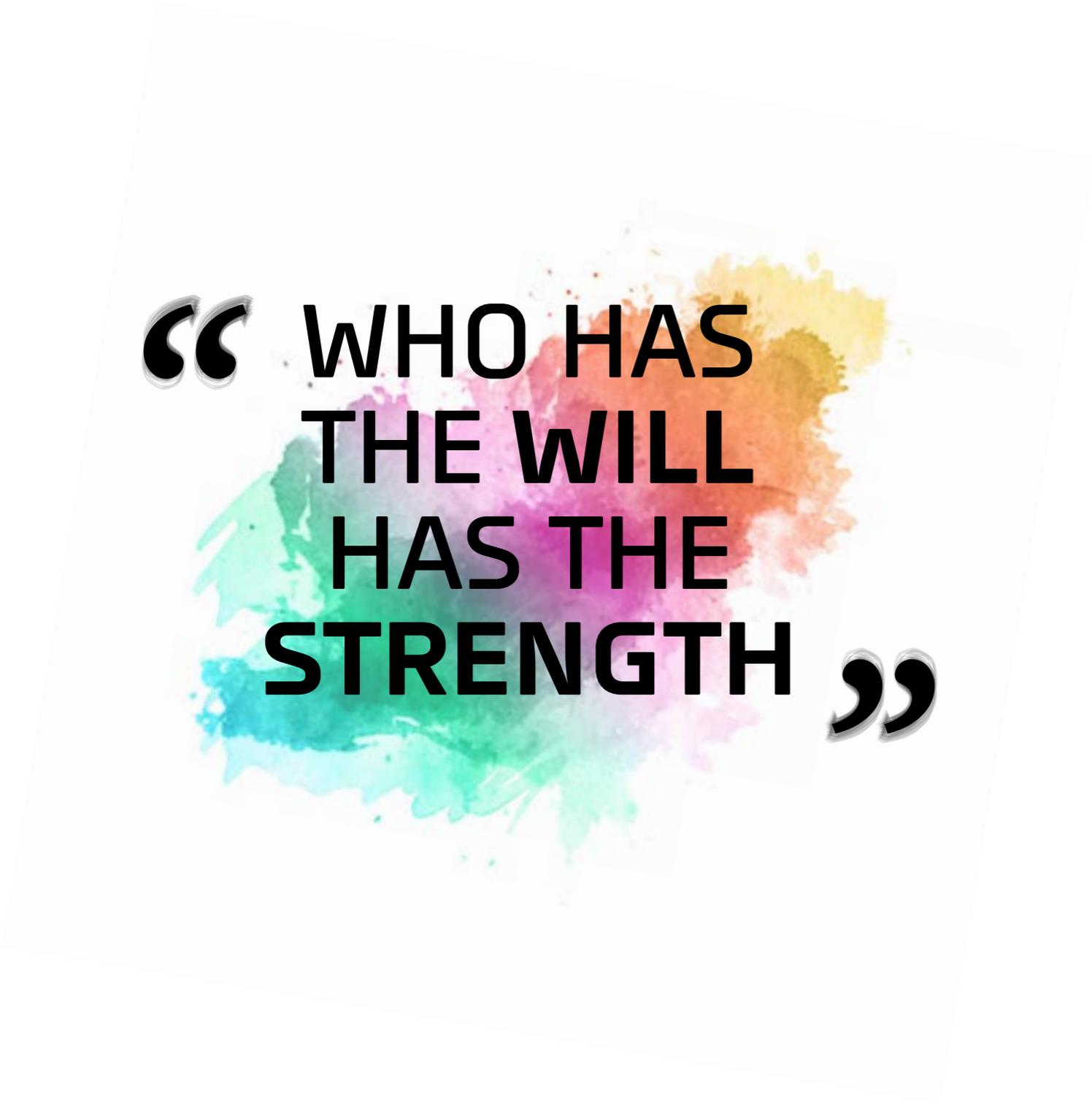


DREAM BIG



FIM
WOMEN
IN MOTORCYCLING



**“ WHO HAS
THE WILL
HAS THE
STRENGTH ”**

Introduction

**If you can DREAM it,
you can DO it**

Why should your dreams only be dreams when you can make them reality?

Motorcycling is typically known as masculine world, but for decades already women have made a stronger and stronger impact on the world of speed. Many strong pioneers have softened the path for the future generations thanks to the examples they have set.

This is not a man's world, this is a world of making your dreams come true. So get ready for the fascinating stories that you are about to read. Get ready to be inspired, get ready to work hard and follow your own dreams!

The FIM and FIA women's commissions organised a joint World Conference on Women in Motorsport in Finland on 17-18 of August 2019. This book is a legacy of this ground breaking event.

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6 Adeline & Augusta Van Buren

(USA) - First women to cross the USA on solo bikes

Sisters Augusta Van Buren (born in 1884) and Adeline Van Buren (born in 1889) are regarded as the first women to ride their own motorcycles across America. The sisters did their groundbreaking journey in 1916, just a year after a proposal to allow women the right to vote had been rejected. America was about to enter World War I, and Augusta and Adeline wanted to become dispatch riders to show America and the US military that women are able to ride motorcycles just as well as men. Furthermore, there was an even bigger meaning behind their journey because one of the arguments for denying women the right to vote was their lack of military service.

The sisters' journey supported both the National Preparedness Movement and the Women's Suffrage Movement, and started from New York on 4 July 1916, the USA's Independence Day. 32-year-old Augusta and 27-year-old Adeline rode cross-country 1000cc Indian Model F motorcycles, worth \$275 each, wearing military-style riding uniforms.

They decided to wear men's leather boots and gear as it was the most practical to use, but in the end they were arrested several times for wearing men's clothing. The duo rode in bad weather conditions on poor and occasionally extremely muddy roads. One of the highlights of their journey was climbing the 14 000 foot (4,3km) Pike's Peak in Colorado as no woman before them had climbed Pikes Peak with a motor vehicle.

On September 8th, after two demanding months crossing the rugged country, Augusta and Adeline successfully arrived in Los Angeles, California.

They decided to continue to Tijuana Mexico where they finished their 5 500 mile trip. Before the Van Buren sisters only Effie Hotchkiss had ridden across the US with a sidecar which she had done the year before, travelling from Brooklyn to San Francisco with her mother Avis as a passenger.



Despite their effort and the fame gained from the journey, the military applications of Augusta and Adeline were ultimately rejected. Although the Van Buren sisters did not succeed with their aim to work for the army, they showed the world that women were able to ride just as well as men.

Later in life Adeline earned a law degree and Augusta became a women's rights activist. The legacy of the sisters has influenced many female and male riders for decades. In 2002 Augusta and Adeline were inducted into the AMA's Motorcycle Hall of Fame and in 2003 they were inducted into the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum & Hall of Fame.

"WOMAN CAN, IF SHE WILL."



©Courtesy of the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame

Ana Carrasco

(Spain) – First female rider to win FIM Open Class World Championship

Born on 10 March 1997 in Murcia, Spain 22 year old Ana Carrasco is the first woman in the history of motorcycling to win a World Championship as a rider in an open class. In 2018 Ana was crowned as FIM World Champion in the SPP300 category of the World Superbike class.

Ana had her first motorcycle at 3 years old, as her family has always been connected to the motorcycle World. Her father Alfonso is a mechanic and has a family motorcycle workshop. He also worked in the competitions with different riders before Ana was born, so practically before starting to walk she already had her first motorcycle.

Ana started practicing the sport for fun and at the age of 4 she participated for the first time in a race. From that moment on until the age of 13 she went through different regional and national championships (Championships of Madrid, Andalusia, Extremadura, Murcia, Mediterranean, MotoDES...) and in different categories (minimotos, 70cc, 80cc and PreGP 125cc). She was always a rider to be respected in all the championships, getting numerous victories and even championships during her first years in the competition World, achieving three of them during just one season.

Due to her good results, in 2011 Ana had the opportunity to debut in the 125cc GP Spanish Championship, the highest-level championship before the World Cup. She was then only 14 years old which was the minimum age to participate. Ana became the first female to score points in this category, also getting the best classification for the starting grid and the best position in the race with a 7th place.

In 2012, Ana participated again in the Spanish Championship, this time in the Moto3 category, which replaced the old 125cc class. She surprised everyone by being one of the fastest and most consistent riders in the Championship, fighting for leading positions in some of the races. She also got another unique title, being the first female rider to get a sixth place on the starting grid. During this year, Ana also participated in the European Championship and competed in a single race taking a solid 11th position.



©PSP/Lukasz Swiderek



In 2013, at the age of 16 Ana made her way into the FIM Moto3 World Championship with Team Calvo, being the youngest rider in the history to debut in a category of the MotoGP World Championship. During the season she managed to write her name again in the history books as the first Spanish female rider to score on 13-10-13 at the Sepang Circuit (Malaysia), getting the best classification of a Spanish female rider on the grid with a seventh place at the Circuit Phillip Island (Australia) and the best classification in the race with an eighth position in the last race of the season, at the Circuit of Valencia (Spain).

Ana's good results gave her the opportunity to continue in the World Championship in 2014 within the Dutch RW Racing GP structure. And in 2015, Ana Carrasco raced her third season in the Moto3 World Championship, with the RBA Racing Team. The season was not easy for Ana due to several injuries suffered during the events of the championship, so at the end of the season she had to leave the championship due to a serious injury she had suffered mid-season with her left shoulder as it did not allow her to race in a good condition.

After the hard setback of having had to leave the World Championship, in 2016 Ana participated in the Moto2 European Championship, a year she used as a transition while recovering 100% from her injury and took the opportunity to gain experience in this new category. In 2017 Ana returned to the World Championship, this time within the FIM Superbike World Championship in the SSP300 category and that season she became the first woman in history to win a race in an FIM World Championship, at the Circuit of Portimao (Portugal), finishing 8th in the overall classification of the Championship. This result opened many doors for the following season. In 2018 Ana signed for the DS Junior Team and began to have support from Kawasaki. She got her first victory of the season at the Circuit of Imola (Italy), where she became the first woman in history to lead a World Championship and with another consecutive

victory at the Circuit of Donington (England) she got a good amount of points that helped her manage the rest of the season. In the last race, at the Circuit of Magny-Cours (France) and after some thrilling moments, she became the first woman in history to win a FIM World Championship title as a rider.

In 2019 Ana is still racing in the same category, together with Kawasaki and within the Provec Racing structure, the current World Championship team in the Superbike category for the fourth consecutive year. Ana, with the number 1 on her motorcycle, is in full defence of her World title and is at this moment second in the overall classification of the SSP300 World Championship.



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"RIDE LIKE A GIRL."

10 Annie Bader

(Lebanon) - First woman from the Middle East to race motorcycles

Annie is a Lebanese motorcycle enthusiast, one of the first women to start riding motorcycles in the Middle East and the first ever to participate in official motorcycle races.

Always known for her strong character and rebellious mindset, Annie was always expected to break boundaries. Her story began in 2010 when she decided to buy her first motorcycle, at the age of 26, in a country that did not exactly encourage women to be involved in any dangerous or so-called "manly" sports. And because it was somehow not the best idea at the time, she had to do it!

Her first motorcycle - a red Kawasaki 250cc, which she shipped from the US - did not quench her thirst quite enough - after all, riding with a crazy bunch of men for almost a year, a bigger engine displacement and a whole lot of guts were a must. So, she sold it and bought a Suzuki GSXR750 that threw her back whenever she wanted to twist the throttle. She soon built the reputation of a fierce rider who was not afraid to try and fall in order to learn and better her skills. That is what caught the attention of the Lebanese Motorcycle Club and later the Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation who were keen on supporting women from the area to engage in racing and open the doors wide for them to test their potential in that sport.

She participated in several rounds of the QSBK, a mixed gender race held on Losail Track, Qatar, in 2013, and took 2nd place at the first round, in the 600-cc division, although she had never been on a track before in her life.

After returning to Lebanon she started organising and engaging in activities to rally women around this sport. She knew that introducing this idea to the ladies required a lot of input.

Thankfully this specific type of input came effortlessly to her; she was so determined to convince women that they can do whatever they set their minds to, and she adored motorcycles, so there it was, a perfect combination! In 2015, she hosted "Quickshift" an Automotive show that aired on LBC, one of the most watched local channels in Lebanon and the



region. She enjoyed learning about the automotive topic in general and test rode the motorbikes that featured in the show. She used her media exposure in Quickshift as well as other shows where she appeared as a guest, to spread awareness about women in motorcycling and their on-road safety.

Lately Annie has participated in the Women Riders World Relay ripple movement, brought to the Middle East by her dear friend, Lara Tarabay Saab, an inspirational fellow Lebanese motorcycle rider who lives in the UAE, and with whom she co-founded The Litas Lebanon, the Lebanese branch of a World-renowned motorcycling community for women.

She also launched the Women's Commission in the Lebanese Motorcycle Club, supported by its president Eng. Ali Dagher as well as FIM Women, through which she is passionately working towards supporting women from Lebanon and the region to start riding. Annie always believed that the initial obstacle was never the culture of the country. In fact, she always said "when I decided to do it, no one stopped me". The obstacle was the women's perception of themselves, their fear of not being strong enough, their hesitation towards whether this, or any other dream, is worth all the effort. Her message to women is loud and clear: "you are good enough to be whomever you decide to be".

Her strong belief in this value and the way she carries it in her life, is inspiring women around her, if not to ride, at least to believe that they can.



**"YOU ARE
GOOD
ENOUGH TO BE
WHOMEVER
YOU DECIDE TO
BE."**

©Patrick Baz

Ashley Fiolek

(USA) - Youngest WMA Champion, 4-time AMA WMX Champion

The most iconic woman in American motocross is 28-year-old former professional motocross athlete Ashley Fiolek. Ashley has broken down more barriers than most to say the least, not only because she was born profoundly deaf, but because she was a female in a male dominated industry.

Ashley was born in 1990 in Dearborn, Michigan. Being deaf since her birth never stopped her dreaming and making her dreams come true. She became familiar with motorcycles already as a young child as her family rode through the woods at her grandfather's cabin. When Ashley was 3 years old she got her first bike, Yamaha PW50.

Ashley started to race when she was 7 years old. She had big dreams of becoming a professional women's motocross racer, not only did she achieve this dream, she was a forced to be reckoned with! Ashley was the first ever woman motocross racer to earn a full factory ride like her male counterpart. Along with earning a full factory ride Ashley is a four-time WMA/WMX National Motocross Champion and two-time ESPN X Games Gold Medalist (Women's Super X).

In 2008, Ashley dethroned five-time WMA Champion Jessica Patterson to become the youngest WMA champion ever. She stood alone to advance women's racing in the U.S. to the next level of performance, recognition, and prestige. Not bad for her pro debut, which also featured a debilitating mid-season broken wrist.

In 2009 Ashley continued winning several races and at the end of the season she was crowned as WMX Pro National Champion despite the fact that she finished the final of the season in pain due to a collarbone fracture. She also won her first X Games gold medal in Women's Moto X Super X at X Games 15. This made her the X Games' first deaf medalist,



©Husky



This made her the X Games' first deaf medalist, and the youngest-ever Women's Motocross Association champion. In the same year she was also named Deaf Person of the Month by DeafPeople.com. During the following year she won the X Games Gold Medal in Super X Women's class again. In 2011 Ashley bought the title of WMX Pro National to herself, although at the X Games she crashed during the practice and was unable to compete. In 2012 she missed the X Games again due to a concussion which she suffered in a crash at WMX. However, come the end of the season she was crowned for the fourth time WMX Pro National Champion, even if she had to recover for part of the season.

Ashley's success and inspirational story skyrocketed her into mainstream media with an Emmy award winning Red Bull commercial and appearances on, Conan O'Brien and "Switched at Birth". Ashley gained Worldwide coverage and is the only woman motocross racer to appear on a cover of a nationwide publication, Transworld Motocross Magazine. She has graced the pages of, Vogue, Sports Illustrated and Rolling Stone Magazine and is the co-author of her book "Kicking Up Dirt." During her years as a racer Ashley had the fortunate opportunity to visit schools and organisations to share her story. She has spoken to people about chasing their dreams no matter what challenges they may have in life. Ashley also had the opportunity to do different charitable work. She found it really rewarding.

Although Ashley no longer races, she spreads her passion and love for motocross through her riding school, Ashley Fiolek MX Schools and is a brand ambassador for Husqvarna Motorcycles and Fox Racing.

"ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE."



©Drew Ruiz

Avalon Biddle

(New Zealand) - FIM European Women's Cup Champion - New Zealand Supersport 600cc Champion

Avalon Biddle was born in Auckland, New Zealand, in 1992. A passion for motorsport and two-wheels was instilled into this determined and diligent Kiwi girl from birth. Raised within a family of former cyclists, Biddle even remembers having dreams of racing in the Tour de France one day. It never crossed her mind that her gender could be a barrier to achieving big goals: she always had big ambitions.

When she was 6, Biddle's father, Keith, brought her first motorcycle (a peewee 50) home in the back of his car. While her mum, Bev, worked on the weekends, Avalon and her brother Travers would ride dirt bikes with their dad. Keith was always in the garage tinkering and Avalon clearly shared his passion for motorsport. She loved going to Speedway, Drag, Karting and Circuit Racing events, having developed a solid interest in engines and going fast! She also fondly remembers riding her 50cc motorcycle with the throttle wide open at the local school field. Naturally, it wasn't long before she started racing.

Biddle enjoyed everything about racing Mini Motocross – except for the jumps. Leaving the ground was frightening and a technique she never mastered. She was 10 when the family moved to a new house, and finances were too tight for them to continue racing motocross, and it was put aside.

Over the next few years her father took up "Bucket Racing": a form of miniature Road Racing on airfields and Go-Kart tracks. The sport was designed to be affordable and fun. Although Avalon's father probably spent more time tuning his homemade two-stroke RG50 than he did riding it, Avalon loved going to the racetrack with him. She remembers one of his sayings: "You just have to do the best you can with what you have". A quote she has carried with her the rest of her life.

Biddle had to patiently wait until she turned 13 to try Bucket Racing, as this was the minimum age in New Zealand. She immediately fell in love. The organiser had to put the chequered flag out during her first session as she was getting her knee down already, and the borrowed set of leathers she was wearing didn't have knee sliders attached! Her first Road Racer was a XR100 trail bike with clip-on handlebars, rear-sets and slick tires. It wasn't long before the engine was put into a proper race frame, however. She was then fighting at the front of the Formula 5 class, rubbing elbows with men four times her age.

At 14, still wearing her motocross boots and borrowed gear, Biddle won her first NZ National Championship race in the Streetstock 150cc class, racing at the World's most Southern Race Track, Teretonga. Biddle and her family went to Australia that same year competing in 150cc class. A huge passion for the sport of Motorcycle racing quickly consumed her entire life: attending track days, race schools, studying riding techniques, fixing bikes, finding sponsorship and building fitness... staying up until 2am to watch the MotoGP races from Europe often made for a tired girl at school on Mondays! In 2008 the family bought a 125GP race bike for Biddle.

Many fond memories were created with this bike, including racing at Phillip Island (Australia), and winning the New Zealand Grand Prix in 2009.



©Drew Aaron Staples Photography



Biddle spent nearly every weekend getting in as many laps as possible, and the family would drive home all night after race meetings so her parents could get back to work on Monday and Avalon to school. The struggle for sponsorship was extreme over this time. Avalon and her parents had a list of over 200 companies which they had approached for sponsorship, with no success. Despite racing the Asia Road Race Championship in Sugo, Japan, in 2010, and riding as a wildcard at the 2011 Australian Grand Prix, overseas opportunities were hard to come by – especially with NZ being so far away from Europe. The sad realisation eventually became true: that racing a 125GP bike in Europe was unaffordable. Consequently, Biddle made the step up to the 600cc Supersport class in NZ.

The 600cc machine was initially hard to ride for a 5-foot-tall woman. Compared to the 125GP machines, Supersport bikes are heavy and powerful, needing to be raced aggressively. Despite a tough start, good fortune swung in Biddle's direction when a local organisation, WIL Sport, gave her the opportunity to race in Italy in the 2012 CBR600 Cup. So, at 19, she packed her bags and headed to Europe alone. She impressed many that season with some great results and additionally, finished 2nd in the Italian Women's Championship in the same year.

Halfway through the 2012 Italian racing season she had received some devastating news: Keith had terminal liver cancer. However, the family desperately wanted her to stay in Europe and continue living her dream, which she did. When she returned home at the end of the year, it was just 12 days before her beloved father passed away. What followed were the toughest times of her life. Amazing support from friends and family allowed Biddle to return to Italy for a second season in the 2013 CBR600 Cup. Despite the extremely tough competition, she had some excellent top 10 finishes and ran as high as sixth at Imola before crashing out. Many crashes in the season hindered her overall result but the lap times were very impressive, especially considering the mental challenges of being so far away from home. During the 2014 season (she raced in the Italian Moto3 Championship with the Rumi project. This was a development project which succeeded, with the team taking 14th place at the final round of the Championship at Mugello.

In 2015, Biddle had the opportunity to race in the World Superbike Championship in the European Junior Cup. She won the Women's category for two years in a row in this class. In 2016, she won every race of the Women's category in this class and finished inside the Top 15 in the Overall standings at every race. Biddle started the World Supersport 300cc Championship in 2017. After struggles with the team and her bike, she retired from the season at the halfway point and returned home.



©Drew Aaron Staples Photography

During these six years of serious competition, Biddle spent seven months of the year in Europe and five months at home. Finding the sponsorship to race overseas was always the biggest challenge. According to her, being a woman was never an obstacle in achieving her racing goals but, being from New Zealand where motorcycle racing isn't so popular, provided difficulties. Nowadays she focuses on helping raise the profile of the sport in Australasia.

In 2019 partly achieved her goal by winning the New Zealand Supersport 600cc Championship. Beating the male competitors in this class brought huge satisfaction and media attention. She hopes to win again in the future! Nowadays, Biddle remains one of the top contenders in the Supersport 600cc Championship in New Zealand and Australia, whilst also advocating for Junior Road Racing and Rider Safety on the roads. Her passion for motorsport remains unwavering as she also works full-time in marketing for a motorsport electronics company.

**"YOU MUST BE THE
CHANGE YOU WISH
TO SEE TO THE
WORLD."**

Beulah Schoeman

(South Africa) - Former FIM Africa President, First CFM Director

Born on 29 August 1944 in Winburg in South Africa, Beulah Schoeman first became interested in motorsport in her teens after she attended an International Nine Hour Endurance Race with her brother at the Kyalami International circuit.

She had to abandon her dreams of studying Law due to ill-health and decided to do a two year Business Management and Financial Administration course. Although she initially accepted positions at two law firms, neither position afforded her the opportunity to be more 'involved' with legal issues and so when the Sports Car Club of South Africa (SCC) advertised for an Administrative Secretary, she applied for the position because of her interest in motorsport.

Beulah joined SCC on 1 February 1966 and during her employment was responsible for the running of the club's head office as well as its 28 branches and the 200 odd events under its auspices for all motorsport categories. At the time, SCC was the largest motorsport association in South Africa with 5,000 members (competitors and officials) and organisers of events at Kyalami and other non-circuit events. During her employment at SCC she was promoted to position of Manager and worked as Event Secretary at 15 SA F1 Grands Prix; 2 FIM International Motorcycle Circuit Racing and a FIM Motocross event. Before her retirement as President of FIM Africa in March 2015, and as a FIM Board member as a consequence, Beulah's motorsport career spanned five decades.

In January 1983 Beulah took up her first executive position in motorsport when she left SCC and was appointed Asst. Manager of AA Motorsport (a division of Automobile Association of SA - AASA); moving through the ranks to become General Manager until 1995, when AASA relinquished its sporting powers to Motorsport South Africa (MSA). The new MSA Board unanimously decided to appoint Beulah as its Managing Director, a position she held until her retirement at the end of 2009. As Managing Director, Beulah was not only responsible for the compilation and execution of company policies, resolutions, business plans and strategies, but also ensuring that all motorsport policies were effectively implemented and communicated to its various Sporting Commissions and Panels, competitors and its approximately 2,000 licensed officials and 1,200 events on its annual calendar.

Beulah became the Titular representative for MSA for FIA and FIM and regularly attended their Congresses. She attended her first FIM Congress in New Zealand in 1991. She was appointed Hon. President of MSA following her retirement.

In 1992 Beulah was unanimously elected by African countries as President of the FIA Confederation of African Countries in Motorsport, in which position she represented Africa in the FIA World Rally Commission. She was unanimously re-elected to this position until her decision to resign at the end of 1998 due to increased work commitments. Beulah, assisted by less than a handful of MSA staff members, organised two extremely successful FIM Congresses (1998 Cape Town and 2008 Durban). Both Congresses were held in the previous FIM format over a 6-day period and included a day excursion to showcase the host country to delegates from around the world.



©FIM Patrice Moullet



She was unanimously elected by all African countries at the 1998 FIM Congress in Cape Town as President of FIM's African Continental Union – FIM Africa (then known as African Motorcycle Union). She was unanimously re-elected to this position thereafter until her decision to fully retire March, 2015, leaving a solid foundation for those who followed to continue and ensuring the promotion and growth of all forms of motorcycling in Africa. She was appointed Hon. President of FIM Africa on her retirement. When Adv. Francesco Zerbi, FIM President at the time, decided in 2006 that the FIM should create a Women's Commission, he requested Beulah to compile a business plan and to head up such a Commission. As no other International Federation had a Women's Commission at the time, Beulah had no role model to turn to for advice and based her business plan on the vision that Commission members should represent various categories of motorcycling to ensure that women were represented in all spheres of motorcycling, not only as competitors, but also officials and non-sporting activities under FIM auspices. The first meeting of the Women's Commission took place at the 2006 FIM Congress in Brazil. The creation of the FIM Women in Motorcycling Commission, led to the FIA deciding a few years later to also create a Women's Commission, promoting women in all spheres of automobile sport. In early 2009, Beulah persuaded the MSA Board to approve the creation of a Women's Panel in South Africa, based on the same principles as the FIM's Women's Commission – and she then ensured that FIM Africa also introduced a Women's Commission afterwards. Beulah was a member of FIM's Strategy Committee and also served on the following FIM bodies – and remains the only South African to have served in such positions.

1998 - 2015 First FIM Africa President (and member of FIM Board as CONU President)
 2010 - 2014 FIM Executive Bureau Member
 2006 - 2012 First Women in Motorcycling Commission President
 1996 - 1998 President – Promotion Commission
 1993 - 1995 Vice President – Promotion Commission

As a result of her commitment, dedication and passion, Beulah received many accolades during her career:

- Honours and Regional Colours Awards from clubs, sponsors and promoters
- National Sports Council's Protea Award as "Sport Administrator of the Year" – 1997
- National Sports Council's Protea Award as "Sport Administrator of the Year" – 1997
- Finalist Lebone programme – Women on the Move – 1997
- SA State President's (Pres. Nelson Mandela) Silver Medal Award – Sport Administration – 1998
- Special Merit Award – Outstanding Contribution to Motorsport – SA Guild of Motoring Journalists – 2006
- Finalist – Sport Category – SA Women of the Year - 2007
- Winner - GSport Women of the Year – 2008
- MSA Life Time Achiever Award – 2013
- Winner - SA Guild of Motoring Journalist Colin Watling Award – 2013
- FIM Nicolas Rodil del Valle Gold Medal Merit Award – 2015

An example of her commitment and passion can be found from 1974 when SA experienced a serious fuel crisis and the Government banned all forms of "motorised" sport, which would have meant the end of motorsport in South Africa. Beulah started a petition and obtained 110,000 signatures in less than 3 weeks (long before the advent of internet, social media or even faxes!). The petition was presented to Parliament in Cape Town and resulted in Government lifting the ban and allowing 100 motorsport events per annum while the fuel crisis existed.

"NEVER GIVE UP – BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!"

Camelia Liparoti

(Italy) 6-time FIM Cross Country Women's World Cup Champion

Camelia Liparoti has been labelled a "Dakar Legend", a title reserved for riders who have taken part at least ten times in the most prestigious of rallies. Better still, she has made it ten times to the finishing line, a prowess, on Quad and, since 2017, in SSV.

French-Italian Camelia was born in Livorno, Tuscany. As an extreme fanatic she got fascinated by adventurous sports and especially motorsport as a child.

Despite living up in the mountains and having climbed up mountains like Mont Blanc and a peak of over 6 kilometres in Tibet, it was the desert that attracted Camelia most. So she started to race on a quad at the FIM Cross Country Rallies winning the women's title 6 times in a row between 2009 and 2014.

Behind her success has been her mental power. Camelia has shown absolute vigour and a fighting spirit, teamed with efficient riding full of finesse, as is proved by the lack of flat tyres over the 5,000 kilometres of race for the 40th Edition. When approaching an adventure, the "Pink Panther" never lets go of anything, she pushes herself to her limits and goes to the end of her strengths. She fights like a lioness to face the difficult times and finds solutions to the many pitfalls that punctuate the tracks of off-road rallies.

Over the seasons, Camelia has developed an efficient and delicate steering style, which is shown by the absence of punctures on many rallies. Since moving from the handlebars to the steering wheel, Camelia has been also often a navigator for Rosa Romero Font, they form a 100% ladies crew in this tough World. Camelia is never so fierce as when the race is long,



difficult, grueling, harming the mechanics and the crew, testing the will of the competitors. When hell is apparent, Camelia is accomplished in dealing with difficulty.

A performance all the more remarkable that is led, unlike many of its rivals, a Yamaha YXZ1000R very close to its production state, with a three-cylinder engine strictly original. Limited by the power, Camelia compensates by an excellent reading of the track and a sense of navigation in which she always finds the best path.

From Morocco to Argentina or Peru, from Qatar to Sardinia, through China, she has travelled across all the deserts on the planet, often competing, winning 6 FIM World Championships in the Women's Quad/Motorcycle category. Throughout the years, she has honed her physical preparation and will not hesitate to train in the sauna in her riding gear, including helmet and boots, to get used to extreme temperatures – all whilst roaming the Alps, where she resides, to get used to a depletion of oxygen.

Her passion has grown stronger over the years and at the start of each race, Camelia shows a level of enthusiasm that goes hand in hand with her curiosity to discover new horizons.

"PINK IS THE NEW BLACK."



©MCH Photography

Celina Liebmann

(Germany) - First woman to win German Speedway Championship

Born 2001 in Wasserburg am Inn, Celina Liebmann was the first woman to win the German Speedway Championship and earn the runners up spot in the FIM Long Track World Championship.

Celina grew up in a small village close to Munich. Her family had always been into motorsports since her father Jürgen Liebmann had been a successful Ice Speedway rider. He ended his career in 2003. Back then as a professional rider he competed in races all over the World and so his daughter Celina was soon infected with his enthusiasm for motorsports. Her father took her to a training session in Olching near Munich to get to know Speedway a bit better. What he didn't expect was that she wanted to get on the bike by herself immediately. The MSC Olching gave her the chance to try out the bikes and the track for some days. Soon she got her first helmet, her first 50cc bike and the other basic equipment she needed.

In 2007 she began her own Speedway career. It didn't take long until other Clubs in Bavaria saw her talent and so the AC Landshut wanted to have her in their Team.

In 2011 Celina changed her bike for a bigger capacity one, and with her 125cc she could compete in her first European and World Championship events where she did quite well. But of course, there has also been setbacks that the team has had to deal with. In her first year of competition, she broke her collarbone and one year after she needed to have surgery to fix a broken arm. However, the team surrounding the then 10-year-old girl didn't give up. They started to drive longer distances to the races so that she could gain more experience. Distances of 800 kilometres just one way became almost usual every week. Her riding technique improved a lot and Celina started to feel equal and comfortable next to all the male riders in her age group. In 2014 she stood on a podium in second place at the German-Championships in the 125cc class.



Her change to the 250cc class came in 2015. Since she had ridden a lot of races in northern Germany she didn't have a hard time finding clubs that she could ride for. In her first year she had so many victories that she was nominated to ride at the World-Championships in France. In 2016 she was the first German woman to win the German Speedway Championship. Her male rivals were more and more astonished by her talent. In 2017 the DMSB sent her to the FIM Long Track World Championship in the Czech Republic where she was the only girl competing. Celina won four of her five races as well the semi-final so that she reached the finals as the only German. Unfortunately, she missed the start which gave her a setback but she didn't give up and fought herself back to the Vice-title. Two months after her big success she had to defend her German title. Celina was one of the favourites, although in the first race she had an accident and broke her 6th and 10th thoracic vertebra. She would have been leading... though after many operations she fought herself back onto the track. In 2018, her last year riding the 250cc bike, she could at least make it to the podium once. She reached third place at the German Championship.

In 2019 it was time for her to climb to the highest grade in Speedway sports. So she put her 250cc bike to one side and moved onto the biggest one, the 500cc. Recently Celina has become already one of the most successful German riders and has challenged the boys to chase her. She has gained many victories over the years and a lot more is yet to come.

**“YOU CAN GET MERCY FOR FREE,
BUT YOU HAVE GOT TO WORK HARD
FOR JEALOUSY.”**



Elina Öhman

(Sweden) - 4-time Women's Snowcross World Cup Champion

24-year-old Snowcross Champion Elina Öhman lives in Älvsbyn, Sweden. Everything started in 2010 when she finally managed to start racing snowmobiles.

Although Elina was from a motorsport family, it wasn't that simple for her to be able to start racing too. It took Elina's father years of pushing and convincing her that she would follow his foot steps. Elina's father raced as well but retired after being injured.

Elina still remembers how nervous she was after the first practice session. There were so many people and mostly men, but after she had done the first session she was thrilled. It was so much fun. Elina's first racing season in 2010 started off really good, she got her first win after only a couple of races. Unfortunately at the end of the season she had a crash and broke her ACL. Elina had surgery after the season and started the rehabilitation to be ready for the next year.

The problems continued in the coming season in 2011 when Elina broke her ACL for a second time and had to return for more surgery. This meant that she missed the whole season. It wasn't the best start for her career but she was determined to recover and return to racing.

In 2012 Elina made her come back to racing, but it took some time to get back to where she was before, both psychologically and physically. However she knew what she wanted so it was easy to stay motivated. Elina worked hard and was able to take a couple of seasons to get her race fitness back to where she was competitive again.

Then came 2014 the year when everything was on point. Elina won her first gold or better yet she got triple: she won Swedish championship, Nordic championship and the World Cup gold! She was so happy about her achievement her dream had come true!



The following year was a good one too, she got two more gold medals: Swedish Championship and World Cup Championship. She also raced against the men in the series at the Swedish championship.

Elina was the first woman ever to be issued a license to race the Swedish championship together with men. For Elina, it was a nice feeling to show that women can also succeed when racing against men! But it still wasn't enough, she wanted more. Elina had always dreamed of racing in USA. She knew it would be tough but that was her goal. So after some years with success in Sweden, Elina got a chance to race in USA and she took it. Elina says it was the best decision she has made in her career. During her first year over in USA she learned a lot and finished second in the Championship. The year after she had new and better team and everything paid off.

Elina won the series in an overwhelming way: she put herself on the highest place of the podium in 14 out of 16 races. When she returned to Sweden after the season in USA, she took part in the Women's World Cup and won that too.

Elina went back to USA for another year, but she wasn't as motivated as before. It showed on the results and she also had some crashes too. After the season Elina decided not to race in USA anymore. She knew one has to be 100% ready and motivated in order to succeed, and she wasn't. However, she still wanted to race, so she did some races back home in Sweden and had a lot of fun which showed on the results too. Elina won the 2019 Swedish championship, Nordic championship and Women's World Cup again!

Elina has achieved her goals and has become the world's best snowcross rider multiple times which is an amazing achievement. At the moment Elina is waiting to see what more the future has to offer for her.



"NEVER STOP
FIGHTING
FOR WHAT
YOU BELIEVE
IN."

©Roger Strandberg

Elspeth Beard

(UK) – The first British woman to motorcycle around the world

Elspeth Beard is a motorcyclist and award-winning architect. In 1982, at the age of twenty-three, she left London and set off alone on a 35,000 mile solo adventure around the world on her 1974 BMW R60/6. In an age before email, mobile phones and satnavs, and with no sponsorship or support, she became the first British woman to motorcycle around the world.

Elspeth first rode a motorbike at the age of sixteen, when she was taught to ride a friend's Husqvarna on Salisbury Plain. Shortly after this, in 1977, she bought her first 'bike, a Yamaha YB100, as a cheap and efficient way of getting around London. A year later she upgraded to a Honda CB 250 and shortly after, in 1979, bought her BMW R60/6. Riding the 600cc Boxer BMW, Elspeth set off on her first long solo rides; first to Scotland, then Ireland, then to mainland Europe and Corsica, racking up over 10,000 miles in her first two years of ownership. In the summer of 1981 she flew out to Los Angeles where she bought a BMW R75/5 and rode it across the USA to Detroit.

In October 1982, after completing her first three years of architectural training, she decided to leave friends and family to ride her motorbike around the world. She saved some money by working at a local pub and prepared the bike for her big adventure. Having travelled across the United States the previous year she decided to start her journey in New York. From there, she rode up to Canada, then down to Mexico before reaching Los Angeles, then continued on to New Zealand and Australia. Elspeth spent seven months working in a Sydney architectural practice, gaining experience and replenishing her diminished funds. While living in a Sydney garage she constructed her own lockable top-box and panniers out of folded and riveted sheet aluminium before starting her exploration of Australia. In Queensland she had her first big accident. Riding on a dirt road near Townsville she hit a large pothole, cart-wheeled the bike and was left badly concussed. After some convalescence she travelled through the outback to Ayers Rock, and finally across the Nullarbor Plain to Perth.



©Anita Corbin



From there she travelled through Indonesia to Singapore. She rode up the Thai-Malaysian peninsula to Bangkok and beyond, to Chiang Mai and the Golden Triangle. With the overland route to India (via Burma/Myanmar) closed, Elspeth headed back south to load her bike onto a boat from Penang to Madras. On the way she had her second big accident when she hit a dog. Once again battered and bruised, but undaunted, she spent two weeks recuperating in the care of an impoverished Thai family.

From Madras she travelled up to Calcutta then on to Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal. While there she met a Dutchman on another Boxer BMW, an R75/7, with whom she eventually rode back to Europe after exploring much of India alone. Having safely crossed Pakistan, they arrived in post-revolution Iran and crossed into eastern Turkey and continued on through Europe and back to London.

Elspeth arrived home at the end of 1984; she had been away for just over two years and added 35,000 miles to her BMW's odometer. She went back to university to finish her architecture studies but has always continued to travel. While studying for her diploma she travelled to Kenya and then spent three months in North Sumatra studying the Batak houses as part of her dissertation. She travelled around Peru by motorcycle, visited Bolivia and Chile and spent six months in South Africa, Namibia and Botswana. She also returned to Australia in 1994 driving over 30,000 miles around the country. Elspeth has visited Tibet twice, and in 1997 rode an Indian-made Royal Enfield from Kathmandu to Lhasa. In 2002 she was the tour manager for Nick Sanders' World Challenge, which involved accompanying 23 motorcyclists on a 33,000-mile trip around the world in three months.

Back in 1988 Elspeth bought a 130ft derelict Victorian water tower which she spent seven years totally transforming into a unique and beautiful home for herself and her son. After the tower won five prestigious architectural awards she set up her own architectural practice, specialising in creating and remodelling interesting and unusual buildings.

Elspeth now has four motorcycles, including the trusty BMW R60/6 that carried her around the world. She never imagined that motorbikes would become such an important part of her life. After returning from her round the world trip in 1984 there was little interest in her achievement and her story remained almost untold for 25 years. In 2009 BMW International commissioned an article about her trip which was put out as a press release; it was picked up by several magazine websites and her story gradually spread around the internet. With this new interest in her achievement she was encouraged to write a book about her journey, her book *Lone Rider* was published in 2017.



©Elspeth Beard's archives

"LIVE YOUR DREAMS."

Emma Bristow

(UK) – 5-time FIM Women's Trial World Champion and FIM Women's SuperEnduro World Champion

People who don't know Emma Bristow are always shocked when they ask her what she does and she replies "I ride bikes." Then she has to explain that "Yes, girls ride bikes and yes, it's my job." Then it goes something like; "Wow you must be good" and she responds with something like "Yes I'm OK" at which point her husband will usually cut in and say "You're better than OK, she's actually a 5 times World Champion!"

Emma thinks the interest in women and girls in motorcycling is usually because it is so unexpected, but it's also why it is so beautiful when real talent emerges. When Emma was at school, she enjoyed all sport and she was very competitive. The girls didn't like playing with her at tennis because she hit the ball too hard, in hockey she would get frustrated at the other girls' lack of effort, so she decided a team sport was not for her and in athletics she would be put in for several events because she would usually win. Bikes at this point in her life were only for fun.

Emma grew up in the Lincolnshire countryside, her house is in the middle of her Grandad's farm and her family loves motorbikes. Emma's grandad (mum's dad) started two wheeled fun in Road Racing before he started riding Trial when he got older. His sons, Emma's uncles then took up Trial. Some years later Emma's mum married Emma's dad, who played football for fun, but it wasn't long before he had a bike to join in with the rest of the family. When Emma was four years old she had two uncles, a dad, a brother, three male cousins and one female cousin all older than her and all who rode bikes. Everyone always looked like they were having so much fun so it was only natural that Emma would also ask for a bike and join in. She saw it as a choice, join in and ride or sit and watch and she is not much of a spectator.

It was not long until Emma was watching the clock all day Friday whilst at school for the weekend to start so she could go play on her motorbike. Each weekend the family would come together to ride Trial bikes at the family farm.



©Pep Segales



Waking up on a Saturday morning was so exciting as Emma knew she would have a full day of riding bikes ahead of her. In her early years she never had any pressure, she was never made to ride sections or keep her feet up, instead, she would simply whizz around the farm and fields all day playing follow the leader without a care in the World. This is what got Emma hooked on bikes and it was official she had the 'bike bug', at this point she never saw Trial as a career, simply a social activity she shared with friends and family to make many happy memories together. As Emma got older, she started to ride local club Trial and it was suggested that she was quite good and should go to the Girls British Trial Championship. So in 2004 Emma's dad took her to her first national event, Round 1 of the Women's and Girls British Trial Championship. They did not have any experience between them, Emma remembers that she had not changed her air filter for two months and they had no idea what to expect, however it was fun and she won! They then decided to compete in the rest of the championship and Emma ended up winning the series to take her first ever British Championship title later that year. It was a similar story internationally, in 2006 a good friend of Emma's, who has had a big impact on her life, Donna Fox, suggested Emma should go with her to Italy and ride the European Championship. Emma's result was not the best, but it was an amazing experience. In 2008 and 2009 Emma finished 6th. In 2010 she had her first podium and finished 4th overall.

In 2008 Emma met James, who is now her husband as well as her minder. They had spoken a couple of times and seen each other at Trial, although it was at a presentation evening where they had both won British championships that Donna asked him for his number so Emma could have it. The rest is history and they had a long-distance relationship for a few years. They visited each other every weekend. They would practise together and it was not long until they brought in some bigger rocks to make improvements to her practise area. Emma would practise in the week just to show him how much better she was the next weekend when he came back to see her, with his guidance Emma began to improve dramatically.



©Pep Segales

In 2011 Emma decided against going to university and started to ride full time when she moved to join the Ossa Motorcycles Team. Emma rode Ossa for two years (2011-2012) two valuable years where she learnt, not only to be a better rider, but also a good mechanic. She could change a gearbox in 30 minutes (something she did at the 2011 SSDT on the side of the road) and listened to Nigel Birkett (Ossa UK) who told her she was weak and needed to get stronger physically. Nigel gave her exercises and it was the first time she felt someone outside of her family really believed in her and pushed her to be better. Emma remains good friends with Nigel and his wife June, however at the end of 2012 she went to test a Sherco in Spain and after much soul searching she made the difficult decision to switch brands.

2013 was Emma's first year with Sherco and what a year it was! Unfortunately, she finished 2nd in the FIM Women's Trial World Championship for the third time in a row, although this time it was close! She took her first GP win and at the last round in France she battled with her rival (and idol) Laia Sanz who got the better of Emma in the final sections of the final lap. Emma was very disappointed with another second, but she knew she was getting close and this gave her more motivation to up her game.



2013 was amazing for Emma for an unexpected reason. Towards the end of the year she started following the FIM SuperEnduro and when it was announced that the 2013/14 season was to start in Liverpool, UK Emma thought that it sounded like fun. So about two weeks before the race she got an entry and borrowed a bike from Malcolm and Rhoda Rathmell at Sherco UK. James and Emma were now living together in Lincolnshire and built a SuperEnduro track on the farm. Every day they would get up at 6am to go for a practise session before he went to work, and Emma would ride all day. She was having so much fun on a motorbike again and she loved it.

She practised hard and her lap times got better and better as she learnt to ride this bigger and completely alien bike. Her fitness grew and again they went to Liverpool with no expectation which felt amazing as it was a long time since she turned up to an event without pressure. Laia Sanz was racing, but Emma was quickest in practise, meaning she had first pick of the gate for the qualifying race and she went for the inside gate. Emma had no idea which gear to start in but somehow managed the start of her life to get the holeshot and went on to win the race, this was only qualifying with no crowd just an empty arena. The race itself was in front of a huge crowd and Emma had never felt an atmosphere like it. Unfortunately, she did not win the race, but battled with Laia and as Emma went to overtake, she fell due to lack of experience, however Emma picked it up and managed to finish in 2nd place. She rode the rest of the season over the winter period. David Knight took her a bike to Poland where she finished 4th and at the final event in France where she did not think it was even possible to win the championship, she did! It was surreal, as Emma and her mum went to the event in the motorhome alone as James was away working, meaning Emma had no mechanic or any technical support, just her faithful mum. So, her first FIM World Championship title was in Enduro and not Trial.

Later in 2014 Emma ended up winning her first FIM Women's Trial World Championship in Andorra. This was a very special moment as she had dreamt of what it would be like to be Trial World Champion and all she remembers feeling was complete relief that all the hours practising had paid off. At the finish all the girls waited for her and threw her in the air from what seemed like genuine happiness for her which she thinks is a real testament to the sport as only minutes before they were her rivals. Since 2014 Emma has won five consecutive FIM Women's Trial World Championships (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018) and she is hoping to make it six in 2019. She has achieved 23 GP wins and is still as passionate about winning as she was in 2014. She has won the Women's Class at the Scottish Six Days Trial eight times (2012-2019) with a few special first-class awards overall. Emma is also the first woman to achieve a silver spoon award at the famous Scott Trial, often considered the toughest one-day Trial in the World plus 10 British Championships.

Motorcycling is in Emma's blood and since stepping onto her first motorbike at four years old she has had bikes ever since and made thousands of amazing memories. In the beginning she certainly never thought she could be a World Champion, it was always just about having fun, but hard work has given her a fantastic opportunity which she is eternally grateful for and she wants to thank everyone who has supported and believed in her along the way. She now believes people should think big and chase their dreams as hard work, commitment and a bit of fun can make anything possible.

**"DON'T JUST
WISH FOR IT,
WORK FOR
IT!"**

Erin Sills

(USA) – Landspeed racing World Champion and advocate for women in motorcycling

Erin Sills is a 37-time World and American National land speed record holder, industry spokesperson, and retired Facebook executive. She was born a natural athlete, and her parents encouraged she and her older brother Ted to pursue their dreams fully without letting gender stereotypes steer them. Erin and Ted both inherited their father's genetic "need for speed", and their mother was always supportive of their passions.

Erin began riding competitively later in life than many at age 35 when she met her husband Andy Sills. Sharing the desire for high speed, the two would tour cross-country in search of places to open the throttle. They discovered the sport of landspeed racing and learned there was something called "Run Watcha Brung" which allowed non-competitors to take a high-speed pass on the Bonneville Salt Flats. Naturally competitive, Erin tried her hand and decided from that day forward she would build her own race bikes and officially compete. Andy and Erin raced together until his sudden death in 2015. Despite this loss, Erin and her team continue to race very successfully to this day in his honor. They hold more record in the 1000cc class than any other team, including the coveted 1000cc Production motorcycle record at 207 mph.

Erin has been named the American Motorcyclist Association Female Athlete of the Year for her motorcycling accomplishments and the American Marketing Association's Woman to Watch for her business accomplishments. In her professional capacity, Erin helped launch two internet-based start-ups and most recently served as Global Director of Marketing at Facebook. In her racing role, Erin and her team at Hunter Sills Racing have set two Guinness Book World Records, and she a member of the Bonneville 200 mile-per-hour Club, the El Mirage 200 mile-per-hour Club, and the Mojave 200 mile-per-hour club with her fastest speed to-date of 242 mph.



©Phil Hawkins



She currently serves on the AMA Specialist Sport Commission, the FIM Women in Motorcycling Commission and the Board of the AMA Heritage Foundation. Erin is also an off-road adventure riding coach with RawHyde Adventures where she trains people how to ride large displacement motorcycles in the dirt. In 2014, Erin was named University of Cincinnati, College of Business alumni of the year.

At heart she is an avid sport-touring traveler, having journeyed over 300,000 miles since she began riding at the age of 35. Erin also advocates for women in motorcycling and, with her late husband Andy Sills, she founded the sheEmoto Scholarship to support women in the sport. Since its inception, the Scholarship has provided over \$25,000 to worthy female recipients.

"I CHOOSE TO LIVE LIFE FOCUSED ON THE JOURNEY AND NOT THE DESTINATION."



©Megan Kinderis

Fatimah Al Bloushi

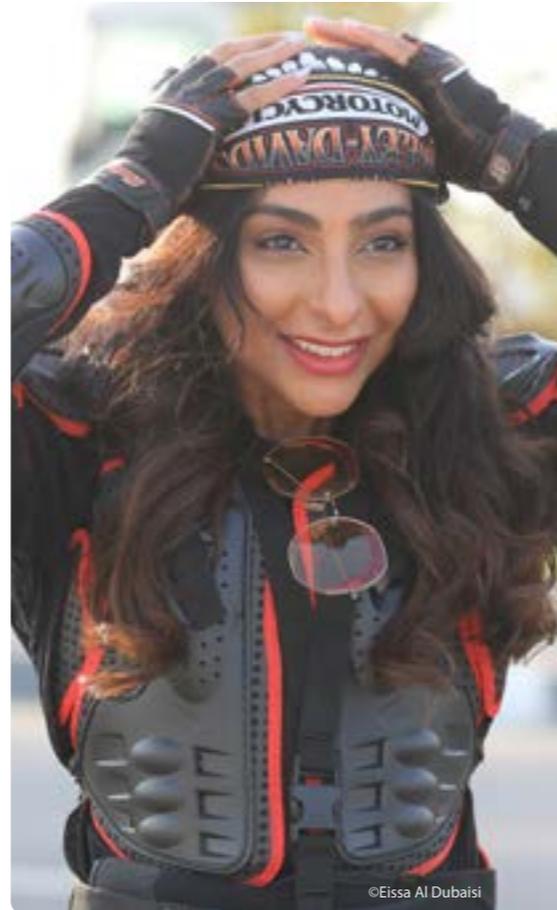
(Saudi Arabia) – Adventure seeker

Fatimah Al Bloushi from Saudi Arabia believes what Oprah Winfrey has said: "Your legacy is every life you've touched". And she definitely has touched people and shown how no matter from which country or culture you are from, you are able to live the life you want.

Fatimah is a highly motivated, dynamic and self-driven person who seeks thrilling and positively impactful adventures. Her lifelong passions have been building a positive influence within the community through socially-driven sports activities and empowering women to unleash their potential through women-focused sports groups.

Born in 1984 in a country that is not known for its support towards women's sport activities Fatimah has initiated the first Saudi Federation amateur female cycling team to participate on a Pan-European cycling tour, in which part of the initiative was to raise awareness on Saudi Alzheimer disease Association. She also initiated the Manal Crohn's Cycling Tour crossing five European countries to help in fundraising for Crohn's disease patients and to raise awareness on crohn's disease. Manal is a relative of hers who passed away as a result of this disease, so this was her way of giving back to Manal.

Fatimah has always been known as an adventure seeker. She climbed Ol Doinyo Lengai a live worshiped volcano at a level of 2,962m located in Arusha, Tanzania and hiked the great rift valley in Africa, climbed mountain Makarot, in Tanzania to raise epilepsy awareness, hiked to reach a remote village school in Arusha for school supply aid, summited Mount Ararat (5,137m), a dormant compound volcano in the far east of Turkey, summited Jabal shams highest peak in the GCC 3,009 m. She was also abseiling from the 7th hole to Tahiri cave in Oman, which was 122m below sea level, she was canyoning the falls of TIWI, Jabal al-Akhdar located in Oman and has been dancing Flamenco Challenge in Abu Dhabi 25km Kayaking between mangroves islands with an open water channel.



©Eissa Al Dubaisi



Fatimah also has finished the SirBani Yas challenge in Abu Dhabi, which was comprised of a 10km run, 37km hike and 3km kayak. She did the Super Hero fun run for foundation innocent to raise money for children in Venezuela, attended the AFF skydiving course 8 jumps level D and is an Iron Man 70.3 triathlon relay finisher 56-mile bike. All these she has done because she knew it was possible and she wanted to show for other women that if they want to do something, they can do it.

But naturally Fatimah got interested in motorcycles as well. Everything started in 2008 when she was working in the oil company Saudi Aramco and had stickers, cabinet magnets and a mug with biker chick pics, so she told her family that she wanted to start riding a motorcycle. They supported her decision, although her father had one condition: that her mother would attend all the trainings as she was in Saudi Arabian standards really young back then, 23 years old. That was the least expected answer of a Saudi father, but Fatimah was lucky to have such a modern father.

Fatimah had training in Bahrain and in Oman, but she never dared to go out to the roads first because it was really hard to get a licence from any of the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates) to ride a motorcycle as a girl unless you lived there or worked there so Fatimah's dream got postponed until 2019 when the driving band lifted and women have now been driving for 11 months straight. Fatimah went on and bought her first bike which she calls Lady Knight (Game of Thrones effected by lady Brian).



©Eissa Al Dubaisi

Also in 2019 Fatimah Co-founded the first ladies motorcycling group in Saudi Arabia @TheLitaskhobar Saudi Chapter. The Litas is focused on building global communities of women who share the love for two wheels all over the World, welcoming women from all walks of life. In the group the women are inclusive and celebrate their differences as they come together over their shared passion for motorcycles.

The women inspire and empower women by showing them they can do whatever they set their mind to, whether that's riding a motorcycle, or building an empire. They are not afraid to go against the grain and shatter stereotypes in the process.

**"FLOW LIKE WATER, SLAY LIKE THE WIND BECAUSE THE ONLY CONSTANT THING IN LIFE IS CHANGE.
I'M STILL LEARNING WHAT MY SOUL LOVES AND I PROMISE I'M GOING TO GIVE IT TO US."**

Iris Kramer

(Germany) - FIM Women's Trial World Champion – FIM Woman Legend

It all started when Iris Kramer was a child. Her father, Willi Kramer, was a former motocross rider who was also competing at international level. Iris and her mum Christine always went with Willi to the races every weekend. However, when Iris's sister Ute was born two years after Iris in 1983 Willi decided to stop his professional career in motocross for his family because he had so many broken bones, accidents and serious injuries. But a life without motorcycling was not possible for him so he started to ride trial for fun at the weekends.

When Iris and Ute got older, their father bought them a Yamaha PW50cc so that they could also enjoy riding a motorcycle. Iris and Ute were always fighting who could use the PW50 first, so once this motorcycle was too small, they got a Mecatecno 80cc which was their first real trial motorcycle. This was the moment when Iris had so much fun riding a trial bike, so she started to practice properly. First in the garden at the company of her parents and around the family owned petrol station.

Her first competition was in a German town called Kerzenheim back in 1993. She received a trophy as an award for the best competing female during this day, well she was the only one, but she didn't realise that. This gave her so much motivation to start practising almost every day. Luckily her dad had a window in his office on the garden side, so once when she was laying under the bike, her dad was able to run to help her.

Since 1994 Iris was participating almost every weekend during the season in a regional trial competition in Germany. Then everything went very fast, up to national level, being a member of the national youth team of DMSB, practising with her team mates almost every weekend (just boys) and competing against boys in the competitions (because there were no girl classes) made her strong.



Then Iris read in a German motorcycling magazine about a female only trial competition in Torro Pellice Italy in 1996, and she decided to compete there the following year. So, in 1997 Iris travelled to Italy with her parents and won the race straight away. This was the moment when her international career started. She won the first ever FIM Women's Trial European Championship back in 1999-2000-2001. And at the first ever FIM Women's Trial World Championship in 2000 she was 2nd behind the world famous Laia Sanz.

Behind all this achievement there were hours and hours of practice. Not in the garden of the company anymore but in the quarry nearby where the owner allowed her to practice.

In 2003 Iris won the FIM Women's Trial des Nations together with her sister and Rostia Leotta as they represented Germany. Again in 2005 she and her German team mates won the FIM Women's Trial des Nations, which is still her favourite competition.

Also, one of Iris's favourite competitions has always been the famous Scottish Six Days Trial also known as the SSDT, where she competed six times in a row from 2002 to 2007. She is proud that she always finished the race.

After many, many years of being 2nd in the FIM Women's Trial World Championship, Iris finally won the title in 2007 on the Isle of Man. Still now she can't believe that she finally won the World Championship, which was her goal, or should she call it a dream, since the championship was established by the FIM in 2000.

After a serious elbow injury, where she broke her elbow in five places back in 2004 and after six operations Iris decided to stop competing at World Championship level as daily practice was not possible anymore. So, in 2009 her last FIM Women's Trial World Championship Round was in Darfo Boario Terme. Iris was crying when she rode her last section together with her father minding for her and her mum - who always played a big role behind the scenes - also present. Her mum was always travelling every weekend with her to the races. She was cooking always for a big bunch of people, cleaning the clothes and just being there for mental support - this was exactly what a sports person like Iris needed.



Since Iris retired the FIM asked her to work with them as the FIM Section Advisor for Women's Trial, while her husband Robert Oelschlegel is taking care of their two children. Iris has also been a member of the FIM Women in Motorcycling Commission since its establishment in 2006 and nowadays she is also organising training camps for children and women to give back something to the sport that has given herself so much.

"LIFE IS LIKE TRIAL,
THERE ARE UPS
AND DOWNS AND SOME
OBSTACLES
AND I LOVE IT."

Jane Queain

(Australia) - South Australian Trailblazer

Miss Jane Queain was most certainly an extraordinary woman. Although little is known about her life, she is considered one of the earliest pioneering female motorcyclists in Australia and it is understood that she was the first lady in South Australia to ride her own machine.

Miss Queain grew up in Minlaton on the Yorke Peninsula of South Australia, approximately 125 miles (202 km) to the west of Adelaide. In the early 1900s Minlaton was considered remote from the capital city Adelaide, as horse-powered vehicles were mainly of the four-legged variety.

Jane was a well-known teacher of music and painting, driving her pair of ponies some distances to reach her students. Finding that she lost considerable time travelling these distances, in April of 1913 she decided to purchase a motorcycle, a 2 ¾ (horsepower) Douglas. The fact that Miss Queain was able to acquire her Douglas considering she resided on the other side of the globe from her acquisition, was quite astounding as motorcycles with internal combustion engines were only made commercially available in Europe in the late 1880s and it was at a time when product marketing was minimal and freight services were slow.

Capturing more than just a moment in history, the only known photograph of Miss Queain reflects the style of the era. Wearing pants or even skirts above the ankle was certainly not considered appropriate attire for a woman in the early 20th century, so, Jane wore her full length silk skirts and gowns on her teaching rounds and only her large leather gauntlet gloves for protection. Her Douglas motorcycle with only a minimal bicycle type seat, springer front end and no rear shocks would not have been the most hospitable form of transport on the rough, unsealed roads of country South Australia. But Jane loved it and her first feelings of nervousness soon wore off!



Supplied by Mr Michael Mahar (great-nephew) to the book *Fast Women – Pioneering Australian Motorcyclists*



"Now I don't seem to be able to travel fast enough" she declared. "I've had one or two falls, but that's all in the game. Once the skirt of my silk dustcoat became caught in the flywheel, and then I nearly went. I managed to pull up in time, however, and released it. On several occasions I've run over snakes, but they were only small ones. All the girls on the Peninsula are in love with my Douglas, and I think that very soon many others will get motorcycles. I save quite two-thirds of my time now, and not only is the machine quicker than ponies, but it is also more convenient. There is nothing to compare with motorcycling, and I'm sorry for those poor people who cannot indulge in it. It is wonderfully exhilarating, and it is impossible to describe the glorious sensation that one gets when travelling on a speedy machine. I'm glad I've got a motorcycle and I don't think I'll ever give it up" (The Register, 22 October 1913).

Miss Jane Queain's desire for adventure took her from Minlaton to Paris in 1914 to study art and she returned to Australia to teach art at Loreto Catholic School for Girls, in Kirribilli Sydney. Who knows if her desire for motorcycling continued?

" THERE IS NOTHING
TO COMPARE
WITH MOTORCYCLING."

Jemma Wilson

(Australia) – 5-time winner of International Six Days Enduro Women's Class

Jemma Wilson's "how I got into riding story" starts off pretty similar to most. She grew up out of town and the Sunday thing to do was go trailriding. Jemma's dad was into bikes his whole adult life and when Jemma turned 12, her dad shared the trail riding fun with her. Jemma rode most weekends on her DT 175 with family and friends at home or at recreational trail rides.

Some of their friends who were members of the local club decided to give Enduro Racing a go. Jemma was too young to race the 175cc, so she went along and cheered on her dad and her brother. Fast forward 16 years and her brother and dad didn't take it much further than the few local enduros and Jemma've continued on to race thirteen years of Australian Championships, spent five years travelling around Europe competing in the World Enduro GP's and completed 7 International Six Day Enduros, winning the World Women's Cup on five occasions as part of the Australian team.

Riding bikes has given Jemma more than she can put into words. It has opened the door to adventure and so many amazing experiences, it has allowed her the opportunity to meet wonderful people from all around the globe, and no matter what country, language or culture, people are all part of the enduro family! Racing has given Jemma many ups and downs, triumphant wins and painful losses, injuries and recoveries, and she wouldn't take away the rough times even if she could because experiences are what make an individual and she is proud of the person she is today.

Jemma got into racing at a time when girls participation was just on the rise. Instead of the few outlier ladies racing in the men's classes, women's only classes were kicking off. Jemma competed in the first ever women's class at the Australian Four Day Enduro in 2006 and was a part of Australia's first ever Women's ISDE Team in Portugal in 2009.



©FIM/g2fmedia.com



It was thanks to those ladies who slogged it out in the men's class, that Jemma got to compete against other ladies, and she likes to think that it will be partly because of her that women in the future will get paid real money to compete, like our male counterparts are today. It has been a long road so far, and there are many twists and turns still to come, but Jemma feels we are on the right path.

Now, as a retired racer Jemma's full-time job is coaching and creating a women's dirtbiking community all around Australia, and she couldn't be happier! Jemma knows that if we want more ladies to get into racing, they need a place to start, and some ladies will never line up on a start grid to compete, but they certainly still deserve a space to get confident too. Jemma runs a series of ladies only coaching weekends, catered of course so that their mums can relax for the weekend, and a handful of fun events; ladies only Trail rides and Motocross Ride Days, which allow ladies to learn in non-intimidating environments, and provide opportunities to make new friends.

Jemma invites the women to come along and get outside their comfort zone and enjoy bikes as much as she does; enjoy the wind in their hair and the joy of conquering something that is sometimes tough or scary. She encourages girls and ladies to come along without their male helpers so that they can see that they are capable of anything. The only reason Jemma thinks that more girls don't ride bikes, is because we haven't done so in the past, and that is not a good reason at all.

Jemma loved her time as a professional competitor racing Enduro, and she is loving her new place in the industry as a coach where her role is to share her knowledge and experiences and encourage other ladies to get involved and share their own knowledge with one-another. Jemma's goal is to not need ladies only events in the fairly-near future. If she can work alongside other inspiring ladies to grow the numbers of females in our industry, which in turn will grow the ability and confidence levels of the lady riders, at some point a trailride, motocross practice day, or championship event will naturally have loads more female entrants, because that will be the new norm! Jemma is so grateful for what bikes have given her in the past, and tremendously excited for what they continue to offer into the future.



©Jemma Wilson's Archives

**"SET GOALS
AND STOP
AT NOTHING
TO ACHIEVE
THEM!"**

Jutta Kleinschmidt

(Germany) - First woman to take victory in the Dakar Rally - FIM Woman Legend

Jutta is one of the most, if not the most, successful woman in global motorsport. She is the first, and so far the only, woman to ever take outright victory in the longest and toughest rally in the world, the Dakar Rally.

Challenges, competition and motor technology are her passions. Raised in Berchtesgaden (Germany), she dedicated her youth to winter sports. At 18, she bought her first motorbike, to go on adventure trips. Her racing career started on motorcycles: 1988 saw her take part for the first time in the Paris-Dakar Rally on a BMW HPN.

In the 1992 Paris-Cape Town Rally, the 14th Dakar event, Jutta finished 23rd overall in the motorbike classification on a Standard BMW R100 GS. The Rally's unique routing was the longest version ever: 7,722 miles (12,427 km) long, starting from Paris on 23 December 1991 and ending in Cape Town 24 days later.

After completing her physics degree and working six years as an engineer in the Research and Development department of BMW, she left her job to concentrate on motorsport.

Following a seven year career on a motorbike in the Cross Country World Cup, she changed to four wheels in 1995 and became involved in the development of the most successful rally car, the Mitsubishi Pajero Evo, with which she won the Dakar in 2001. She then moved on to join the Volkswagen Works Team and developed a new rally car, the Race Touareg, with which she also competed.

In addition to motorsport, Jutta loves all manner of challenges: in 2004 she took part in the Race Across America. Together with her teammate Joey Kelly, she cycled 3,000 miles across America in just eight and a half days. Since then, she owns and pilots helicopters.



After 17 Dakar participations, with six Top-5 finishes in the overall standings, Jutta Kleinschmidt shares her experience working as a motivational speaker for international companies. She also wrote a book "Mein Sieg bei der Dakar" ("My victory in the Dakar").

During her outstanding career, Kleinschmidt has won many prizes:

- Engineer in Motion Award by the German Engineering Association VDI (2001)
- ADAC Motorsports Personality of the Year (2001)
- ARD Sports Personality of the Year (2001)
- Rally driver of the Year by the "Motorsport Aktuell" readership (2001)
- Lord Wakefield Trophy Award of the "British Women Racing Drivers Club" as "Outstanding Lady Competitor" (2001)
- FIM Women Legend Award (2013)
- Monaco World Sports Legends Award (2018)

After over 30 years of experience in cross-country rallying, she has joined the FIA as President of the FIA Cross-Country Rally Commission and acts as the FIA Senior Advisor for Cross-Country Rally on a part-time basis. She sets out the strategic vision and takes part in the development of Cross-Country Rallies. Jutta is also part of the FIA Women in Motorsport Commission since 2016. She founded and led the project "WIMC-QMMF Women's Cross Country Selection", the first race driver selection camp to encourage women to play a bigger part into motorsport. She is currently involved as a sport coordinator in the FIA European Young Women Program, "The Girls on Track Karting Challenge". She also supports the FIA Smart Driving Challenge as a Team Leader.



In Germany, she works as a consultant for the Deutschland Rally, on behalf of the German Automobile Club ADAC e.V. She has also been a member of the ADAC Foundation's Board of Trustees since 2016.

**"EVERYTHING
IS
POSSIBLE!"**

©Jutta Kleinschmidt's archives

Katja Poensgen

(Germany) - First woman to achieve World Championship points in Circuit Racing 250cc class - FIM Woman Legend

Katja Poensgen was born in Bavaria as the daughter of Suzuki Manager Bert Poensgen and his wife Juliana. She has got an older sister and younger brother, who also work in professional motorsport today.

Bert Poensgen brought the Japanese motorcycle brand Suzuki to fame in Germany as its general sales manager. In Katja's youth she and her brother both tried riding motorcycles more seriously as the family was usually in the paddock over the weekend. Initially her father was racing himself, and later was team manager, racing series manager all tied somehow to the Suzuki brand foremostly.

After some rather wild early teenage years Katja being very athletic herself (competing in swimming and horse riding) she introduced to her father and mentor Bert Poensgen the idea, that she wanted to really become a road racer! She and the family decided to give it a try and Katja was given a pocket bike and mopeds in her youth, a chance to race in the ADAC junior series.

In order to improve her obvious talent, she and her father took trips around Europe, mostly Spain and Italy, to camp at race tracks in order to get better by riding with local Spanish talent. It was normal for Katja to race "only" against boys, but she never looked at it as a gender issue either way. All have to fight against the clock, the material and the laws of physics, so no vain competition towards other riders needed.

In 1995 Katja won the ADAC Junior Cups and she was very fast in it. Then she was offered an entry in a World Super Bike competition. There she always wanted to become World Champion. This led to being given a chance to ride in the MotoGP 250cc series. There she was able to manage great results with not always the best material. Her boss asked her what she wanted in return. And she said she wanted to ride at the California race school. She was bought the ticket to go and here is where Katja met her hero Kevin Schwantz. (A Motorcycle World Champion in the 1970s, a generation before Rossi so to speak. Katja was offered a spot in the MotoGP 250cc team where she eventually became the fastest woman in MotoGP history with World Championship points. During this famous rain race in Mugello, Kevin Schwantz followed this race of her from her pit box and was impressed how she achieved 11th position in this hard race.



Katja was respected by all other professional riders. Of course, there were always a few who wanted to win by keeping her behind the stove in a kitchen. Since kitchen and Racing is no contradiction Katja ignored these fake critics and always gave her best, this is what her rider colleagues also acknowledged. She was not seen as a grid girl when the riders hung out together in the paddocks after the races. She was one of them, even friends with Rossi and other current big shots recognised her.

Katja did not hide her feminity nor pushed it to the front, she was a person and a rider being hungry for success and the podium, showing how to fight to get as much out of herself and the racing package in a wild but still sound manner. Katja wanted to end her racing career on the top level when her first child was born. It simply makes everybody in this situation more prudent. She was hired then to commentate on German TV for the MotoGP on RTL.

Later she was enrolled for the Transibirian Rallye in a women's team to go east for three weeks. Then she helped her father to re-build the International German Motorcycle Series with great success until the project sort of was cancelled by bureaucrats above. Brands like BMW booked her for promotional films and Indians Motorcycles for sprint races. She was Brand Ambassador for Nolan helmets for many years. She still loves engines and speed and her 2nd daughter seems to have the very same drive in her.

It is important looking back on such a fantastic career, that it was mainly possible by attempting the impossible, and showing how fast one gets back up when others stopped believing in you. The real race is not to impress others, but to reach your very own podium inside of you every single time you sit on a bike. Becoming great does not happen overnight, it is the actual everyday fight to re-invent yourself and with people around you that seek the same goal for you.

Katja's motto is: Always one wheel on the ground! This means not at all attempting to push your limits by a bit more, but then being half hearted. You first select your challenges if it makes sense and it is no ride to heaven or hell. But then you kill all your inner doubts and start doing and delivering to yourself and to the bike.



In her life it was racing, in the readers life it may be something totally different. Don't copy other legends, find out where you can become one and then be YOU. This does not mean on TV or with the VIPs first. There are many great riders nobody has ever heard of, but you will see them on the country roads if you pay attention. They have an eager smile to be free to ride, whatever suits them. So, build your personality first, and then your talents will become clear to you. I wish you all the best, and maybe one day you write a similar article in a book just like this one. We must push each other and not putting ourselves down, That is why Katja now is also fighting against bullying, since it lets nobody in the end become a champion.

“ALWAYS ONE WHEEL ON THE GROUND.”

Kattia Juárez

(El Salvador) - Director of FIM Sustainability Commission

Kattia Juárez is from El Salvador, a very tiny tropical country surrounded by volcanoes and the warmest beaches in the world. A large part of her adolescence was spent in the middle of a civilian war. In the middle of '80s during the hardest years of the war, Kattia joined the El Salvador State University. The campus was constantly bombed, and every class day when the campus was opened she had to pass a military fence to be able to enter her classes. Sometimes Kattia attended her math classes in the middle of burst-fire. One day, after an open fire, she hid for hours in a trench. She had to leave the University, in the dark, raining, accompanied by the International Red Cross with a white flag and being eight months pregnant. She ended up on the cover of some international newspapers. Despite winning a scholarship to one of the best agricultural schools in the region, Kattia couldn't get out of her country. Her father passed away earlier and she couldn't travel to fulfill her dream.

Kattia's relationship with sport was never very close. Her father was a well-known writer and her childhood was spent between classical music concerts, exhibitions and poetry. Kattia's mother showed and inspired Kattia to have a love for cuisine and arts and she started painting. Kattia never imagined that her life would be devoted to sport, much less motorsport. Her father dreamed of his daughter being an architect, but it was clear, nature called her and she wanted to work for nature.

So, Kattia graduated from Agricultural Engineering and was the only woman in her class. Then she obtained a master's degree in business and other studies in sustainability. She always faced situations where she was the only woman: at work, applying for a position, in the office, chairing some projects among many other situations. Because of her vocation and her career, she had to compete for a place in a world dominated by men and it was not easy.



©Ignacio Verneda



Kattia became a very young mother. After the war, her life changed. She founded a company linked to the automotive world and got in touch with motorsports. One day her son Guillermo at the age of 6 crossed the door of their house riding a Yamaha PW50. Kattia still remembers seeing her little boy looking so happy on his new toy. Kattia became his manager, coach and his "umbrella girl". Many times, she even cleaned filters even though she did not like it at all, but that is how her career with motorcycles, in motocross began. The Via del Mar motocross track was behind Kattia's house and after each race she saw a "carpet" of plastic bottles and all kinds of garbage. Nobody cleaned, they lived in a country without environmental laws.

At that time, in Kattia's country there was no National Federation, it was the 1990s. There was a club that she joined to support her son and she helped them a little bit on the race days to organize the event; with a group of parents, they decided to step forward and they founded the Salvadoran Motorcycle Federation. Kattia became the President of the federation, she was the first woman in the office and one of the few in national sport federations. She integrated the Latin American Motorcycle Union and oversaw the Committee on the Environment commission. She was the vice president of ULM and of the Ibero-American Motorcycle Union.

All this experience helped Kattia to join the FIM in 1999 as an International Environment Commission (CIE) delegate, the first Latin American woman to be part of the FIM. Years later, in 2011, she faced a new challenge when she became Director of the CIE now known as the International Sustainability Commission (CID). Combining her two great passions, motorsport with the environment has been the machinery that drives her enthusiasm. Having volunteered and then becoming a professional in the sport has given Kattia the opportunity to leave a positive mark for this world and help in some way to solve the planetary crisis. Working with sustainable sport has given her the opportunity to meet many people with who she is now a family. In this world of motorcycling she met her love and married a motorcycling leader, former CEO of FIM, Ignacio Verneda.



©Patrice Moullet

Kattia loves everything she does for sustainable sport, but she says the greatest satisfaction she gets is by inspiring other people, through education. Environmental Seminars are her passion as well as awareness campaigns in which she deposits all her creativeness. Working with the seven Ride Green Ambassadors is an immense opportunity to positively influence motorsport fans and ratify that the sport as an enabler of sustainable development.

Always the people ask Kattia if she rides a bike. Her answer is not now, but she did in the past. Her track is her desk where she designs all the campaigns and projects for a sustainable sport. From time to time she loves to hug her husband and ride on the roads of the mountains of Andorra where she now lives together with her motorcycling family.

**"BECAUSE THE EARTH IS
OUR COMMON TRACK,
LET'S THINK
AND RIDE GREEN!"**

Kiara Fontanesi

(Italy) - Six-time FIM Women's Motocross World Champion

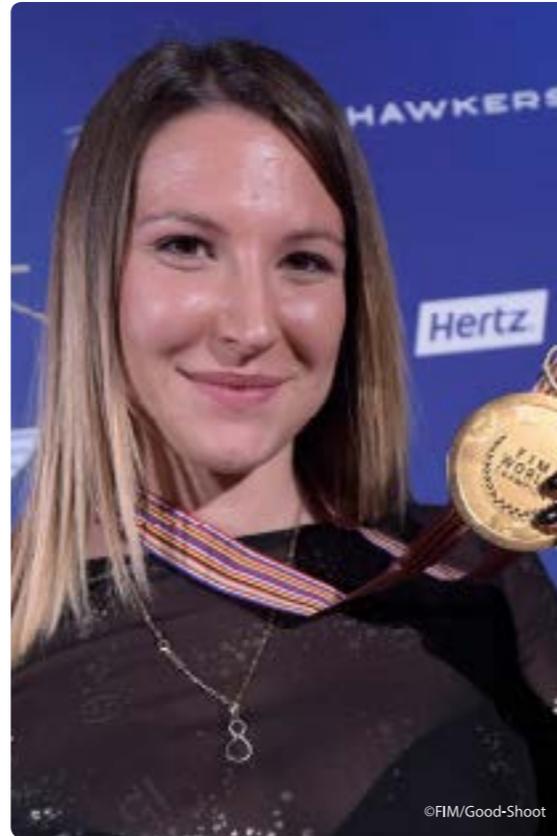
Kiara Fontanesi was born on 10 March 1994 in Parma Italy, the heart of the Motor Valley where legendary brands like Ferrari, Ducati and Lamborghini have their museums and factories. At 3 years old she rode a motorcycle for the first time when her father Massimo brought home a Yamaha PW50. It was love at the first sight for Kiara who cried for joy and wanted immediately to ride it. After all, her older brother Luca was already racing, and Kiara had no intention of standing still to watch him have all the fun! The whole family went to the races to follow Luca, and "paddock life" became familiar to Kiara at very early age.

Soon Kiara started to race herself and earned her first victory in Felino (Parma, Italy) when she was just 6 years old. Soon after came the victories in the Regional Minicross Championship and in 2007 her first big win at the most important American race for young riders, the Loretta Lynn.

In 2009 when she was just 15, Kiara made her debut in the Women's Motocross World Championships (WMX). During the last race in Lierop (Belgium), Kiara won a manche, becoming the youngest rider in history to do so during the World Championships. That year she finished the Grand Prix in second place and the Championship with an overall 9th place.

In 2010 she finished 4th at the WMX, and in 2011 she battled for the title until the end, ultimately finishing 2nd. That year she also won the Grand Prix in Finland.

In 2012 Kiara won her first world title in Matterley Basin (UK) and at just 18 years old she became the youngest champion in history. She then earned 3 more consecutive titles in 2012, 2013, 2014; and in 2015 Kiara became the first and only female rider to have won 4 titles in a row becoming a legend already in her early twenties!



At the end of 2015 Kiara left Team Yamaha to join Team Honda, and did not meet with success, but in 2017 she rejoined team Yamaha to win her fifth title. 2018 saw her win her sixth title in her home country Italy on the legendary Imola circuit. Her success hasn't come easily, but Kiara believes that having her family supporting her since the beginning has helped her to grow and succeed. The passion that she felt from the first moment she sat on a bike has enabled her always to give her maximum performance.

Recently, because of physical problems Kiara has taken a break from riding and made the most important decision of her life... to become a mother! Kiara is looking towards 2020 to come back with her young daughter to race the WMX and win it as a mother. Her victories gave life to the KF8 MX Training project in Ponte Taro (Parma, Italy). The project is a one-of-a-kind initiative that aims to help the young talents develop and succeed in the motocross world.

"IT'S NOT OVER UNTIL IT'S OVER."



Kirsi Kainulainen

(Finland) - First woman to win FIM Open Class World Championship

Kirsi Kainulainen was born in 1985 into a Finnish family that was involved in motorcycle racing. Her father Ari, raced in Road Racing and Ice Road Racing and did a bit of motocross as well. Kirsi joined her father at the races and always followed him when he fixed his bikes.

When Kirsi was 3.5 years old she got her first motorcycle, a Yamaha PW50 motocross bike. Kirsi rode her bike almost every day, becoming better and better. Sometimes she even rode without telling her parents as her father had taught her how to start the bike and he often worked long hours and was home late so she would ride by herself. Her mother, on the other hand, came home earlier so Kirsi always needed to bring her bike back to the garage on time and pretend that she was doing her homework. Kirsi's mother always wanted her daughter to wear dresses but Kirsi only agreed if she was allowed to ride her bike more in the yard of their house. It was clear to Kirsi that she was going to be a racer and that was why she needed to practice hard at a young age. A local police man living close by Kirsi often stopped the 5 year old girl riding with a jerry can in her back pack. He tried to explain her that she was too young and small to ride amongst the cars on a big road and instead she should use the smaller gravel roads when riding to the motocross track.

At 10 years of age, Kirsi also started to ride on ice. She usually won usually her own class in the club races in 80, 125, 250 and 500cc classes. In 1996, 11 year old Kirsi participated her first national motocross race. She was really nervous as she didn't know the track and rain had made the track and its steep uphill muddy and slippery.

Kirsi worked hard to get her 80cc bike up the first hills and even though she was not as successful as she would have liked, she knew she was going to be a motocross rider one day. The race left Kirsi with a big smile on her face! Kirsi recognised she had what it takes to be a racer. She had extremely competitive mind set and even though she was doing lots of different kind of sports, nothing was able to beat the feeling she got when racing on her motorcycle. When Kirsi was 14 years old she started to race in Ice Road Racing at the Finnish Championship and was able to succeed relatively fast getting herself way all the way to the podium.

At 15 Kirsi stopped Motocross racing after she had a chance to sit on a Road Racing bike, she had decided Road Racing would be her thing. On her second year in Road Racing B-class she finished second overall even though she had broken her leg in the beginning of the season.

In 2006 Kirsi managed to get 125cc bronze in Finnish Championship and on the following year she gained bronze in the same class in the Nordic Championship. Achieving this medal meant so much for Kirsi, it was the highlight of her career as she had worked so hard to get it. Her strengths were good physical condition, ability to handle pressure and Finnish "sisu" that means 'that you will never give up'. Kirsi said she is at her best when the situations are tight.



©Nita Korni



In 2013 Kirsi's life changed when she started to be a passenger for multiple sidecar World Champion Pekka Päivärinta. The moment she first sat on the sidecar she felt she was made for the job. Her background in different sports and disciplines, plus her small size made her a really talented, fast passenger. Being overactive as she is, this multitasking was perfect for her spirit. Being inside the sidecar was both exciting and eventful, something she had never experienced before. The duo agreed that they would compete together in the world championship with their first one in 2015. Pekka already had four world championships and three silver medals and he wanted to give Kirsi the opportunity to experience the feeling of hearing the national anthem of Finland on the podium. The Finns did a great job during the season but in the end they had to settle for world championship bronze. Kirsi made history by becoming the first ever woman to achieve a world championship medal in an open motorcycle race. Initially, Kirsi felt that the colour of the medal was wrong as she was aiming for gold, but little by little, after getting recognition by other people and media she started to appreciate her great achievement.

For the next year Pekka and Kirsi had a clear plan, to win the world championship. They also competed on the ice - which was good practice for the summer season - winning two Finnish championship silver medals. On the fourth race of the season the duo made history when they crossed the finish line first in Hungary. Kirsi was now the first woman to win a motorcycle World Championship race. She was so happy when she was listening the national anthem on the podium. When the finale of the season was held in Donington Park in Great Britain on the 17th of September 2016, Kirsi became the first woman in history who was crowned as a motorcycling World Champion! She and Pekka were crying and screaming for joy. Their extremely hard work had paid and they achieved Kirsi's ultimate dream. After the championship celebrations Kirsi felt empty - she had given everything she could including her health in order to win the title. She didn't listen to the doctors who had said that she couldn't continue the season. She had used all her strenghts to fight but now she needed to give up and have a back operation. The following year, Kirsi and Pekka achieved world championship silver after winning the season final in Brno, Croatia. People were thinking she was crying on the podium because of the victory but it was actually because it was to be her last moment in the world of side cars. It was time for Kirsi to progress to the solo classes, to follow her dream. During the 2018 season Kirsi raced in Ice Road Racing and also in Circuit Racing with the Dutch team Oosterveen Racing. Competing in the international OW-Cup series she finished the season in 16th position.

For 2019 Kirsi formed her own team, Motorsline Kainulainen and she has been racing in the Alpe Adria series finishing ninth at best. In July she made it to the podium in OW Cup's race being third in France. Kirsi is happy that she followed her heart and made her dreams come true. She said it was only possible because her parents taught her to always keep her feet on the ground and first work before dreaming. But she

was also dreaming when she was 11 years old she dreamt that she would one day have a Finnish Championship gold medal. With several Finnish Championship medals and also World Championship podiums she understands that anything is possible if you are willing to work hard and give everything you can to achieve your dreams.

Kirsi says the years haven't been easy. Still after racing for decades, winning several trophies, Kirsi is extremely nervous before the starts and she feels like she needs to throw up into her helmet. The feeling only gets better during the warm up lap, then she knows what she needs to do and enjoys it. She is living her dream.



©Mark Walters

**"DO EVERYTHING
AT 100%
OR DON'T DO IT AT ALL."**

Kirsten Landman

(South Africa) – First female to finish Hard Enduro races

Growing up on dirt bikes, which started off as just fun with her cousin and uncle, helped Kirsten Landman make history and a name for herself worldwide in the hard Enduro racing scene. Competing in major international events, Kirsten has become the first woman to finish races such as Redbull Romaniacs, Redbull Sea to Sky, Redbull Megawatt 111, Redbull Braveman & the Roof of Africa & most times being the only woman to do so.

With the sport of hard Enduro still developing for female riders, very few took part in hard Enduro mainly because it is so physically demanding. Landman has often been the only female amongst the men for as long as she has been racing, seeing herself as an equal competitor when racing against the men, and strongly believing that this is what has driven her passion into success.

Kirsten hasn't had the easiest of careers: plagued with injury after injury, her professional career hadn't even kicked off when it came to a complete halt after a near death experience racing a high speed off-road race in Botswana in 2013. Suffering severe internal damage after colliding, abdomen first, with a tree stump and only being treated 36 hours later had Kirsten fighting for her life. After being induced into a coma and on life support for 11 days, Kirsten believes her strong will power and determination to get back to doing what she loved most in the world is what got her through what seemed clinically impossible. A very long rocky road to full recovery later, Kirsten was back on the bike 6 months later preparing for her first appearance on the world stage at Redbull Romaniacs 2014.

Overcoming such an injury and major set-back gave Kirsten a whole new outlook on life: not many people are gifted with a second chance at life and she strongly believes it was the case for her. Facing her fears head on, more motivated and determined than ever, Kirsten swore to never take another day for granted.



Most people would think that after surviving what she had gone through, getting back onto a motorbike and doing what nearly ended her life was outright stupid. As humans we take small things for granted and as the saying goes: "We don't know what we have got until its gone" but Kirsten's passion and love for riding her motorbike was her life and if she wasn't doing what she loved most in the world than to her life wasn't being lived to the fullest.

After competing and finishing Romaniacs in July 2014 Kirsten knew that this is what she was destined for doing what was said to be "impossible for a woman" because "female riders weren't capable to race hard Enduro". Kirsten, whose whole life has been motivated by being told what she couldn't do, set her goals on becoming the first woman to compete in world extreme Enduro, and that's what she did. Now 5 years later Kirsten has left her mark all over the world by becoming the first woman to finish major extreme Enduro races like Romaniacs, Sea To Sky, Megawatt 111, Braveman, King of the Hill and Roof of Africa, still with so many other races on that to do list.

Kirsten now has her heart set on what is said to be "the toughest rally race for any motorsport enthusiast" the Dakar Rally 2020. This being a completely different discipline in motorsport to what Kirsten is use to – and the biggest of it all, for she is facing her biggest fear: getting back into high speed racing and facing those demons from the accident she experienced in 2013 head on, during her build in preparation and at the Dakar Rally 2020. If Kirsten achieves what she has planned and prepared for the in last 2 years, she will become the first African woman to finish the Dakar Rally on a motorcycle.

Kirsten's passion for 2 wheels, dirt and adventure with her family has turned into a professional career. Despite all the difficulties and setbacks, with lots of hard work, determination and passion for her sport has seen Kirsten achieve what was said to be impossible for woman in the world of hard Enduro and Kirsten hopes to pave the way for future female riders who have the same desire to do whatever they believe they can do. The quote that has always given Kirsten assurance during both the good and difficult times is:



"THE ONLY TIME YOU SHOULD EVER LOOK BACK IS TO SEE HOW FAR YOU HAVE COME."

Laia Sanz

(Spain) - 13-time FIM Women's Trial World Champion, 5-time FIM Women's Enduro World Cup Champion and Queen of Dakar

Laia Sanz's story is about a young athlete who became one of the most talented trial riders worldwide.

At the age of 2 she rode a bike for the first time together with her dad, the person responsible for her passion for motorsports. At just 4-year-old she took her brother's bike, a Cota 25, without anyone noticing and she started to know what she really liked.

In 1992 her mum encouraged her to participate in a Catalan Championship race for children which was taking place at her birthplace, Corbera de Llobregat. Laia finished in eight place at the bottom of the group, though the experience was so amazing that in 1993 she did the entire championship. Her first victory in the male category came in 1997, on a 80cc trial bike. This season she also took part for the first time in a female only trial championship together with 50 girls from around the world.

Year after year, the number of female trial participants was growing and in 1998 the first non-official European Championship was held which Laia won. By then she was only 13-year-old and her major rivals were much older than her and for the first time Laia thought about the idea of becoming a professional trial rider. She decided to participate at the Spanish Trial Championship, where she was the only girl riding. Immediately the results of her talent turned into victories. Without any real expectations in 2000 she won the Spanish Trial Championship in her category. Up to then, no one had seen Laia as a rival since she was the only girl competing in categories which were for boys basically. This victory was the beginning of an exceptional sporting career which brought her to participate in both the FIM Women's Trial World Championship and European Championship, where she finished first and second respectively.

In 2001 Laia won the FIM Women's Trial World Championship again and took second at the European level. Notwithstanding, for the following 5 seasons she won both Women's Championships, participating at the same time in male competitions also where she obtained great results as well. In 2007 she could not retain her FIM Trial World Championship, but from 2008 onwards she continued on the highest step of the podium in both competitions.

At the age of 24 she had a great list of achievements: 10 time FIM Women's Trial World Champion, 9 time Women's Trial European Champion, and 4 time a member of Spain's winning FIM Women's Trial des Nations Competition. Looking for new goals, this same year she made her debut at the FIM Women's Enduro World Championship taking 3rd position without any kind of experience in this discipline. It was one of the first steps to prepare for the Dakar Rally, which was actually Laia's biggest childhood dream.



©Felix Romero



Her dream came true in 2011 not only by participating but winning the Female Trophy and finishing in 39th position overall. Only a few months later she won again the FIM Women's Trial World Championship and the European Championship as well as the FIM Women's Trial des Nations with her Spanish compatriots. Into the bargain she achieved second at the FIM Women's Enduro World Championship. Immediately after these successes she signed with Gas Gas.

2012 was a great year for Laia, she achieved an historical triple win, successfully retaining her titles at the Dakar and the FIM Women's Trial World Championship and winning for the first time the FIM Women's Enduro World Championship. In the following year she did it again, achieving the World Championship titles for trial and Enduro. She also finished a hard Dakar for the fourth time in a row, in which she went down in history by finishing stage eight in a brilliant 12th position. Within the same year 2013, she took part for the first time in four X-Games events, where she won 3 gold medals (Foz do Iguaçu, Barcelona and Los Angeles) and 1 silver medal (Munich).

2014 was a special year for Laia Sanz. After 13 FIM Trial World Championship titles she decided to leave this discipline to focus on Enduro and the Dakar Rally, which allowed her to take her 3rd FIM Women's Enduro World Championship title and increase her achievements to 16, overcoming the legend Giacomo Agostini.

On her way to the Dakar Rally, Laia participated in two African raids obtaining great results. She made her debut in the Morocco Rally as Honda HRC official rider, where she finished in 10th position overall. A few months later she competed in the Merzouga Rally, in which she reached sixth position and went down in history once again by becoming the first woman to win a stage on a motorbike raid. Also, in 2014 she achieved an impressive car feat together with Francesc Gutiérrez, by becoming the first team of two drivers to compete in a 24 hours race in Spain, completing the 24 hours of Barcelona at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya.

In 2015 Laia beat all her records to date during her fifth consecutive Dakar Rally, by finishing in an excellent 9th position overall, the best result by a woman on a motorbike during the 37 editions of this Rally. Four months later she debuted as a KTM official rider at the FIM



©Kin Marcin

Women's Enduro World Championship that would end by her winning her fourth World Championship title in this discipline and the 17th in her extended list of achievements. During this same season she secured her 4th gold medal at the X-Games of Enduro X which took place in Austin (EEUU). Laia also successfully participated in Baja Aragon, where she obtained the 5th position overall and the best result by a woman in this classic race.

She took part in various Rallies to train for her sixth Dakar. In the TransAnatolia Rally she was 6th in the overall classification and first in the female category; in the Morocco Rally she finished in 11th position; and in the Merzouga Rally she achieved a great 5th place and first woman once again.

Besides motorbikes, in 2015 Laia also took part in several car competitions: Barcelona RX at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya, SEAT Eurocup, 500 Kilometres of Alcañiz and Barcelona 24 hours of car, which she completed again with Francesc Gutiérrez and again being the only team with only two drivers.



In 2016 Laia retained for the fifth time in a row the FIM Women's Enduro World Championship, making it her 18th World title in her great list of achievements, retaining it again in 2017 when she had to retire from the last round of the championship in Germany due to a mechanical issue. Back to 2016, she made her debut at the International Six Days of Enduro (ISDE) ending in second position after a tough fight in both individual and teams categories.

For Laia, the Dakar Rally was not an easy one this year. During the last days of the competition she fell ill, and she had to ride with fever and dizziness. Consequently, she had a huge crash causing a shoulder injury on her right side. Laia took strength from the weakness and crossed the finish line in an amazing 15th position overall. Once more she honoured her motto "Who has the will has the strength". During 2016 she also took part for the first time in several rallies to train for the next Dakar: Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge, ending in a great 6th position; Sealine Cross Country Rally in Qatar, where she had to abandon due to a crash during the second stage; and Atacama Rally, in which she secured a deserved 12th position after facing some troubles during the race, like pushing the motorbike for almost 1.5 kilometres walking due to a petrol issue.

In Dakar 2017 she finally got 16th position, just 50 seconds from again finishing in the top 15 classification. Nonetheless with this final result Laia expanded her legend status as the female rider who has finished Rally Dakar the most times on a motorbike: 7 consecutive times since her debut in 2011, and the last four times finishing amongst the best 16 men of the rally (16th in 2014, 9th in 2015, 15th in 2016 and 16th in 2017) and always winning the Female Trophy. In the same year she focused on her preparation for the last FIM Enduro World Championship but even after the excellent training she had done, she lost the opportunity to fight for this more than deserved title. Luckily, she could celebrate her individual victory at the ISDE and take fantastic results in Atacama Rally and Rally OilLibya in Morocco.

After 8 months without competing in raids, she reached a great 11th position with her KTM 450 Rally in Atacama Rally. A few weeks later, she emerged again in Rally OilLibya in Morocco where she finished in an amazing 8th place and only 23 seconds from seventh position. Besides fulfilling her mission, she went one step further in riding and self-confidence which saw her achieve an outstanding result. Laia attained third place in the second stage of the race, which was the best result by a woman ever in this discipline.

In 2018 she was at the start line of Rally Dakar for the 8th time in a row. Seeking to improve her past results, she achieved an incredible 12th position in the overall classification, her second-best result since her first appearance in this rally. This year she also took part in the Merzouga Rally, where she finished in a brilliant 14th position. And looking for new goals, in 2018 she decided to make her debut at the Erzberg Rodeo Race, the toughest hard enduro race in the world, by participating in the Blakläder Iron Road Prologue on her KTM 450 Rally bike. Laia came close to a top 50 classification. She did not take part in the main race Red Bull Hare Scramble held on Sunday.

Later this year while competing in Atacama Rally in Chile, a double virus infection prevented her from finishing the race and kept her away from training for the last three months of the year (the most important ones to prepare for the Dakar Rally). Despite the tough end to the year and the lack of proper preparation for this race, her tenacity allowed her to be at the start line of the 2019 Dakar Rally on January 6th. And once again she surprised the whole world by finishing in an unexpected but so incredible 12th position in the overall classification, thus turning her into the only active bike rider who has finished the last nine editions in a row of the Dakar Rally.

Moreover, in 2019 she has debuted at the main race at the Erzberg Rodeo, the Red Bull Hare Scramble. Although she made a huge effort and has passed successfully the hardest part, Carl's Dinner, she couldn't reach her goal of finishing within the 4 hours stipulated. That brings her to add a new goal for the next season 2020.

"WHO HAS THE WILL HAS THE STRENGTH."

Livia Lancelot

(France) – 2-time FIM Women's Motocross World Champion

Livia Lancelot was born 11 February 1988 in Saint-Denis, France. She became the first ever Women's World Champion in the history of motocross, winning the inaugural FIM Women's Motocross World Championship in 2008.

Livia was only four years old when she started to ride a motorcycle. Few years later she started her racing career from the 50cc class moving up to the 60cc and 80cc class always competing together with boys. When Livia was 14 she started to race in the 125cc class. Two years later, 16-year-old Livia was already competing in the French Junior Motocross Championship becoming the first girl to win qualifying. She also participated in races in the USA.

In 2005 the FIM established the FIM Women's Motocross World Cup series and Livia took part in the series that included two races in Germany and two in Sweden. She won the opening race and was second in the second moto. However, the final weekend in Sweden did not go that well and after being third in the first race she only claimed 11 points from the second moto when she crossed the finish line in tenth. However, in overall results Livia finished 3rd and gained her first World Cup medal. She also won World Cup Bronze the following year and claimed second spot in 2007 despite the fact that she had problems with her knee that required an operation after the season.

In 2008 the women's motocross series got FIM World Championship status. Livia had only one goal when the season with five racing weekends started, she wanted to win the title! Livia had a very strong year, she was second and first in Bulgaria, made it onto the podium in Italy and in France, and went 1-3 in Germany. After being second and winning the last race in The Netherlands Livia Lancelot made history by winning the first FIM Women's Motocross World Championship. She had made her dream come true after so many demanding years and tough fights.

Livia started to defend her title the following year strongly with several victories even wrapping up her first ever overall victory in front of her home crowd in France.

However, in the middle of the season Livia dislocated her right shoulder in a training accident. She arrived in Germany in pain trying to fight for the championship, but already in the beginning of the opening moto her shoulder popped out and she had to be taken to hospital. Livia did not return to action for the remainder of that season. She put all her focus for the next season and trained herself to be even stronger.



In 2010 Livia achieved a silver medal in the World Championship. The following year she only did the opening round of the World Championship, although since the women's races were now organised with MX3 and not MX1 and MX2 anymore, the travelling costs to countries that were further away from middle Europe got bigger and at the same time the media coverage became poorer. So, Livia decided to skip the World Championship that season and instead she travelled to the USA to practice Supercross. The decision paid off when Livia made it to the podium in the X Games.

In 2012 Livia was dominating at the beginning and the end of the season, but due to the fact that she went again to the USA to get another bronze medal at the X Games in the middle of the World Championship season, she had to say good bye to another medal. In 2013 Livia hurt her knee and had to quit the season missing also the X Games. 2014 brought new challenges for Livia as she started to compete with her own 114 Team. She also had two young female talents racing under her team. By the end of the season she achieved a World Championship bronze. The 2015 season was great for Livia despite that she narrowly lost the World title to Kiara Fontanesi. Winning two GPs and scoring 10 podiums, she also claimed her fifth French title after she won every round of her national series.

It took her eight years, though finally in 2016 Livia confirmed her second FIM Women's Motocross World Championship in one of the most competitive editions of the contest since Women's Motocross was inaugurated as an FIM series back in 2008. Livia's campaign was one of consistency with important race victories in Germany, France and Switzerland through the seven-round, fourteen-moto affair. Eventually, across the damp sand of Assen, the 28-year-old grasped the No.1 plate that had proved so elusive for the best part of a decade, returning her to the top of Women's Motocross. Livia was so happy and relieve, she had been fighting for this title for years.

After 20 years of racing, that being 12 seasons at the highest level and gaining silver in 2017 Livia was ready for new challenges. She decided to fulfil another dream of hers by becoming the manager of a Team 114 competing with two riders in the MX2 World Championship. The challenge became bigger when she made a contract with a manufacturer she had not worked with before. After competing almost all of her career with Kawasaki, she was now working with Honda.



Livia was starting almost from zero as a MX2 Team Boss, but she was excited about her new challenges and ready to work hard in order to fill yet another one of her dreams. She soon realised that her rider's background helped her a lot in this new role. Already from the first race of her first year leading the Team 114 in a very high level MX2 class, she managed to celebrate a podium finish as her Australian rider Hunter Lawrence took second in Argentina. In 2019 the podium celebrations have continued thanks to another Aussie Mitchell Evans. Livia has never been afraid of saying yes to new challenges and that is why she has been living the life of her dreams.

**"GET UP
ONE MORE TIME
THAN YOU FALL."**

Lydia Robin

(France) – FIM Track Racing Commission Coordinator

Born in Marmande, South West of France in 1980, Lydia Robin is lucky to now work in the industry where her passion lies. She grew up in a family where you learn how to ride a bike before riding a bicycle, where you spend holidays around tracks across Europe instead of relaxing on the beach.

This passion was passed on to Lydia by her father, who has been involved in the sport for over 40 years. So how could Lydia not be touched by the racing virus? This passion takes such a big part in her family's lives, probably up to 95% of their life was spent around the Track Racing World.

Lydia is not only a maniac of this one sport, she is a big fan of basketball, motocross and everything around the data processing atmosphere, these universes are totally different but also complementary to help her learn and develop skills that are good for her personal enrichment and work.

Thanks to this innate involvement, Lydia had the chance to experience many areas of volunteering. After school time, then after work evenings, weekends or holidays, each of these free moments were a reason for her to enter the circuits areas and spend hours working with her passionate fellows or spend days around a track with the nice methanol smell.

Some years later, Lydia quit the club in which she was born to enter the "rival" club some kilometres next to the first one. That was a bit like the story of Romeo who wanted to marry the rival family's daughter Juliette. Her family was against it, but she did it anyway! Sometimes she was on a tractor, sometimes painting the wood fences of the track or just behind her computer, she really liked this versatility. She could also jump in a van and drive around 3000 kilometers in a weekend to be with her friends and riders for a track racing meeting, as well as designing press books or designing racing gear.

One day, Lydia followed one of her old friends, Mr Thierry Bouin (FIM CCP Bureau member and FIM Long Track Race Coordinator until 2018) during a FIM Long Track world Championship Final. He was also born into and is still spending lots of hours around this sport (currently chairman of the French Track Racing Commission). Thanks to him, over a couple of seasons, Lydia was able to learn how everything works while observing him as a passionate volunteer at a high level.



©Niklas Breu



At the same time she wrote some articles and took pictures for the FIM Communication department. The next year, Lydia became French Track Racing Commission Member and she obtained all the French licences needed to progress. She became the first female Referee, Clerk of the Course and Track racing Commission member of the French CCP history. It wasn't really easy to referee in a male environment, but her strong character and her wish to be in this sport helped her to face the challenges. Referee, Clerk of the Course, rulebooks, communication, graphics; she tried to help in everything she could. And it worked!

In 2014, Lydia placed an application for candidature to enter the FIM Track Racing Commission, supported by the French Federation. Accepted by the leaders, in February of the same year she attended her first ever FIM Conference of the Commissions in Geneva along with 300 volunteers in motorcycling. This was quite impressive to her! Then came the Commission meeting. Only men around the table and most of them who had been racing before and were her idols. This was even more impressive to her! While opening the meeting, Mr. Armando Castagna (Director of the Commission) introduced Lydia and added that she was the first female entering the commission in the history of the FIM CCP. At the time, she was lost for words for a while as her dream had come true! The three next seasons, Lydia was still assisting her mentor, Mr Thierry Bouin on the FIM Long Track World Championship as well as continuing to work for the French commission on the French championships as well as refereeing and creating the first ever French Speedway League with her French CCP fellows. In middle of 2016, Lydia became aware that the FIM CCP Coordinator job would be advertised. With no time to lose, she applied! Lydia knew all about the sport of Track Racing, she was confident she could do the role, she was a born self-learner and studying had never been her cup of tea. Lydia knew it would be a "disability" not to have any school diploma, but she wondered if her experience in the sport would be strong enough to gain the position.

Mr. Armando Castagna, Track Racing Commission Director, was also sure that Lydia was able to do the job from the minute she entered the office. Thanks to him, Lydia got the job! She had two weeks to leave her life in France, drive across the country to reach Switzerland, alone and in an unknown region. She knew she had some difficult times ahead, but she also knew that following your dream is priceless.



©FIM/Good-Shoot

Lydia is often asked why she still spends her free time around track in the racing dust. But one should not ask a passionate person about the sacrifices they make and things they missed out on while devoting their time to a sport... because for them, they are not losing their time, they spend it for their passion. Today, Lydia is a very proud employee of the Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme and if you go to her native area in South of France, you can meet people who know her with big stars shining in their eyes, knowing that she was working at FIM and what she has achieved... the same stars that are in her eyes every morning when she enters her office.

**"EVERYTHING IS
POSSIBLE AS LONG AS
YOU WORK TO ACHIEVE
YOUR GOALS."**

Maria Costello MBE

(UK) - First woman to claim a podium finish in a race around the Isle of Man TT

Maria Costello MBE is probably the most prominent woman in motorcycle road racing and the only female motorcycle racer ever to be awarded an MBE. She has achieved unrivalled success in a high-risk world, competing on equal terms with men in a sport renowned as the ultimate test for competitor and machine.

Maria Costello got in to racing literally after an accident when a car driver knocked her off her TZR125 on her way to work (as a Veterinary Nurse). The accident's silver lining was that she received insurance compensation and bought her first race bike. She started racing back in 1995/6 and quickly added real road racing to her short-circuit career when she raced at the Manx Grand Prix at the Isle of Man. This was the start of a very important relationship with road racing at the Isle of Man TT.

Maria was the first woman ever to claim a podium finish in a race around the notorious Isle of Man TT course – often described as the world's most dangerous race. She also held the female lap record around the TT course for five years - but they are just two of many accolades she has garnered in a career spanning 20 years (a feat itself!). Throughout this time, she has shown remarkable resilience and determination in the male dominated world of motorcycle racing, overcoming astonishing injuries – including 24 broken bones – to gain multiple podium finishes in real road racing.

The 2016 race season proved to be one of her best, securing the female lap record at the Vauxhall International Northwest 200, her best ever finish, so far, of 12th place in the Isle of Man Lightweight TT race and a historic podium alongside her hero and 23 times TT winner, John McGuinness in the Isle of Man Senior Classic TT.

Maria added another wheel and new discipline in the form of sidecar racing to her resume and made history as the first all female team to score podium finishes in the British Sidecar Championship 600cc class.



©Maverick Pics



At the 2019 Isle of Man TT races Maria went even further and raced both a sidecar (as an all-female team, with passenger Julie Canipa) and a solo – TT Lightweight bike – at the same TT event on the same day – yet again making history and breaking boundaries for women in motorcycle racing. She has also set a Guinness World Record, been voted Sports Personality of the Year in her native county, become an animated character in a PlayStation game, a rider double for Reese Witherspoon in a Hollywood movie and a published author.

Maria's racing has taken her around the globe and the invitations for her to compete on exotic modern and classic machinery continue, adding to her already impressive racing CV. Never satisfied with confining her success to the track however, she breaks boundaries to pave the way for more women racers and motorcyclists alike. In 2013 she founded 'Woman on a Motorcycle' a community space where like-minded ladies can share experiences and ideas. Her pioneering 'women only' trackdays have also gone from strength to strength; starting with just 11 riders at the Teesside Autodrome circuit, she now runs events for up to 70 riders at the world renowned circuits including Donington Park and Silverstone.

Maria is a former member of the Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme's Women in Motorcycling Commission and was a mentor for the young female riders competing in the European Junior Cup. She is also an Ambassador for ex-F1 driver Susie Wolff's 'Dare to Be Different' campaign to drive female talent.

Maria has been an IAM RoadSmart road safety Ambassador since 2017 and continues in that role again this year heading up their 'ladies skills' day at Mallory in July. Maria is also the TT Riders Association President, the first woman to be inducted in to this position in the charities 67 year history. Acting as competitor for BMW Group Classic she has ridden both motorcycles and sidecars from their collection at the Goodwood Festival of Speed and competed at the Goodwood Revival with them since 2014 to the present day.



©Steve Babb Photography

Her position in the sport is undeniable and her following reflects that with over 270,000 followers on Facebook alone. Twitter is an impressive 22,500 and her new Instagram page already has over 12.5k followers.

Her undeniable uniqueness, the fact that she's a woman challenging gender stereotyping and succeeding in a male-dominated area, also attracts elusive and highly sought after coverage from all forms of media: lifestyle, tabloid and broadsheet newspapers, TV, radio and online media. Her talents, achievements and extraordinary story have made her a popular presenter and Keynote and motivational speaker too.

**"DREAM - BELIEVE
ACHIEVE!"**

María Herrera

(Spain) – First woman to win Spanish Championship Moto3 races - MotoE racer

María Herrera was born in 1996 in Oropesa, near Toledo in Spain. Encouraged by her father Antonio, himself a keen sports motorcyclist, she started motorcycling at the age of five, even before she had learnt to ride a bicycle. She made her first steps in competition in 2004 on Minimotos, concluding her season in 8th position in Campeonato Cuna de Campeones Bancaja.

At the age of nine María decided for herself that she wanted to dedicate her sports life to motorcycling, as she moved from Minimotos to 70cc MiniGP bikes. She pursued her learning path through various stages of the national Cuna de Campeones championships for children and was the first classified girl of the Metrakit World Festival MiniGP in 2007 and 2008.

2011 was a major milestone in María's career, as she won the Campeonato Mediterráneo de Velocidad PreMoto 3 and also joined the famous Monlau sports boarding school. The next year she demonstrated her resilience in a painful way: despite a severe injury at the beginning of the season she still managed to end the year fourth in both the Spanish and the European Moto3 championships.

In 2013 María was the first woman ever to win races in the Spanish championship. She led the Moto3 championship until the final race, having many memorable dices with Fabio Quartararo. Unfortunately, she couldn't finish the last race and concluded that highly competitive championship in fourth position. 2015 was María's first and best full season in the Moto3 World Championship, as she finished in three GPs within the points, amongst that was a beautiful eleventh place in Australia.



©Pep Segales



By contrast the next two GP seasons would highlight the importance of a competitive team and adequate finances. As her 2016 team had retired after the fourth GP due to financial problems, together with her father, María set up her own MH6 team in order to continue the World Championship. María finished the season as a true privateer and on a shoestring budget, like in the old days of the Continental Circus! Still she ended within the points in no less than four GPs. Towards the end of the GP of Malaysia race she was run off the track by another rider while dicing for the eighth place, breaking her shoulder and finishing her season early.

In 2017 again, the less experienced team she was riding for was unable to complete the whole GP season.

In 2018 María bounced back, moving to the Supersport 300 World championship, where she put several fastest laps in her name. When the dates allowed for, she also competed in the Spanish Supersports 600 championship, here also often putting her name behind the fastest lap in the race. This was an eye opener, as she discovered how much she loves racing larger bikes.

In 2019 María is riding in the World Supersports championship and in parallel in the first ever MotoE World Cup.

Having now proven that a female rider is able race large bikes as fast as any male riders, María has the ambition for the future to set up a racing school, which will be open to both genders and where of vcourse she would raise many young female top talents!

"CORRER O MORIR - RACE OR DIE."



©Manu Tormo

Maribel Giordani

(Argentina) - FIM Latin America Women's Enduro Champion

Maribel was born in Argentina on 4 January, 1984 into a family that loves motorcycling. Her father Tony Giordani rode enduro for fun, just enjoying nature on his motorcycle.

Life gave him three daughters, which was no reason not to teach girls their favorite sport and their passion. Thus, in the beginning the initial connection with this sport was a family pastime, simply looking to enjoy nature outdoors and sharing a sport within the family.

When his daughters were at the age to drive a motorcycle, Tony introduced them into the sport. Quickly Maribel, Erica and Noelia showed their skills as riders and therefore the family motorcycle rides became more frequent and prolonged.

As time passed Tony decided to start competing in Enduro in Argentina with some very good results. The whole family attended the races and while their father competed, his three daughters trained in the nearby area on their bikes, developing more and more their level of riding.

Maybe as they were already ingretated into competitions, perhaps being the father of three women and seeing that his daughters rode as well as men, it was a natural progression in 1994 and at only nine years old, Maribel competed in her first enduro, becoming the first woman to compete in Argentina.

The excellent results obtained by Maribel in her debut, the only woman in competition, motivated her to continue competing, entering each time in races with a higher level of riding and physical demands.

For years, Maribel was the only woman competing, then her sisters joined, who also competed in their respective categories as the only women.

For Maribel competing against men meant a double challenge, which she enjoyed very much. Seeing what she was capable of, feeling how she could measure up with them at the same time and beating them, gave her great satisfaction, a feeling that stil exists even to this day. For that reason, she competes in both Women and also mixed category events.



©Ariel Santibanez



She remembers never feeling excluded, although it was not easy, but for her the most important thing was to show that as a woman she could learn from her male competitors and she learned a lot from them.

In the year 2006 Maribel married Fernando Forti who also rode enduro. The new family started to ride enduro together. They are the proud parents of two girls, Valentina, 11, and Agostina, 7, both who ride enduro in Argentina.

Just three years ago, the Women's category in Enduro and Women's Motocross were created in Argentina, a category that is part of Maribel's years of work, who fought to incorporate new riders in competitions in Argentina. Among her sporting achievements, Maribel was the Argentine Enduro Champion in 1997, the Latin American Women's Enduro Champion in 2018 and won a bronze medal at the 2018 ISDE, as part of Argentina's first ever Women's national team to compete in this prestigious event.

Her passion for motorcycling, her desire to incorporate more women and her concern for future generations has meant that Maribel currently dedicates her time not only to continue competing, but also to turn her experience into training new riders. This is why, as a volunteer, she conducts training camps, riding classes and promotion for the inclusion of women and children. She is currently working to train the Argentine women's and children's team that will compete in the next Latin American Enduro Championship for women and children.



©Ariel Santibanez

"MIND COLD HEART HOT."

Martine De Cortanze

(France) – First woman to finish Paris-Dakar – FIM Woman Legend

Fuelled very early on by the passion of motor sport, Martine de Cortanze started with a bang in 1968 as team mate to then French rally champion, Marie-Claude Beaumont.

Together they held the title during four years, aboard their Opel Commodore, GT and Kadett prepared by Greder Racing, which they brought to the lead in many rankings of their category and Women' Cups.

They figured on the podiums of major events in France – mainly Monte-Carlo, Coupe des Alpes, Tour de Corse, Neige et Glace... and abroad: Portugal, Great Britain, East African Safari, Morocco – the last two were crucial for Martine's career as she discovered Africa and all-terrain driving.

In the meantime, having attended driving lessons at the Bugatti School in Le Mans, Cortanze dabbled in a few circuit races, including the racing 24 Hours of Francorchamps with a Chevrolet Camaro and was lucky enough to be selected by Renault for the only Women's Grand Prix organised in Monaco on R5 Turbo, opening the Formula 1 race on the same circuit. What a huge impact she made!

Martine managed to combine a professional career with her sports activities, representing the Cabinet of one of the partners of the famous American architect I.M.Pei in Paris and was in charge of the automobile pages for Maison et Jardin Magazine.

IN 1975, after abandoning car racing, she discovered all-terrain two-wheel riding with a Yamaha 250 TY. Small tracks in Normandy and The Causses in the department of Lozère were her first playgrounds. As her passion evolved from leisure to competition, de Cortanze was attracted to Enduro and signs up for her first race in Gailfontaine. Five racing seasons followed on a Yamaha YZ 175 custom made for her thanks to Jean-Claude Olivier, head of the make. As the only woman to race regularly in this resolutely masculine discipline, she was hailed as a critical success giving her the support of the manufacturer, then ELF and Pernod racing team.

In 1978, two men she got to know during the rally period were to play an important part in her life: Thierry Sabine (a former Porsche pilot) organised the first Paris-Dakar rally and Jean-François Piot (a former Alpine pilot) recruited her to ride for the Honda team on a 250 XLS. That race marked a turning point: as the first woman to finish, 11th of the motorcycle ranking, de Cortanze's notoriety soared beyond a mere sporting feat.



©FIM/Good-Shoot



The following year was not as joyful, as her Yamaha XT 500 caught fire 500 km from the finishing line, in 15th position. For the third edition, she finished 16th on a XT 250. The other significant results during that period were mainly her two victories at La Croisière Verte in 1978 and 1979 (a giant Enduro organised by Thierry Sabine between Le Touquet and Nice), the rallies of Morocco and Tunisia where she lead a team of 11 competitors, and the times she took part in the Enduro in Le Touquet.

1981 marked her come-back to car racing for 4 years this time all-terrain. Recruited by Lada Automobiles, she lead the Lada ranking until giving up in the penultimate round of the 1982 Paris-Dakar, and won the Women's Cup of the Morocco Rally of 1983. Representing the brand, she also took part in the 5th Paris-Dakar and in the 1984 Baja de Montes Blancos. Riding a Peugeot-Automobiles Dangel, she won all female ratings for the 24 heures de Mauléon and rally of Tunisia, and 2nd place for 4x4 series at the 1986 Baja de Montes Blancos.

On a professional level, Martine de Cortanze was recruited by André Courrèges who put her in charge of communication for all his creations. The avant-garde fashion she could only dream of during her youth temporarily stole her away from running, as the haute couture fashion shows, at the height of the season, took place at the same time as the Paris-Dakar. As Courrèges was firmly established in Japan and in the USA, de Cortanze spent more time on planes than holding handlebars or at the wheel. Moreover, she was elected vice-president of the French Union of Press Agents.

Still the competition demon loomed and took the form of a motorboat: races took place on circuits traced by buoys and were named Inshore or Offshore, depending on whether they occurred on rivers or sea yet another discipline deemed masculine! The News / Total team decided to create a Women's team; from speed races (Grand Prix) to endurance races (6 Heures de Paris, 24 Heures de Rouen), de Cortanze spent many weekends on water. She ranked respectively 3rd and 5th at the French Championships in 1985 endurance and speed, then 1st amongst the French (12th generally) at the World Championships in Aurenzo (Italy) and 1st in her category at the Pharaohs on the Nile nautical rally in that same year. First in the S3 category at the Grand Prix d'Elbeuf in 1986, she continued her winning streak: one victory, three 2nd positions and one 3rd place in 1987, even winning a bronze medal at the French national championships that year.

In 1986 her Class III victories at the Monaco then the Saint Tropez Grand Prix gave her the title of French Offshore Champion. After water, skies: de Cortanze became a private plane pilot. She was approached by Patrick Baudry, a French spaceman and motorcycle enthusiast, and became his team mate during parabolic zero-gravity flights operated by the NASA from 20-22 June 1988 at the Houston Space Center (USA).



©Paris Match

That same year, her career as a pilot ended and de Cortanze joined the French Olympic Committee to create a Communication & Marketing department. She also took part in the Olympic Games in Seoul, Albertville, Barcelona, Lillehammer and Atlanta. In 1989 she helped create the Sportel Monaco, an international Convention for Sport and Media, and directed their Parisian agency from 1995 to 2011. Martine felt she had gained a lot from sport and its' values, and wanted this enrichment to benefit all: having taken part in a two-year course in the French Institute of NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming), she now practices as a coach.

Martine is the author of the book entitled "A Girl in the Desert" (Editions Solar) and co-author of "The Rallies" (Editions de Messine). Jean Graton chose her as the heroine for his comic book "Julie Wood at the Paris-Dakar" in the Michel Vaillant series. Martine De Cortanze was appointed "Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Mérite" in 2001, by then French President Jacques Chirac. She was also appointed FIM Woman Legend in 2015.

**"EVEN WHEN IT'S DIFFICULT,
MOVE ON.
STAYING THERE IS MUCH WORSE."**

68 Mary McGee

(USA) – American motorsport racing pioneer – FIM Woman Legend

Born in 1936 in Juneau, Alaska, Mary McGee was one of the first women in United States to race in road racing and in motocross events.

Mary was introduced to automobile racing in 1950s by her husband Don who worked as a mechanic. Mary started her sports car racing career with the Sports Car Club of America in 1957, her first car was a Mercedes 300SL belonging to George Rice. She was like a natural talent being both fast and conscientious. Mary won consistently in car racing and became more known in the scene. She made everyone aware that women can be part of the motorsport and even beat male competitors. Mary finished up third overall in under 1600cc class in 1958 and 1959. In 1960 Mary finished second in E Modified Class and won the 1500cc Modified Class in 1961. In the following year she was second in the same class the result she repeated twice on the following years in Pacific Coast Championship.

In 1957 Mary bought her first motorcycle, a 200cc Triumph Tiger Cub and despite knowing nothing about motorcycles she soon fell in love with motorcycles. However, her main goal back then was to improve her car racing skills through road racing. Mary - wearing her pink polka dot helmet - passed the audition requested by American Federation of Motorcyclists and became the first woman to road race and hold a FIM licence in the United States.

Mary competed from 1960 to 1963 in Road Racing with Honda CB92. However, in 1963 Steve McQueen encouraged her to move to off-road and soon Mary was competing on 250cc Honda Scrambler in AMA District 37 desert races. In 1964 she said goodbye to her successful automobile racing career and concentrated on competing on motorcycles only, primarily in Motocross.



©FIM/Good-Shoot



In 1967 Mary started to compete in the Baja races. The following year she became the first woman to finish the Baja 1000. In 1975 she rode Baja 500 solo on a 250cc Husqvarna finishing in front of 17 two-men teams. Mary was the first person to race the Baja 500 Solo on a motorcycle. Racing in Baja was the hardest thing she ever did. But Mary was not only a rider she also worked for motorcycling magazines in the 1970s. One of her achievements from this period was the 24 hours road race in Las Vegas and 6 hour road races at Ontario Motor Speedway. She competed in a team together with Motorcyclist magazine editors Jody Nichols, Brad Zimmerman and Rich Cox on a 650 cc Suzuki changing riders every hour. For the 6 hour races it was Brad, Rich and Mary on 750 Kawasaki.

In 2000 Mary started Vintage Motocross racing on a 250 Mag Husqvarna. Her last race was in 2013. Mary stated that Vintage Motocross racing is the most fun she has ever had in her racing career. Mary has also been an active speaker for women's motorcycling and a great role model supporting women to start riding no matter what their age.

In 2012 Mary was nominated as FIM Woman Legend, a title she received at the FIM Awards in Monte Carlo when travelled to Europe for the first time. The recognitions continued and in 2014 Mary was inducted into the Californian Trailblazers Hall of Fame and a year later was the recipient of the 2015 Extreme Sports Award. The following year American Vintage Dirt Racers Association decided that they will be awarding the highest point rider in any class with the "McGee Cup" in order to recognize Mary's accomplishments over the years. In 2016 Mary received the Dirt Illustrated Lifetime Achievement Award for her contributions as a pioneer in women's motocross. In 2018 she was inducted into the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame during the American Honda AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in Columbus, Ohio.

Mary never thought about having a career in motorsport - it was just pure fun to her. Motorcycling became even more fun when she started to race. Mary is very proud of her accomplishments and very pleased about breaking barriers for so many women following her foot steps, Mary never dreamt that she could do all that. Motorcycling has been a lifelong passion to her – something that still now is important part of her active life.



©Archive Mary McGee

**“MY HOPE IS YOU
WILL ALL BE RIDING
OR RACING,
NEVER GIVE UP.”**

Midori Moriwaki

(Japan) – Japanese motorsport pioneer

Midori Moriwaki did not get involved in motorsport later in life. Midori was in fact born into the motorsport racing world and, at the age of four, she already knew that this was going to be her world. She never strayed from the path she chose at that time.

Granddaughter of the legendary Hideo “Pops” Yoshimura and daughter of racer Mamoru Moriwaki, Midori has been hearing the sound of engines for as long as she can remember but, in addition to this, she quickly absorbed the values that still drive her in her successful career in both the international motorsport business community and the world of motorcycle engineering and sports. Passion, hard work, team spirit and, above all, resilience.

Midori believed that only comprehensive knowledge of the machine itself would allow her to achieve the goals she had set herself and so she chose a technical school for her studies. Having graduated from TSU Engineering High School, in her early 20s she joined Moriwaki Engineering Co. Ltd., the family company that Mamoru Moriwaki had established in 1973 in the Japanese racing city of Suzuka. The company is world-renowned for the design, production and sales of race-inspired aftermarket parts and the building of custom race machines. Midori took on a role in two areas, in International Sales and in the management of the Racing Department.

Over the years, she successfully led company racing activity in national and international championships, including the legendary Suzuka 8 Hours endurance race (where the firm have often outclassed larger and better-funded efforts), all Japan Road Race Championships, FIM World Grand Prix MotoGP, and FIM World Grand Prix Moto2. From 2003 to 2005, Moriwaki took part in several MotoGP class races with their MD211VF prototype, gaining fundamental knowledge in the process.



©Moriwaki Althea Honda Team



In 2010, the MD600, a Moriwaki-framed machine run by Gresini Racing, took the inaugural Moto2 World title with rider Toni Elias, winning 7 races and securing the championship trophy at the Malaysian Grand Prix on 10 October 2010.

In 2008 Midori also founded the Moriwaki Junior Cup, a project run in several countries across Europe, America and Asia in collaboration with the National Federations. The series serves to prepare young riders on a pre-Moto3 GP racing bike, the MD250H (Moriwaki Dream 250 Honda), getting them ready for the GP tracks. Moriwaki built a strong and resistant bike, with the specific purpose of limiting the damage even in the case of a crash, so as to help riders and their families to contain the costs.

In 2014 Midori was nominated by FIM as an Expert Member of the FIM Women in Motorcycling Commission. In the same year, she became the Team Principal for the Suzuka 4Hours Race as an activity for FIM Women In Motorcycling, bringing a 100% female team, comprising American riders Shelina Moreda and Melissa Paris, to the 4 Hours of Suzuka with the CBR600RR Synergy Force Moriwaki Club.

In June of the following year she became a FIM CFM member in order to combine her activities in and outside the world of motorsport. With a view to industrial development overseas, Midori established the Midori Corporation on March 2018 and the MIE Racing s.r.o on November 2018.

In 2019 Midori still holds many roles and she is also Team Director of the Moriwaki Althea Honda Team, managing the project that has seen the return of a HRC factory supported team in the WorldSBK Championship for the first time in 17 years.

"JUST DO IT!"



©Moriwaki Althea Honda Team

Morongoa Mahope

(South Africa) - First black female Superbike racer

Morongoa Mahope is the first black female Superbike racer in South Africa. She learned to ride a motorcycle in 2013, at the age of 30. Her first bike was a Kawasaki Ninja 250, which she used at the time for commuting.

She then joined a motorcycle club and went on leisure tours around the country. At the end of 2014, they went on a 800km tour that covered four cities. The only woman amongst men, riding on bigger and faster motorcycles, Morongoa held her own, especially on the mountainous roads where she was more comfortable and much faster than most of the men. Her riding mates noticed her natural talent for handling a bike in curvy roads and suggested that she go to the track to nurture her raw natural talent.

She started track riding in 2015 after two years of riding only on roads. She enjoyed circuit riding more, ultimately riding more on track and less on roads. Her interest in the sport grew to a point where she attended races across the country. In 2016, at the age of 33, Morongoa started racing and became the first coloured woman to race Superbikes in South Africa.

Her intention was to start racing at the beginning of the 2016 season but unfortunately had a big crash during practice a week before the first race and broke her collarbone in the process. This put her off riding for a few months but that did not scare or discourage her. She bounced back, invested in her training and pushed herself even harder, and was determined to go even further, to a point where now, three years later, she is racing in one the Regional Championships with the aim of one-day racing in the National Championship including a few international races. She is currently in second position in the championship standings.



©Tshepo Phiri / Prodigy Studios



In May 2018, Morongoa represented South Africa and FIM Africa at the IWG Women in Sport Conference in Botswana, then in September she hosted a track-training day in partnership with MSA, in order to introduce more people – especially women – who have not experienced track riding, to the sport. That same year, Morongoa Mahope was appointed Motorsport South Africa ("MSA") Ambassador.

Morongoa launched her Rider Academy, "Mo83 Rider Academy", in February 2019. There she provides one-on-one rider training from beginner stage, to track riding and eventually racing. She hopes to one day produce a future champion from her academy. Later on that year, in May, Morongoa was a guest speaker at the FIA conference 2019 held in Sun City South Africa.

Since 2017, Morongoa has appeared on over 13 National Radio shows, television shows and newspaper articles promoting the sport, encouraging women and people of colour to get involved and participate in Motorsport, especially people from communities that still believe it to be a far-fetched dream.

She has even introduced her 12-year-old daughter to the sport, making them South Africa's first and only all-female-of-colour super bike racer team!

"IT ALWAYS SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE UNTIL IT'S DONE."



©Tshepo Phiri / Prodigy Studios

Nita Korhonen

(Finland) - FIM Women in Motorcycling Commission Director, FIM Events and Liaison Director

Nita Korhonen was born a bit over a year after her father - circuit racing world championship medallist and Montjuic 24 hours' winner - Pentti Korhonen and his girlfriend – then soon to be wife - Marja-Leena had decided that it was time to stop the racing career. Back in the 1970s Road Racing (now Circuit Racing) was so dangerous that Pentti and "Marna" had witnessed several times the loss of their close friends and wanted that their children would be able to grow up with both parents. After spending over a decade racing worldwide together with the continental circus they decided to settle down and move back to Finland from where they both were from.

As a little girl Nita enjoyed listening to the paddock stories of her father and his rivals. The Korhonen residence was often visited by several world championship riders, team managers and journalists so Nita - even if she never witnessed her father racing - became very familiarised and passionate about the racing world. She and her little brother Aku got their first moped when she was around four years old. A few years later Nita found the thrill of snowmobiles. Because the racing years had been pretty dramatic for Marna and Pentti - they were not that keen when Nita, as a small girl announced that she wanted to race as well. However, for them it was very important that both of their children were able to follow their dreams and they did everything they could to support them in their various hobbies. Nita did everything from ballet to various sports and horse riding, but her only motorcycling race as a child in the end was a local off road race when she was about 7 years old.

When Nita was 16 years old she earned herself a motorcycle licence and immediately made a 700 kilometre tour around southern Finland. The following year she was elected to the board of the local motorsport club of Konnevesi, as the youngest person in the club's history. Before Nita even went to school she was working in different volunteering tasks in motorsport events, although now she also started to write articles about motorsport – first for the local newspaper and then for the Finnish-Swedish newspaper in Spain where she lived for a year after her graduation from high school.

When Nita was studying her BBA degree in business polytechnic of Helsinki she decided as her final thesis to write a book about Finland's Road Racing riders who had achieved World Championship points.



©FIM/Good-Shoot



The plan that even her father (who always highlighted to his children that nothing is impossible if you work hard) thought it would be too challenging for a 23-year-old student to do – however became reality when Nita managed to get a publisher and wrote her first book "TT:stä RR:ään – Suomalaiset Maailmalla" that was awarded with an Honorary Distinction at the Finland's Sport Museum Sports Book of the Year nomination. Over the years Nita has published four motorsport books in total, one being a biography of four-time Rally World Champion Juha Kankkunen. Her book "Voittamattomat" (Unbeatable) is based on her master's thesis "What makes a Champion" which she did for the FIM in 2011 when studying to be a Master of Sport Science and Management in the university of Jyväskylä. In this thesis Nita investigated by interviewing over 50 world champions what are the main character traits that make some people World Champions.

In 2006 the FIM created a Women in Motorcycling Commission and the board of the Finnish Motorcycling Federation decided to nominate Nita to the commission. She got selected as one of the founding members and in 2012 the board of the FIM nominated her as the director of this commission. In the previous year she was also elected to the board of the Finnish Motorcycling Federation SML and in 2016 she became 2nd vice president of the federation.

Even if Nita was never planning her career in motorsport – mainly because she didn't see any other options than being a racer which she realised she should have started already before school age – she has been involved in motorsport all her life. She has worked 20 years alongside her studies as a motorsport journalist including taking care of the communication of MotoGP series team Ajo Motorsport, MotoGP rider Mika Kallio, Kallio Racing Team competing in World Supersport series and the new Finnish MotoGP circuit KymiRing. In 2014 Nita produced, wrote the script and filmed a documentary of Mika Kallio on his way to the Moto2 vice championship. She established the www.moottoriurheilu.tv website that takes care of the communication of Finnish Motorcycling Federation SML and Car Motorsport Federation AKK and has worked as a columnist of the Finnish Vauhdin Maailma motorsport magazine since 2012. Nita also hosted a TV Programme called Motorsport to Finland's national TV channel YLE for six years which also included projects where she was able to race. The idea of her competing in ATV Supermoto Finnish Cup series that was just meant to be entertaining for the TV show changed completely when Nita did surprisingly well, and with support from Yamaha ended up 4th in the series as the only woman competitor.



©Bike Promotion

In 2015, 40 years after her dad's World Championship bronze medal, she made one race in Finland's KTM RC 390 Cup where she competed against men such as Moto3 rider Niklas Ajo and 25 time Finnish Champion Kari Vehniäinen. Over the years Nita has gained multiple awards and recognition for her commitment to motorsport.

On Finland's 101st Independence Day, the 6 December 2018 Nita got a call from the FIM's newly elected president Jorge Viegas. He wanted her to move to Switzerland to work as an Events Director and as a Liaison's Director of the National Federations and Continental Unions of the FIM. Nita asked for a few hours to decide, though Jorge already knew that Nita is never saying no to the new challenge especially as her family will always support her to follow her passion.

**"PLAY HARD,
PLAY FAIR,
PLAY WITH PASSION."**

Sandra Gomez

(Spain) – X Games medalist, first Spanish rider to win AMA Championship

Sandra Gómez Cantero competes in Hard Enduro and Trial all over the World. She was born on 23 January 1993 in Cercedilla, a small village in the mountains of Madrid, Spain. Sandra started to ride motorcycles when she was 3 years old because her dad is passionate about motorcycles. He and Sandra's mum bought a Merlin for Sandra and her older brother. Sandra wanted to be a skier and she started her career competing in this sport, although when she was 9 years old she changed the skies for wheels.

Sandra started - as every rider - in regional competitions, then moved to the nationals and then travelling with her family in a van to the European Championship when she was 12 years old. Always training with her brother and all the boys in Madrid, she was the only girl in her area, but always had the feeling of a rider, the same as them, even if they called her "the girl". At thirteen years old Sandra watched for the first time a round of the FIM Women's Trial World Championship in Andorra. In that moment she knew she wanted to be a professional rider. One year later she competed in her first race of the FIM Women's Trial World Championship, finishing 16th.

When Sandra was 15 years old, she was selected to represent her country in the FIM Trial of Nations, an event that Spain won. It was her first big trophy. After that, she won from TDN four times, was two times second in the individual World Championship, was crowned two times Spanish Champion and is also six times a finisher at the Scottish Six Days Trial. Still she is fighting for her World title.

Sandra's Enduro and Superenduro career started in the 2013 X Games in Barcelona, with a bronze medal. She always watched this competition on TV and when she had the opportunity to race it and to win three medals it has been like a dream come true.



©Mihai Birca



Focused on Trial and Superenduro, Sandra is a restless dreamer and good little sister. In 2013 following her big brother's career (he also started on Trial) Sandra discovered the Hard Enduro, the hardest races in the world. Her friend invited Sandra to compete at the Rally-Hardenduro Romaniacs. Since that, she loved these races which put you physically and mentally on the limit each day, each hour, and now she is racing with the big boys all over the world.

When Sandra was 21 years old she had some money saved, so she packed her big bag and travelled to the USA. She wanted to learn more English and live the "American Dream". As she did not have much money she was coming home and going back to the USA for the races to compete in the Endurocross series. She was travelling alone and had to race until the end of the season with a broken foot, however she won the AMA Endurocross championship and became the first Spanish rider to win an AMA Championship.

One more opportunity which the Spanish Nation has given her is to race the International Six Days Enduro. Sandra managed to take second in Spain in 2016 and secured third place in Chile in 2018. For her to be in this place to represent Spain with two more women and the team behind them is incredible. Sandra likes the team spirit of the ISDE and the TDN.

Being part of the Spanish Team since her first world race, now Sandra is working with the Spanish Federation to enhance the women riders, the women's hobby and off road in general. She decided she can show her ideas to make women's motorsport better; maybe not for her, though maybe for the next generations.

During her life Sandra has put the helmet on her head with the thought just to ride, to win, to improve. She never thought she was less or worse than a man. She used to compete and fight against the boys and is still doing it. But at least she wants to beat herself and be the first on the classification. In these fights there has been hard moments, more injuries than she wanted, she has thought to quit more than once and she thought to continue her university career more than once. Sandra feels it's hard to be a woman in still a man dominated world, but this sport is the one she likes most.



©Pep Segales

**“NO-ONE IS YOU
AND THIS IS
YOUR MAGIC
POWER.”**

Sarika Mehta

(India) - Road Safety and Women Empowerment Promoter

Dr Sarika Mehta from India grew up in a joint family of over 30 members. She soon realised that educating the girls in her home country was not a priority, but having an ambitious mother helped Sarika to set different standards for herself. Somehow, she managed to continue her studies all the way up to specialising in psychology in college and later got a PhD in behavioural science.

Although after fancy academic titles Sarika wanted more. She needed adventures. She went on her first trek when she was just 12. In 2015 Sarika came across a tour group who were planning a trek to the Himalayas. She wanted to try if she could do it as well. So she started going for smaller treks in the Himalayas, her first major climb being Everest basecamp already in that same year. However, at the same time Nepal was struck by a severe earthquake, which triggered an avalanche onto the Everest basecamp. Many people were killed and a few of Sarika's friends were badly injured. She was terrified of what she had to witness and the worst part was that she was not able to contact her family to let them know she was ok for five long days.

In the end the incident had bigger implications to Sarika's life. She needed to beat her fears as she wanted to climb again. So in September 2015, she climbed Mount Kilimanjaro and in 2017 scaled Mount Elbrus in Russia. Once she had fulfilled one of her biggest dreams it was time to look for another one and have the next challenge. Everything started when Sarika wanted to take a picture in front of her friend's motorcycle. Immediately after taking the picture, she felt a strong urge to ride the bike. Her friends told her that she wouldn't be able to handle it so of course she took it up as a challenge. If she could climb mountains, why couldn't she learn how to ride a bike as well?



©Imtiyaz Ansari



So 38-year-old mother of two did again what she wanted. Her husband had no choice but to teach her how to ride a motorcycle. Soon after, she joined a bike racing academy in Coimbatore. She learnt everything about gears and the technology of the bikes as well as the psychology behind riding a bike. She was so impressed about what she learnt that she wanted to share her knowledge. That is how Sarika started to hold seminars in schools and colleges on the importance of road safety.

Soon the World Health Organization noticed the work Sarika was doing and they invited her to participate in a Road Safety event in Europe. When some might fly from India to Europe Sarika naturally decided that she would ride there on her motorcycle. WHO was impressed by Sarika's research and invited her to join also other campaigns in Spain, Morocco and South Africa.

When Sarika returned to India a number of women contacted her asking her to teach them to ride. In 2015 Sarika started the first women's Biking Club called Biking Queens in Surat. Sarika along with three other women from her club embarked on a 10-nation ride for the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Abhiyan in 2016. The group made history by riding across India, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia and Singapore completing the 10,000 km journey in just 39 days. Along the way, they spoke to people about issues like female foeticide, the importance of educating young females and to spread awareness about welfare schemes available for women.

In 2017 to commemorate India's 71st Independence Day, Sarika and 50 other women riders rode through 6000 villages in 15 Indian states promoting women empowerment. They also taught young girls in the villages about menstrual hygiene and encouraged them to stay in school. The group concluded their journey by hosting the tricolour at Khardung La pass, one of the world's highest and most treacherous motorable roads, on August 15.

Sarika believes that a woman riding a bike sends out a strong message to the World. She herself however has touched the lives of so many girls and women in the most distant villages of India. Everything started with one little girl refusing to take no for an answer.

"LIFE OCCURS TO YOU IN THE ATTITUDE YOU HAVE. "



©Imtiyaz Ansari

Shelina Moreda

(USA) – Professional racer and COVERGIRL Model

International professional racer and COVERGIRL model, Shelina Moreda grew up riding motorcycles on her family's dairy farm in Northern California, USA. She got a dirtbike when she was 12 years old and the love for two wheels grew from there. She says that her dad never knew what he was starting when he made his children do ranch chores on the motorcycles, like bringing the cows in from the fields.

Shelina started racing 9 years ago, after getting her racing licence the first time she was ever on a track. She obtained her AMA Professional license immediately following her novice year. Shelina was raised to believe she could do anything she set her mind to, and what she dreamed of was being out there racing with the guys she saw on TV. She says she is just crazy enough to turn that into a goal and chase the dream. Shelina races at the Pro level and has raced in the USA, China, Qatar, Japan, and Europe.

She has several "firsts" to her career, including being the first female to race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway on a motorcycle, as well as on the first female team to complete any Suzuka endurance race. Most recently, the first female to race the Zhuhai International Circuit in China where she finished 3rd on the Splitlath EBR Superbike. She also finished first in the Women's Championship in Qatar in 2016. She is a leader in the industry for branding, exposure, and representation of brands as a sports model and spokesperson. She commands a high level of media attention and is growing her brand to represent her marketing partners at an even higher level beyond racing.

Shelina also runs SheZ Moto Camp, an all-female motorcycle skills school that focuses on building confidence and inspiring people to build their goals. It's Shelina's dream to craft an army of powerful females who support each other, push each other, and have high expectations for each other.



She was featured in the television show, Motorcycle Startup, which profiles her racing and her girl's dirtbike camps, and she is also a speaker at conferences and expos.

Most recently Shelina signed with COVERGIRL, as a model for the the worldwide makeup brand, and is their first motorsports COVERGIRL ever. She also stepped up to the big bikes this year, her first time competing at the pro level on a 1000, she is racing in the MotoAmerica Stock 1000 Championship this season.

"RIDE IT LIKE YOU STOLE IT."



©GotBlueMilk

Sue Fish

(USA) – Motocross Champion - Stunt Rider - FIM Woman Legend

Sue “Flying” Fish was born in 1958 in the USA. During her overwhelming career Sue won the Women’s National Motocross Championships in 1976 and 1977 plus Superbowl of MX Women’s Championships in 1975 and 1984, long before the FIM created the Women’s Motocross World Championship. But it was not only her titles that have made her career so inspiring for thousands of people.

When Sue’s father put his 3-year-old daughter on the tank of his motorcycle and took her for a ride to the desert, Sue felt that it was her place. It was like love at first sight and there was no turning back. From that moment onwards, motorcycling was part of Sue’s life. Her father, who used to compete in dirt track and hare scrambles, taught Sue how to ride a bike when she was 11 years old. Riding always felt natural to Sue and when she was aged 14 she started her motocross racing career, winning her first race already in the same year.

Sue was one of the first female motocross racers who got a Men’s Professional Racing Licence from the AMA competing primarily in the AMA 125cc National Motocross Championship. A big credit goes to Sue that there are today so many women competing against men in many disciplines. Sue was one of the pioneers who helped with her courageous example to break boundaries for female racers. Men at that time did not want girls to beat them, although Sue herself did not care how big names she needed to race against. She just simply wanted to race and thanks to competing against men she soon learnt her aggressive riding style. Besides off road Sue also competed on tarmac against men in the 600cc Road Racing classes. However, Sue never considered herself as a role model – she just did what she loved most. Beside her racing career many know Sue from famous movies, as she was a Hollywood stuntwoman for almost ten years performing in movies such as “Terminator” (Linda Hamilton’s stunt double) and “Footloose”. In 1979 she was also part of the Evel Knievel Stunt Tour.



©FIM/ Good-Shoot



Sue finished her professional racing career in 1985 when she secured third at the Women’s National Championship in Palmdale, California after running out of fuel in the final moto. During her ‘retirement years’ Sue has worked as a personal fitness trainer. She has also continued racing – but without an engine. Sue has competed in mountain biking for the Factory Yeti team achieving multiple victories in National Off-Road Bicycle Association competitions.

In 2012 Sue was inducted into the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame alongside the likes of fellow compatriots Roger De Coster, Steve McQueen and Eddie Lawson. Two years later, in 2014 she was nominated FIM Woman Legend at the FIM Gala held in Jerez, Spain. Motorcycling has been such a big part of Sue’s life. She was always happy when being on a bike. Despite going through over twenty operations, having her knees repaired ten times and her damaged shoulder replaced - especially motocross was something she loved in every cell in her body and she feels that the sport gave so much and taught so many lessons about life.

Being able to work with her passion, do what she loves and follow her biggest dream was something that makes Sue feel fortunate and grateful for.

“HEAL & DEAL!”



©Dick Miller

Susanne Neuhäuser

(Austria) - FIM Track Racing Referee

Born 1971 in Vienna, Austria Susanne has been refereeing since more than 20 years on a national level and 10 years on an international level in Track Racing.

Susanne was introduced to motorcycling sport by her father Hansjörg who volunteered for the "Motor-Rennclub Österreich" in the 1950s. The family went to a range of events from international Motocross Sidecar, to international Speedway Meetings in Austria and Europe and some British League Racing in Great Britain. It was impressive for Susanne to see big stars very close.

At the beginning of Susanne's career as an official started in the early 1990s when the organiser of Wiener Neustadt Speedway asked Susanne would like to help at events held in the stadium in Wiener Neustadt. Working at the University in Vienna (researching in Building Materials) she started to do the Clerk of Course education, took the international Licence in 1996 and later worked as a Sporting Steward on a national level in AMF. In 1999 she passed the national referee exam in Austria and became the first woman ever in Austria to referee a track racing event, even though her male colleagues were not happy to have her on the buttons.

At FIM level she got her first Clerk of Course Licence in 1996. At her first international FIM meeting as an FIM Clerk of Course she felt that as a woman she had to work hard to get her job done. Luckily FIM Officials of this meeting supported her in the best way so the meeting went well. But there was a 'chill' in the air, the first women to be on the buttons was not seen with a smile from her male colleagues. She was very strict so she faced some challenges with riders, who didn't accept her decisions as a referee. Some riders tried to cheat, because she was a woman, others tried to argue and some liked her and finally supported her in the best way, as they worked together to have a good races. Susanne achieved the FIM Referee Licence for the first time in 2001. It was her dream come true to be on the buttons in a FIM meeting to prove that women can do the same job as men in this position.

Susanne travelled at her own cost to FIM meetings and trained on her own. She attended the Referee Seminar and passed the exam every 3 years. Luckily she had friends in Great Britain who supported her and took her to their meetings so she could learn and get experience. With all this support finally and a bit of luck she got the chance to be FIM Europe Referee in 2009 in Teterow, Germany on the day of her son's 3rd birthday.



©Niklas Breu



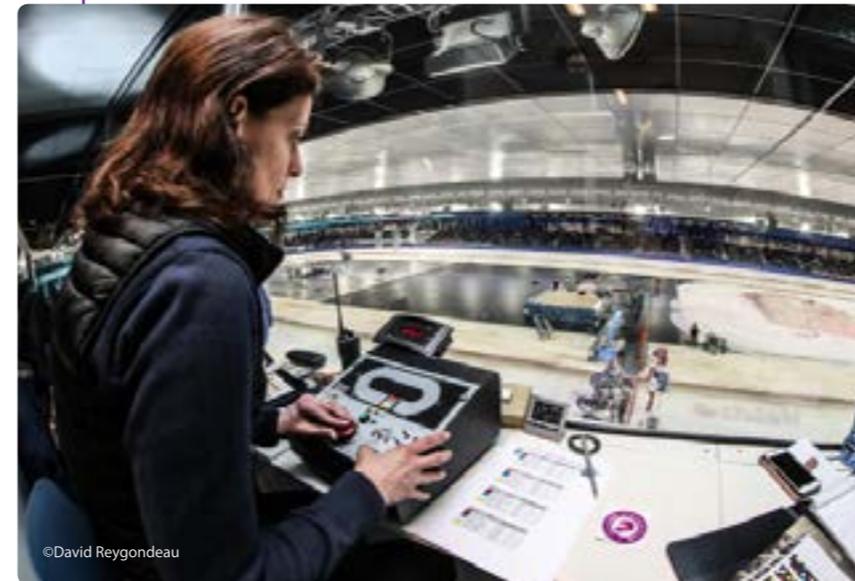
There her career in FIM Europe started and since then she has refereed many meetings for FIM Europe on all levels, even Finals of European Championship which were shown on live TV that time. In 2011 after another very successful seminar she got told that she will referee her first FIM meeting in Terenzano, Italy. Since then she has also refereed all kinds of Track Racing meetings on every level, except a SGP round in Speedway. At Susanne's first meeting in FIM it was interesting for her to learn that it's still not "normal" that a woman was in a leading positions. A Swedish rider asked so many questions about rules in the riders briefing so she could see that he didn't trust her knowledge. At the end of the meeting he came to tell her, that he is happy now, first he qualified and second he realized that she really knew the rules.

Another funny situation happened when the late Istvan Darago (former FIM CCP Referee) introduced Susanne in the riders briefing at the first event of the Final rounds of the European Championship in Denmark as a Referee. One of the younger riders realized that the Referee is female, and he then fell of the chair. Of course everyone laughed about this, but still a few years ago it was not comon that women are refereeing.

As well as her career as an official, Susanne also volunteers behind the scenes in several positions which she has held for a number of years and still is today. In 2009 Susanne became a Board member of the Austrian Motorsport Federation (AMF), the first woman in history in Austria to do so. In 2000 she became a member of the AMF Circuit Committee; in the same year she became member of the AMF Plenum. She also took a position as an Observer in the Track Racing Commission 2000-2005 and in 2005 she became a member, and moved to Vice Chairman of this Commission for 2008-2014. In 2015 Susanne became Chairman, which she still holds till today. Susanne is also current Vice Chairman of the FIM Europe Track Racing Commission, a position she has held since 2010.

Susanne is working for living at the ÖAMTC Christophorus Flugrettungsverein (Helicopter rescue in Austria) and volunteering in AMF, FIME and FIM. She is a mom to two teenagers; her daughter Julia is 15 and has been volunteering with her mom in Track Racing since 2018. Her son Philipp, 13 years old, is riding a Trial bike in events at the AMF since he was very young and also volunteering in Track Racing

besides his mom. Susanne has been a member of the FIM Women's Commission (CFM) since its launch in 2006, her projects are #FIMvolunteers and she is also part of the #FIMfuturestars and is doing Training Camps for Officials.



©David Reygondeau

"IF SOMEONE TELLS ME THAT I CAN'T DO IT, BECAUSE I AM A WOMAN, I SHOW HIM/HER THAT I CAN DO IT BECAUSE I AM A WOMAN!"

Taru Rinne

(Finland) – First woman to achieve World Championship points in Circuit Racing

Taru Rinne was born in 1968 in Turku, Finland. She is the first ever woman to achieve World Championship points in Circuit Racing (previously known as Road Racing). However, achieving points meant basically nothing to her, it was never her goal – she had only one dream and that was to win the World Championship.

Racing was everything for Taru who got involved in motorsport via her father who raced Mini-cars. The paddocks of Finland had already become familiar for her by the time she was 4-years-old. Taru practiced since a really early age. It didn't matter whether it was raining or snowing, she never gave up, but went on and on round the circuits. She believed that she could succeed if she trained hard enough.

Beside Circuit Racing Taru also did Ice Road Racing and Motocross, which she thought was very beneficial for Circuit Racing. However, before her Circuit Racing career Taru was competing in go-karts and she beat names like F1 driver Mika Salo and two times F1 World Champion Mika Häkkinen.

After winning two Finnish Championships in go-karts in 1979 and 1982 and team European Championship in 1983 Taru realised that go-karts did not bring her the excitement that she needed so she quit her go-kart career after the 1983 season and put all her focus into Circuit Racing. In 1985 and now 16-years-old Taru gained her motorcycle driving licence and started to compete in 125cc B-class. She succeeded to such a level that by the following year she got a permit to compete in the Finnish Championship A-class where she ended up fourth in her debut season. The following years Taru, with the financial help of her parents, competed in the European Championship level where her best overall result was sixth. In 1988 she took part in a few World Championship events as well as her European Championship races. In the French GP held at Paul Ricard circuit Taru made history when she crossed the finish line on her Honda in 14th position and having gained two points. She was now the first woman to ever achieve World Championship points - though she barely noticed it herself.



©Nita Korhonen



However, the historical achievement got attention and so Taru got a place to race in an Italian team in 1989. During the season she made it into the points in Jerez, Spain when she finished 15th, but it was at the Hohenheim GP in Germany where she managed to end up second in the qualifying practice. During the actual race she incredibly led all of her rivals and took the chequered flag in seventh position, crossing the finish line 10.31 seconds behind the winner. In Assen, Netherland she finished eighth, in Anderstorp, Sweden she was 15th and in the season finale held in the Czech Republic she ended up 12th. At the end of the season that included 12 GPs, Taru was 17th overall.

She liked to be part of the team and was happy that finally she didn't need to worry about the financial part all the time. The media were also interested in her as she was the only woman competing with men, this made the task of getting sponsors a little bit easier. Racing with men was something she enjoyed a lot. There were no gentlemen on the circuits, she was just another rider amongst the group, and everyone respected each other as high-level rivals whether they were women or men.

Taru was always on the road and only briefly visited her home in Finland. The mechanics of the team arrived from Italy to the races and Taru travelled alone from Finland with her 508 Mercedes which had the bikes in the back and bed and small kitchen in the front. She loved the paddock life. Everyone was like one big family – it was a feeling she has never experienced anywhere else. All in all, Taru spent four years in the team. During her whole racing career Taru competed in the 125cc class. Her aim was to start racing with a 250cc bike, although initially she had problems with her knee that she injured and which still didn't work properly after two operations and then one letter changed all her plans and ended her whole career in World Championship level.

At that time Bernie Ecclestone was the promoter of the series and he wrote to Taru saying that she didn't have a place for the next season. Taru had no choice but to accept that she would never be able to make her dream come true. She moved to the German Championship for the 1992 and 1993 seasons. More than her seventh position at World Championship level, Taru ranked her 11th position she achieved in the German championship higher. As everyone had standard motorcycles that they needed to

fix themselves and she had some really big names racing against her. Before long Taru couldn't afford racing anymore and had to stop after the 1993 season.

She tried to start a "normal life" and got a job in a mobile phone factory in Finland. However, life was never the same for her. She had big problems trying to get used to life without racing. She missed the times when she felt she was free and was able to have those big adventures in Europe. She also still missed racing that she felt was the best thing in her life.

In 2017 49-year-old Taru was nominated as FIM Woman Legend at the FIM Gala held in Andorra. She enjoyed being on the stage with other heroes and champions. Even if she never won the World Championship she so badly wanted – she doesn't regret anything. She won herself and proved everyone that she could be fast.



©FIM/ Maurice Büla

**"NEVER
GIVE UP."**

88 Tomo Igata

(Japan) - Pioneer in Asian Circuit Racing - FIM Woman Legend

Born in 1965 in Tokyo, Tomo Igata began Road Racing when she was twenty, under the influence of her elder sister Mari.

In 1987 Igata became the second female International A class rider in Japan and was delighted to ride in the same class as her sister. However, as Mari had to retire from racing due to a big accident, Tomo's dream of sister battle was not realized as Mari had to retire. So she set up a female road racing team, named "Team Mari", and Tomo became the first rider.

Competing in the All Japan Championship 125cc class in 1991, Igata finished sixth overall place, finishing third three times. Many famous names such as Tetsuya Harada, Kazuto Sakata, Noboru Ueda and Haruchika Aoki raced during this Golden Age in Japan.

Igata took part in the Japanese Grand Prix in 1992 at Suzuka as a wild card rider, which led her to move up to the World Grand Prix 125cc class from 1994. She joined team "F.C.C Technical Sports", which had supported Ueda and Sakata in the past.

Igata's debut as a full time GP racer was a big surprise to many, as she finished fourteenth and gained two points in Australia. But when the show moved to Europe, she struggled with suspension setting on different tarmac surfaces. Her best result in 1994 was twelfth in CZER and as she broke both her ankles in the Austria GP and had to miss a few races.

In 1995, Igata finished seventh in Brno (Czech Republic), her favorite track, beating Emilio Alzamora, Noboru Ueda and others. This was women's best result in Grand Prix equally achieved by Finnish legend Taru Rinne. Igata also finished eighth in Malaysia.

Igata moved to Germany in 1996 and took part in the German Championship races three times, achieving two podium finishes and one sixth place. She returned to Japan the following year and retired from racing in 1998, fully starting her new life as an advisor and instructor for female motorcycle riders in "Team Mari". She realized that there are some handicaps for women as they have smaller physique compared to men, especially in Japan where a woman's medium height and weight are 158cm and 53.6kg. Female riders mostly face difficulties and dangers to riding on motorcycle on highly mixed public traffic road in urban cities, in particular, when they ride so-called "big bikes" (over 600cc motorbikes): if they have an accident, it may endanger their life.



©FIM/Good-Shoot



As a road racer, Igata faced no problem regarding gender when competing with other road-racers. However, when dealing with many ordinary female riders, passionate about riding, but who struggle with various difficulties, she realized the way women ride must be distinguished from that of men: women should not rely on muscle strength, but should use a balancing technique and machine operational techniques. Igata named this "Beauty Riding – Ageless Women Style" as it is indeed a very smooth and beautiful riding style.

After Mari's retirement from team management, Tomo has been handling Team Mari and in 2010 she reorganized the team and became the president of the new Team Mari Co., Ltd. Tomo is teaching the "Beauty Riding" style in Japan and has helped female riders enjoy safe riding. Over 15 000 riders of all ages have joined her school.

After retiring from racing, Tomo was recognized as a LGBT and, being engaged in motorcycle activities among woman as a leader and female rider, this fact deeply afflicted her and she questioned whether to stop her activity for women. However, road racing on circuit is a competition with no gender distinction, so, after deep long thought, Igata made the decision to continue devoting herself to the motorcycle activity. She is now receiving hormone treatment and realizes how different muscle strength is for men and women. She is therefore able to look at motorcycling from both genders and recognise once again how necessary the riding technique for women is. Now Team Mari organises around 30 motorcycle events every year for women, including circuit racing lessons and safety riding schools, and counts, as of July 2019, 1954 members.

During her Grand Prix Road Racing career Igata won a total of thirty points and until now this record remains the highest won by a woman in the history of the FIM Road Racing Championship. This success earned her the FIM Woman Legend Award in 2016. "The two years in the World Championship were a fantastic and exciting experience", recalled Igata. She since has devoted her life to promoting the idea of Women on Motorcycle and to sharing the delight of Beauty Riding with many women riders who ever since enjoy "long-lasting safety and happy ageless motorcycle life".



©Igata Archive

**"NANAKOROBBI-YAOKI
FALL DOWN
SEVEN TIMES,
STAND UP EIGHT."**

Ulla Kulju

(Finland) - World's first paraplegic female motorcycle racer

Ulla Kulju was born in June, 1986, in Kemi, Northern Finland. She was an active sports enthusiast starting from very early age as her parents had an American car shop which gave her the spark to pursue a profession in the area of technic. Ulla had many different hobbies as a child, but she was most passionate about racing horses as a jockey and snowboarding.

At the age of 15, on 26 March 2002, Ulla was snowboarding with school friends in Ylläs, Finland, following her passion for the sport. Unfortunately in an instant one badly performed jump caused her to brake two vertebrae from her spine and leave her paralysed from the waist down.

Ulla was determined that despite her spinal cord injury and being confined to a wheelchair for the rest of her life, she wouldn't stop pursuing her dreams. Just three months after her accident she moved to Rovaniemi on her own and started studying for her dream job as an airplane mechanic.

Just eight months after her tragic change of life Ulla went back to the slopes, this time not with a snowboard but with a sit-ski. Soon she found herself on the Finnish disabled Alpine ski team and amazingly she won the gold medal in the National championships in Giant Slalom, less than a year from her accident.

Ulla's journey from being a 15-year old disabled girl to present day has been an incredible one. She has competed and succeeded in many sports, including Multihull sailing, Paragliding, car building and Alpine skiing. She has proven herself to be a frequent visitor in the podiums. Clearly any time she sets her mind to a sport, she masters it and comes home with trophies!

Ulla also has a passion for education. She earned a degree in information technology and in 2007 joined Kymenlaakso University of Applied Sciences, graduating in 2010 with the Bachelor's Degree in Boat Manufacturing Engineering. With a solid knowledge in several areas of engineering, she has worked as a Design Engineer for multiple companies and on many projects.



©Jukka Kinnunen



She has designed aluminium workboats, oil recovery equipment in Gulf of Mexico, command bridges for war ships and ocean liners, control board systems for hospitals, product development for KONE elevators, and armoured vehicles for militaries.

Ulla also became a mother in 2009, giving birth to her son while pursuing her Engineering studies.

One dream was still possibly out of her reach. Ulla was always very interested in motorcycles, and before her accident she knew the sport was something she would pursue once of legal age to do so. Alas, the dream of motorcycling was always moved to a lower priority. Studies, work, finances, family, kids... there was always a reason to postpone her dream of riding her own motorcycle. 12 years after her accident, Ulla was having coffee at work with her colleagues when one of them suggested "you should build yourself a bike you can use!" The next day Ulla bought a Honda CBR-600F pc25 1993 to do just that. She worked relentlessly for a year to adapt the bike street riding without the use of her lower body and finally in June 2015 the bike was approved for road use in Finland. That year saw Ulla also give birth to her daughter.

From the first track day on a bike, Ulla's story reached a disabled racer from Great Britain, Talan Skeels-Piggins. Talan invited her to join him in a track day in Silverstone where she also had an opportunity to work with California Superbike School coach, Andy Ibbott. Shortly after, Ulla bought her first race bike, a 2007 Yamaha R6, fulfilling her racing dream.

In May 2016 Ulla participated in her first race and wrote her name in the history books by being the world's first paraplegic female road racer. She continued to race the Star Service Cup series in the Finnish national series of motorcycle circuit racing and earned more and more visibility worldwide. In December 2016 Ulla was invited to join the Disabled World Championships International Bridgestone Handy Race held during MotoGP in Le Mans, France. In May 2017, Ulla and 31 other racers were on the starting grid of Le Mans in front of a massive crowd of 105,000 MotoGP spectators for the first world championship race for disabled racers. Ulla was the only woman to take part in the race and finished a remarkable 6th place among the 600cc men's series. As the team was celebrating their incredible achievement, Ulla was further surprised to be summoned to the podium. There she was presented with the highest podium and the world champion title in the 600cc women category as the first paraplegic female ever to race in a world championship race!



©French Arrogance

Ulla has continued to race 600cc motorcycles in the world championships for disabled, the International Bridgestone Handy Race, as well as against the able-bodied racers in the Finnish National Series. She has even designed a ground-breaking, 3D-printed sliding race seat for her bike and special 3D-printed magnetic foot pegs to keep her legs on place while racing.

Always focused on education, Ulla went back to school and in July 2019 she graduated from Monlau Repsol Technical School with a Master's degree in Race Motorbike, Motorsport engineering. She hopes to one day work more in the field of motorcycle manufacturing and design.

Ulla has inspired people with and without disabilities all over the world, and she says she is going to continue her racing career and her philanthropic work to spread her motto "Dare to dream, if you can dream it, you can do it!" to all in need of motivation.

**"DARE TO DREAM,
IF YOU CAN DREAM IT,
YOU CAN DO IT!"**

Vanessa Guerra

(Spain) – First Female Team Manager Moto2 World Championship - TV Presenter and YouTube Vlogger

Born in 1984 in Lausanne (Switzerland) to Spanish parents, Vanessa Guerra grew up living in Madrid and studied abroad in both Boston and Paris – she graduated from the American University of Paris with a Degree in International Business Administration (IBA) and a Minor in Global Communications (GC); she also speaks English, French, Spanish and Italian.

Vanessa Guerra was first introduced to the world of racing in 2007 by her younger brother, while he was competing in the Stock600 European Championship. The team asked if she could help with the management, coordination, bookkeeping. She agreed, although her knowledge about racing or motorcycles was very limited. The learning curve was steep as there was much to grasp about bike parts and racing dynamics, coordinating the team's travel plan for the season, managing media relations and guests.

In 2008 she became a permanent team member and was included in 2009 when the team went to take part in the SuperSport World Championship. She managed the team, who thought she owed her position only to the fact that her brother was the rider and her father was the Team Owner. It was not until the race weekend in Qatar that same year that the team saw her as a legitimate Team Manager. During the race weekend one of the riders crashed and broke his tibia and fibula. He was transported to a local hospital and Guerra accompanied him, as neither his wife nor he spoke any English. Once they reached the hospital, Vanessa was "harassed" by security as the local hospitals separate patients into female and male wings. Being a woman, she was not allowed to remain close to the rider and translate but since she stood her ground and remained with him, they cleared the hallway nearest to his room so that no other men could see her. She managed to make the necessary arrangements to have him transported back to Europe and get him safely home within the next 48 hours.



©Gigi Soldano



That is when the team saw real value in her, aside from her bookkeeping, scheduling and ordering bike parts. 2010 was a very exciting year as the team stepped into the MotoGP paddock for the 1st year of the Moto2 World Championship. Guerra became the 1st ever female Team Manager in the intermediate class at the age of 26, managing an all-male team with 2 permanent entry riders and a third rider who was a real wildcard, at 8 events for the season. The first time she ever attended the Team Manager's meeting held that season in the IRTA offices, she was the only woman and substantially younger than her male counterparts, who looked surprised to see her and even wondered whether she was lost or she was standing in for the team manager. However, once introductions were made, and she established her position in the team, it was never questioned again.

At the end of the 2010 season, the team decided to retire from the racing scene and Guerra remained connected to the MotoGP paddock working as a freelance Press Officer throughout 2011. She was then offered a permanent position in the Moto2 team Forward Racing for 2012. In 2013 the team grew, as they would have 4 riders in the Moto2 class and 2 in MotoGP. It was a very busy year, overseeing media, event planning, and writing/translating Press Releases in both English and Italian.

In 2014, Guerra joined the HRC factory Repsol Honda Team as Press Officer for Dani Pedrosa and Marc Marquez. Working for a MotoGP Factory Team was a great learning experience. The visibility and expectations for such a team are far greater, making it very important to carefully manage the media planning for the riders and team's sponsor events. A Press Officer also provides the official written statements for the team and liaises directly with members of the media, creating a closer interaction with both International Press and TV broadcasters. This enabled her to better understand the needs of the TV broadcasters – what, how and when to provide the information, making it extremely valuable knowledge once she became a Pit lane Reporter the following season.



©Vanessa Guerra's Archives

2015 marks the start of her career as a live TV presenter and pit lane reporter with French channel Eurosport. She remained with Eurosport on site from 2015 to 2018, throughout the 19 rounds of the MotoGP World Championship, attending press conferences, media debriefings and interviewing team members in order to provide the latest news in all three classes: Moto2, Moto3, and MotoGP.

2019 sees her join the Red Bull Media Network project: MotoGP Inside Pass Vlog on the Red Bull Motorsports YouTube Channel, producing a vlog for every race on the MotoGP calendar, providing insight into the paddock life and behind the scenes of the Championship.

**"NO ONE IS BORN AN EXPERT:
KNOWLEDGE IS AVAILABLE TO US.
BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO GRAB IT
AND GROW TO
YOUR FULL POTENTIAL."**



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IF YOU CAN DREAM IT
YOU CAN DO IT



WOMEN
IN MOTORCYCLING

