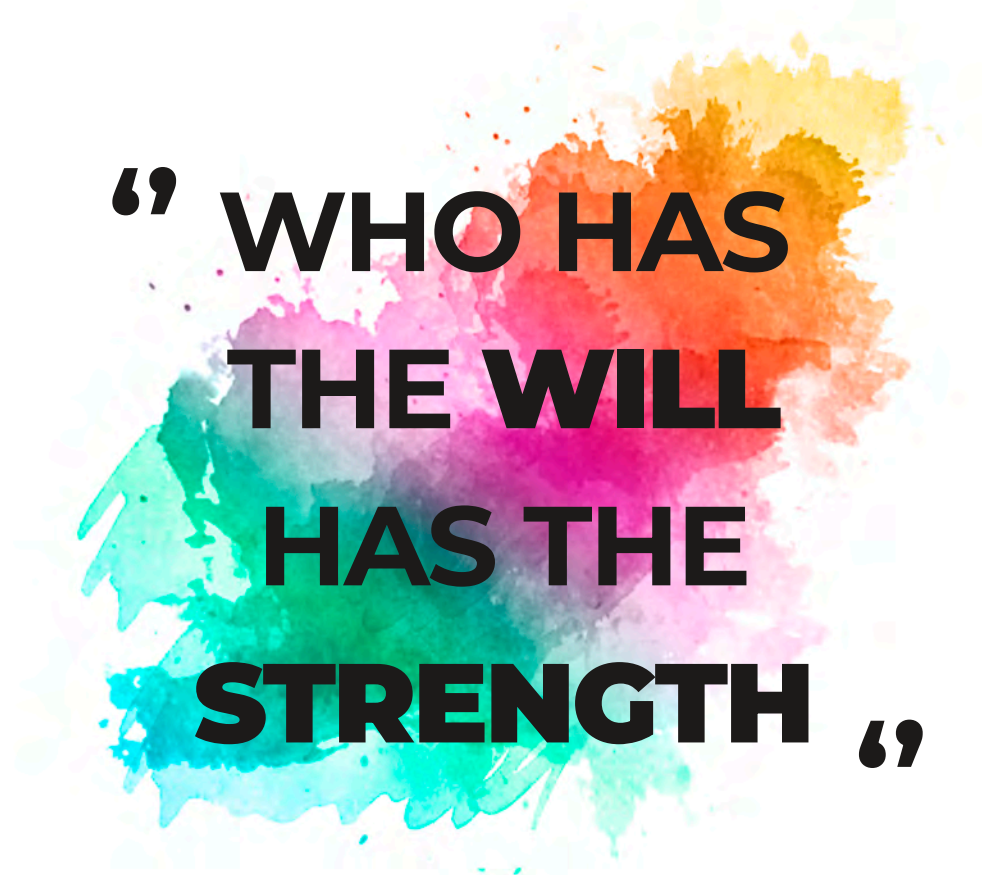




DREAM BIG

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN MOTORCYCLING



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

Introduction

**IF YOU CAN DREAM IT,
YOU CAN DO IT**

**WHY SHOULD YOUR DREAMS
REMAIN DREAMS, WHEN YOU
CAN MAKE THEM A REALITY?**

Motorcycling has typically been known as a masculine world, but women have been making more and more impact on it for decades. Many determined pioneers have paved the way for the next generations of females in motorcycling by acting as role models and setting examples. This is a world full of passionate people, a world of making your dreams come true. So, get ready for the fascinating stories you are about to read! Prepare to be inspired, prepare to work hard, and follow your own dreams!

Portraits

AL BLOUSHI FATIMAH.....	6	FIOLEK ASHLEY.....	52
BADER ANNIE.....	8	FISH SUE.....	54
BEARD ELSPETH.....	10	FONTANESI KIARA.....	56
BELL HAYLEY.....	12	GARDINER JESS.....	58
BIDDLE AVALON.....	16	GIANNETTI SILVIA.....	60
BLIZZARD JAN.....	19	GIORDANI MARIBEL.....	61
BRISTOW EMMA.....	21	GÓMEZ CONTERO SANDRA.....	62
CARRASCO ANNA.....	24	GUERRA VANESSA.....	64
CEVOLINI LIDIA.....	26	HARGREAVES VELIA.....	66
CLEGG RACHAEL.....	28	HERRERA MARÍA.....	68
COLEMAN ANDREA.....	30	HEYGATE LEAH.....	70
COSTELLO MARIA.....	32	IGATA TOMO.....	72
DAUTHEVILLE ANNE-FRANCE ..	34	JEAVONS STEPH.....	74
DE CORTANZE MARTINE.....	36	JUÁREZ KATTIA.....	76
DUNCAN COURTNEY.....	39	JUDEIKA JANIKA.....	78
DYKES GILLIAN.....	42	KAINULAINEN KIRSI.....	80
EMERY FRANÇOISE.....	44	KLEINSCHMIDT JUTTA.....	82
EVANS DEBBIE.....	47	KORHONEN NITA.....	84
EZPELETA ANA.....	50	KRÄMER IRIS.....	86

KULJU ULLA.....	88
LANCELOT LIVIA	90
LANDMAN KIRSTEN	92
LAZZAROTTI MONICA.....	94
LIEBMANN CELINA.....	96
LIPAROTI CAMELIA.....	98
MAHOPE MORONGOA	99
MARCHETTI LETIZIA.....	100
MARTINEZ SUANY	102
MCGEE MARY	104
MEHTA SARIKA.....	106
MOREDA SHELINA.....	108
MORIWAKI MIDORI	110
ÖHMAN ELINA.....	112
PERRY TAYE	114
POENSGEN KATJA.....	116

KYRIAKOPOULOU POLYTIMI.....	118
PORTERFIELD LESLIE.....	120
QUEAIEN JANE	122
REEVE MINA.....	123
RINNE TARU.....	125
ROBIN LYDIA.....	127
SANZ LAIA.....	129
SCHOEMAN BEAULAH.....	133
SILLS ERIN.....	136
VAN BUREN ADELINE & AUGUSTA.....	138
WALLACH TERESA.....	139
WESTBYE EMILIE	141
WILSON JEMMA	143

FATIMAH AL BLOUSHI

ADVENTURE SEEKER SAUDI ARABIA

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.

Fatimah also has finished the Sir Bani 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



**“SLAY, MIND, BODY,
SPIRIT AND SOUL.
FLOW LIKE WATER
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.”**

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 license 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 at midnight on June 24th.

Fatimah went on and bought her first bike which she calls Lady Knight (Game of Thrones effected by lady Brian). And she crossed the Saudi - Bahrain bridge as the first Saudi women to cross the bridge riding her motorcycle after the ban on motorcycles on “king Fahad bridge” has been lifted for riders at the same year.

Also in 2019 Fatimah Co-founded the first ladies motorcycling group in Saudi Arabia which was focused on building global communities of women who share the love for two wheels all over the world. In November 2019 Fatimah hosted WRWR The

Women Riders World Relay ripple event in Saudi Arabia and had the Saudi Arabian flag be signed by women from the region even though Saudi wasn’t ready to host the event at that time, it has been two years now and they are ready to welcome women from all walks of life. During Covid times Fatimah bought a BMW S1000XR “Red Hot Chili Pepper” and started a road trip of adventures across Saudi Arabia to discover the country in the light of the new laws that support women adventures and initiatives, Fatimah also lead the Saudi National Day parade rides supported by the government for two years straight 2019-2021. She also went on a motorcycle alps tour in Europe 2021 after the travel ban lifted post Coronavirus.

ANNIE BADER

FIRST WOMAN FROM THE MIDDLE EAST TO RACE MOTORCYCLES LEBANON



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. 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, made a bigger engine displacement a must. Soon after, she sold it and bought a Suzuki GSXR750 that got her back whenever she wanted to twist the throttle.

With time, she built the reputation of a fierce rider who was not afraid to try and fall in order to learn and improve her skills. That is what caught the attention of the Lebanese Motorcycle Club and later the Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation, who were keen to support 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 600cc 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 were featured in the show. She used her media exposure in Quickshift, as well as other shows where she appeared as a guest, to raise awareness about women in motorcycling and their on-road safety.

Later in 2020, Annie 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 the FIM Women in Motorcycling Commission (CFM), through which she is passionately working towards supporting women from Lebanon and the region to start riding.

Lately, Annie caught the attention of investors in the middle east and started working on a clothing line for women motorcyclists that she will hopefully launch soon. Her designs scream "I'm a motorcycle rider" yet are very feminine and can be worn on or off motorcycles.

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 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. Thus, in 2022 Annie led Arabic Women in Motorcycling project in collaboration with FIM.

**“YOU ARE GOOD
ENOUGH TO BE
WHOMEVER
YOU DECIDE
TO BE.”**



ELSPETH BEARD

THE FIRST BRITISH
WOMAN TO MOTORCYCLE
AROUND THE WORLD
UK



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 de-

ecided 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. 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 Aus-

tralia 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.



“I HOPE MY STORY CAN INSPIRE PEOPLE TO BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE NO LIMITS TO WHAT THEY CAN ACHIEVE WITH SELF-BELIEF, PERSEVERANCE AND DETERMINATION. LIVE YOUR DREAMS.”

HAYLEY BELL

FOUNDER OF THE
WORLD LARGEST
MOTORCYCLE
RELAY IN HISTORY
UK



Hayley Bell was born in Cheshire, UK, on 7 March 1991. She grew up around motorcycles and always admired them. Her father, brother and cousins all rode but, Hayley was a bit of a reckless teenager, so was deemed safer on 4 wheels rather than two. She travelled the world teaching windsurfing and English in her late teens and early 20's, hopping from country to country every 6 months, so motorbikes weren't practical for her lifestyle (or wage at EUR 50 a week) back then.

Hayley finally came back to England and settled in Warrington, where, at 23 years old, the engines started calling. There are so many layers to motorcycling that she loves. The adrenaline, the diversity, the sense of freedom... But what really hooked her, was the community. Sharing a passion so intensely that it eradicates all other differences, is a very unique and beautiful thing. To have a sense of belonging and family that stretches right across the world is life's greatest "richness" for Hayley. There was just one thing missing for her - women. Hayley knew there were more women, who like her, wanted to spend their week-

ends riding, breaking and fixing bikes, but in a heavily male dominated sport, she struggled to find them. Being a woman in the motorcycling industry brings its own unique challenges in each country. In some countries, there's a stigma associated with women motorcyclists or a lack of appropriately fitted/selection of safety gear, in others, it's extremely frowned upon or outright illegal for a woman to own a motorcycle licence. Female riders are a minority within a minority and Hayley wanted to address some of the issues directly.

Thus, Women Riders World Relay was born. Hayley wanted to ignite a global sisterhood of inspirational women to promote courage, adventure, unity and passion for biking from all corners of the world and do something that had never been done before to this scale. Thus, the idea to organise a worldwide relay with women from around the globe was born. The idea was to have groups of riders ride day long rides every day to the next handover checkpoint, ensuring the baton and its signatures were delivered safely to the next group of riders. Hayley's aim was to wow the industry into realizing the global market for women in motorsports and to inspire and encourage women into the motorcycling community worldwide. It was really a lightbulb moment. Those close to Hayley know she is forever coming up with crazy ideas and this one just fitted right. She wanted to show the industry the potential of female riders, that there was more out there than they thought and that women can ride just as good as any other rider. There are a lot of stereo-



types surrounding female riders, Hayley wanted to set the record straight and unite and inspire women from all around the world.

In the first week of Hayley having the idea and putting it out on Facebook, they had over 3000 riders in the group, by the end of the first month there was over 10,000. That's when Hayley knew she needed help and couldn't do this alone. She started by publishing a post on Facebook to seek support and received a lot of positive responses. As a result, a team was developed. It's bizarre to think that they are all in different countries, on completely different time

zones, have never met or spoken to each other before and in some cases, didn't even speak the same language and had to exchange through Google translate. Yet, they all came together from the desire to create something special and now they all have matching tattoos, some of the people have moved to a different part of the country (in the States) to live closer to each other. Fortunately for Hayley, WRWR generated the best team of people she could have ever imagined working with. Without the team, WRWR couldn't have been successful.

From the idea coming about in August 2018 to the team leaving for the start of the

relay in February 2019, they had 6 months to plan routes around the world that were suitable for their members, taking into account and providing for border controls, language barriers, seasonal weather impacts, sponsorship, a hand-carved baton, a GPS tracking system, a website, merchandise, legal aspects... the list goes on and on. The only way Hayley can describe how they did this was by working every day, every night, all day, all night together as a very close team.

They knew if they wanted to find sponsors, they would need to get the word out to the media, but few people seemed to be interested at the beginning. They all thought it was a crazy idea and it would never work so the project gained very little attention, exposure and indeed sponsorship. It wasn't until they hit the United States that the media coverage and sponsorship level increased and Hayley with her team were able to complete the journey.

Hayley still believes today that WRWR was meant to happen for a reason as there were just so many challenges that they had faced and overcome. Things sometimes went wrong and could have been worse, but they managed to solve it all and keep moving forwards.

One big challenge was the weather. If you are going to ride across 80 countries, simultaneously, day in day out, over the course of a year, the route needs to be planned methodically to avoid extreme weather where possible. Remember, if the baton didn't get



ridden for just a SINGLE day that it was meant to, the entire world relay after that point would be skewed. Women had taken time off work, booked accommodation, flights, boats etc, so the baton had to keep moving. During the relay, they had women riding in extreme weather conditions. Ever ridden in a monsoon? Hurricane winds? Desert heatwave? Snow and ice? They did!

Some countries bordering each other were at political warfare with one another, an example was India and Pakistan. The team needed to ensure the baton was passed across these countries and knew this would be difficult to organise. Two things happened here, both amazing in their own right.

First the baton got held up in customs as officials thought the tracking device inside it was some sort of bomb. Hayley was called at 3am in the morning only to be told that the baton was going to be destroyed by the bomb squad, along with all the signatures that they had accumulated thus far. In the end the team called their Pakistani ambassador Guliafshan Tariq and she went straight to the border to liaise with officials and after many days of tough negotiations, she managed to convince them that the GPS tracking system inside the baton, was in fact, not a bomb.

Another challenge was with India and Pakistan being in a political warfare with each other, the WRWR team were struggling to find women who would meet at each side of the border to accept the baton. A group

“A SHIP IN THE HARBOUR IS SAFE, BUT THAT’S NOT WHAT SHIPS ARE BUILT FOR.”

of women from both sides stepped up. These women said the following: “If it wasn’t for WRWR, I would never have met these women. I realise now that we are so alike in so many ways and we have become great friends!” What an unbelievably amazing thing. Putting aside all differences, two countries at political war with each other, come together for a bigger cause, paving the way to a great friendship. It still blows Hayley’s mind every time she thinks about it. In the end there were so many highlights of WRWR. One that still makes Hayley cry now is a memory from Dubai. When they completed the route, they had a closing ceremony in Dubai before heading back to the UK. Lara Tarabay is their UAE ambassador and she had organised for them to have a slot on the stage at the Dubai Shopping Festival Finale. Hayley had to ride the KTM backstage up a flight of marble stairs and she was in her element. Just before Hayley was due on stage with Lara to do the presentation, Lara grabbed Hayley’s hand, looked at her very seriously and said: “You have no idea what you’ve done here. We have changed the world, Hayley.” And Hayley believed her, and she still does because she can see it.

So many women have been inspired by the achievements of the WRWR team and have then gone off and done the things they love and promoted themselves, which in turn created even more of a ripple of change in the industry. As a direct result of WRWR, we are seeing magazines starting to include articles for women, women’s clothing lines are starting to become available, members of WRWR are setting up schools for women, promoting female riders as a positive outcome in their countries and so much more. The relay’s legacy is very powerful, the stories of what this meant to so many women have kept coming through and this makes Hayley feel immensely humble.

Currently, Hayley has a few projects in the pipeline alongside continual planning for the future of WRWR and its events. One of them is to write a book for children called “Musty the Rusty Motorbike” about a little girl who falls in love with a rusty old motorcycle and together they embark on magical adventures. With this project, Hayley wishes to enlighten young girls about their options, interests and hobbies outside of dolls, hair and make-up and to encourage

girls from a young age to step into the world of motorcycles.

In total, the WRWR got over 20,000 members from over 100 countries worldwide. The relay began in John O’Groats in north-east Scotland in February 2019 accompanied by more than 200 female riders. From Kent, the relay continued to Europe through France, then to Asia, Australia, Africa and North and South America. In the end over 3,700 riders accompanied the baton riding 102,223 kilometers through 79 countries and across six continents during 333 days, ending on 15 February 2020 in Dubai.

It was the first female motorcycle relay and the largest motorcycle relay ever performed. Google produced a short documentary on the relay which has over 6 million views. WRWR generated over 300 international press publications including in the New York Times.

In 2019, Hayley was nominated as AMA Motorcyclist of the Year. She is also WIMA Lifetime Honorary Member.

AVALON BIDDLE

FIM EUROPEAN WOMEN'S
CUP CHAMPION, NEW ZEALAND
SUPERSPORT 600cc CHAMPION
NEW ZEALAND



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 en-

gine 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. 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 ap-

proached 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.

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
IN THE
WORLD.”**

JAN BLIZZARD

VOLUNTEER OFFICIAL
IN AUSTRALIA
FOR OVER 60 YEARS
AUSTRALIA



I have never been away from motorcycling. My mother's maiden name was SPEED and our home was never without a motorcycle in the garage. My Dad, Jack Chignell, started out Road Racing where he won the NSW Senior TT at Hartley Vale in 1936 before turning to Speedway in 1938.

Back in 1949-1950 Speedway in England was prolific - running 3 divisions. Australians were limited to 2 per club. Dad rode 3, 4 and sometimes 5 nights per week in all parts of England and Scotland.

It was my job to complete the programmes and keep the scores up to date for him. So, I suppose, you could say that this really was the start of my involvement as a "worker" in the sport. I was 10.

It was through Speedway that I met Arthur, my future husband, who, at the time, was a mechanic for another young rider. That is how it all started. I joined the St. George club in early 1955, started with lap scoring at dirt track meetings held at Cross Roads (where Bunnings now stands), Vineyards, Winstanes, etc. Oran Park and Amaroo Park did not even exist back then. Not long after this I became Treasurer of the club and stayed in that position for 23 years.

During this time our club kept growing. We

“THE FUN AND THE SADNESS OF THINGS

I HAVE EXPERIENCED

OVER ALL THOSE YEARS HAS BEEN WONDERFUL.”

conducted scrambles (now known as motocross), dirt track and sporting trials. We introduced the Bert Bayliss Reliability Trial and also conducted the Mick Andrews Trial. We also held a few road race meetings at Oran Park and Amaroo Park.

I also worked as a lap scorer for meetings conducted by Willoughby MCC and later Northern Districts MCC held at Amaroo Park, and Bathurst then run by the ACU. Being a lap scorer, I was part of the timing team so I also learned something about that side of things too.

St. George club became one of the eight owners of Nepean Raceway. Somewhere in there, I was Secretary for a couple of years, organising dirt track meetings which included a couple of six-hour races. I have also been a member of the Road Race committee for I don't know how long.

In 1965 I had the honor, along with Arthur, to receive Life Membership to our club. This is pretty unique... We were the second husband and wife team to receive this honor from the club.

I helped at the ACU with the preparation of entries for the Bathurst race meetings from 1959 up until 1968 and when Arthur took over as Event Director I became fully re-

sponsible as the Race Secretary.

Things developed from here. Arthur & I were involved in organising the first-ever International meeting to be held in Australia, which was the 1972 International Motocross at Oran Park where Roger DeCosta and several other International riders competed. I was also race secretary for all the Oran Park Motorcycle meetings, as well as the interclub meetings that our club was running, and working in the timing team at Amaroo Park motorcycle meetings. We then conducted the first two World Superbike Championships ever held in Australia – again, at Oran Park, in 1988 and 1989 Superbikes then moved to Phillip Island in Victoria so I had a full day's traveling to get there. I still worked in the administration for several years. Moto GP then came to Australia. The first two years were held at Eastern Creek in Sydney then it too moved to Phillip Island. I worked for 10 years at the GP.

In 1973 I had the honor of being the first-ever female to receive Life Membership to ACU of NSW. This was a double honor, as Arthur was also nominated at the same time. For the first time ever, two people had been nominated at the same time, more-

over, a husband and wife team.

St. George club then approached me again to take up the position of Treasurer. I did so hoping it would not be for long. However, it was another 20 years. I retired when I resigned from all positions in December 2019. I was then 80 years old.

This all sounds like a lot of hard work. Perhaps it was and still is. But there has also been lots of fun. I've met and have made lots of great friends. I have lots of wonderful memories. Over the years I have seen so many ups and downs in this sport, but friendships made have been kept through it all. The pleasure of seeing people achieve their goals, both competitors and officials alike, has been great. I could go on forever. Sixty-four years may sound like a long time, but it really has gone by very fast. The fun and the sadness of things I have experienced over all those years has been wonderful.

EMMA BRISTOW

8-TIME FIM WOMEN'S TRIAL WORLD CHAMPION
AND FIM WOMEN'S SUPERENDURO
WORLD CHAMPION
UK



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 8-time 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 son's, 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. 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.

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. Between 2014 and 2022 Emma won eight FIM Women's Trial World Championships (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022). In 2021 Emma gained World Championship silver after losing the championship to Laia Sanz by only 4 points in a closely fought battle that went to the wire. She has achieved 34 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 and only woman to achieve a silver spoon award (3 in total now) at the famous Scott Trial, often considered the toughest one-day Trial in the World and 10 British Championship titles.

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. From 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!”**

ANA CARRASCO

FIRST FEMALE WORLD CHAMPION RIDER SPAIN

Born on 10th March, 1997 in Murcia, Spain, 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 SSP300 category of the World Superbike class.

Ana got her first motorcycle when she was 3 years old, as her family had 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, Andalucia, 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 in 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.

In 2013, at the age of 16, Ana made her way into the FIM Moto3 World Champi-



onship 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 good conditions.

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 a 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, with the number 1 on her motorcycle, clinched two victories and further three podium finishes during the season racing in the same category, together with Kawasaki and within the Provec Rac-

ing structure. At the end of the season she achieved World Championship bronze.

Ana's luck changed in September 2020 when she crashed during a test session at Estoril, Portugal. She was taken to a Lisbon hospital where they found out that she had fractured two thoracic vertebrae. Ana's season came to an early end and she faced the biggest challenge of her life. That kind of injury usually ends your career but this 24-year-old woman wanted to show that she is anything but an ordinary athlete. Ana was operated in a hospital in Barcelona where the doctors screwed titanium plates to her spine. She faced a long three-month recovery during which she really used her fighter spirit. Just one hour after the green light from the doctors, Ana was back on her bike. The Covid-19 had given Ana a hard time as the strict social distancing didn't allow people to visit her at the hospital. However, the season had to be postponed by one month due to the pandemic, which gave Ana some extra time to recover. Season 2021 was anything but easy for Ana as she had not yet fully recovered but already at the second race weekend of the season she proved everyone that she was back! Eight months after her serious accident, Ana won the Misano GP in Italy! Many top-level male competitors, including Marc Marquez, praised her incredible achievement after the tough battle.

However, that victory remained the only podium position of this tough season for Ana. She finished the year in 16th position. In 2022 Ana made her come back and competed in the Moto3™ World Championship with BOE SKX.



“RIDE LIKE A GIRL”

LIVIA CEVOLINI

CEO, ENERGICA MOTOR COMPANY
FORMER SOLE CONSTRUCTOR OF FIM ENEL
MotoE™ WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
ITALY

Livia Cevolini was born in Italy's "Motor Valley", known worldwide as the home of the greatest brands in automobiles and motorcycles.

Livia grew up in a family of "Archimedian" entrepreneurs, engaged for two generations in research, invention and development in motor power, starting first with four-wheeled vehicles and then rewriting the history of motorbikes with the creation of the first electric all-Italian sports bike.

As a child she followed her father in his rounds of work, curiously observing all aspects, from the family machine shops to the paddocks of Formula 1. As a member of a family where engines were part of daily life, she sees her current "job" with Energica Motor as much more — for her, it's a fusion with her own personal passions.

As a young graduate from high school, she was unsure which of her many great inter-

ests she would pursue — animals, arts and humanities — or the technical areas already familiar to her.

Making this last choice was key to her success. She graduated in Mechanical Engineering, with a management focus, but her passion for art remained undiminished.

From that moment, by combining scientific studies, managerial and technical development with her passion for the arts and culture, she began to mature her vision: one where art is at the service of science. Indeed, if asked about her guiding principles, she will respond: "Take advantage of science. Combine it with inspiration, with creativity... with the arts!".

In 2002 she joined the CRP Group, just after the company had entered the pioneering field of 3D printing. Her task entailed over-

seeing the launch of the Windform line of materials for 3D-sintering of functional polyamide-based components.

In 2005, while working with ADV racing sponsor agency, she entered the world of



Gran Prix Motorcycle racing in the role of Team and Sales Manager for Fantic Motor, in the 250cc class.

In this full-immersion experience, the subjection of women to prejudicial stereotypes was immediately obvious. Typically identified as umbrella-holders and even companions of riders, their path towards entry as engineers, technical specialists and man-

agers was still barely opening. Since then, women have increasingly been recognised for the same or better skills than their male colleagues. According to Cevolini, women, like men, have only two options when faced with obstacles: “react or surrender”. The choice comes from within the person, and Livia advocates that each of us learns to be stronger... and more reactive!

When asked what’s best about life in the paddock, she immediately answers: “The team! Living the team life, with all the team members. When you are part of a team, things must run smoothly. Certain synergies must work.” Livia sees teamwork as a symphonic concert, where everyone plays a special part, a key role, starting with the mechanics and ending with the drivers. But only with harmony can the team achieve top results.

In 2012, CRP launched the Energica Project for the first Made in Italy electric supersport motorbike. In 2014, with the formation of Energica Motor Company S.p.A., Cevolini was appointed CEO. In late 2017, Energica entered history as Sole Constructor of the FIM Enel MotoE World Cup, chosen by Dorna Sports, the Spanish company that manages the MotoGP.

In 2019, Forbes Italia listed Livia Cevolini as one of the country’s 100 most successful women.



**“IF WE ALL START CHANGING
IN OUR OWN SMALL WAY...
THE WHOLE WORLD WILL CHANGE”**

RACHAEL CLEGG

MOTORSPORT JOURNALIST
AND ARTIST
UK



Rachael Clegg, born 10 of October 1980 in Rochdale, Greater Manchester, United Kingdom, has motorcycling in her blood. Her grandfather, Tom Clegg was an amateur motorcycle racer and competed in scrambles events and the Isle of Man 'Clubman's TT' in the late 1940s. Her father, Noel Clegg, started racing at the age of 17 and was soon competing nationally and later, in GPs across Europe. But of all the events in which Noel has raced, one in particular had gripped him: the Isle of Man TT, in which he competed from the 1960s to 2004.

Rachael was thus raised in the paddock: the sound of dyno machines, the smell of Avgas (before racers switched to unleaded fuel) and endless days hanging around the workshop were all part of growing up. Her brother Tom carried the racing baton too: he competed in the British Superstock and Superbike series. Unlike her brother, Rachael did not possess the God-given reflexes required to be a motorcycle racer, nor did she have the guts to put her life on the line. But she was always there: at British Superbikes, Daytona and - every summer - at the Isle of Man TT alongside art school,

obtaining a first class degree and MA in Art History, working at the Tate Gallery (quite contrasting with paddock life) and later, she became a journalist.

But in 2012 these paths - racing, journalism and art - converged. Rachael became a motorcycle journalist and decided to embark on a truly bonkers and ambitious project: an Isle of Man calendar which would fuse TT history with journalism and surreal art nude photography (a strange mix that can be also seen on www.rachaelclegg.com). She borrowed props from multiple-time TT winner John McGuinness, TT winner, Phil Read, Giacomo Agostini, Guy Martin and Peter Hickman and set about re-telling the TT's 113-year history.

Rachael researched hundreds of TT stories and made sketches to illustrate them. These sketches formed the basis of her photographs, which always included relevant props (such as John McGuinness' leathers or Guy Martin's X-rays) and were always shot at the exact location of the original event. With a borrowed van, a photographer and a friend as a helper Rachael started shooting what soon became known as the Milestones calendar series.

The project took off: it was on TV, in several national newspapers, dozens of magazines and the calendar and prints were being collected globally. By 2013 Rachael was taking commissions from all manner of clients and in 2015, she decided to embark on a project at another legendary circuit: the Nürburgring. Here, Rachael celebrated the

treacherous beauty of the Nordschleife with her signature series of surreal photographs, which were all based on factual stories.

But there have been obstacles along the way: the TT course is a live road and so shooting has to take place at first light. Furthermore, with a minuscule budget, the only willing model she could afford was herself (she's free). But Rachael soon realised that posing in precarious positions on a live road at 4am at 5-12°C was tougher than she had thought and that shell grip tar-

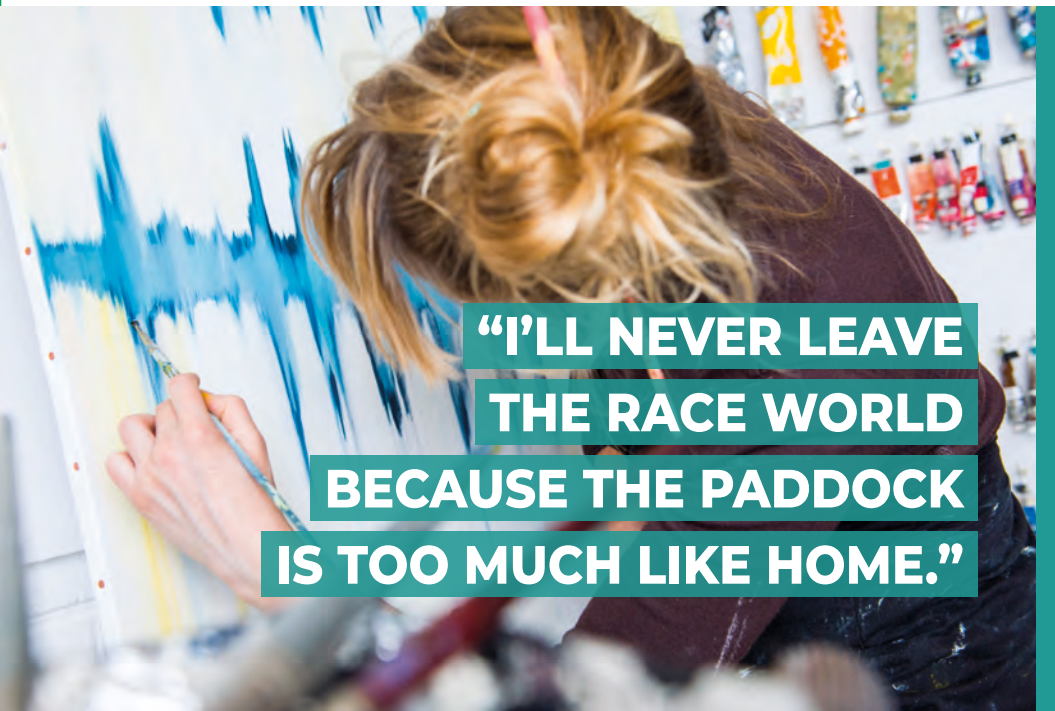
mac is quite harsh on bare feet! The logistics of transporting and procuring some props have been tricky too (such as organising a real elephant for the Nürburgring shoot). But she wouldn't change any of this for anything in the world.

Less intrepid is Rachael's Sound Stories series in which she transforms recordings of racing motorcycles from past and present into huge oil paintings. The subjects of her paintings include Mike Hailwood, Peter Hickman and Michael Dunlop. These,

alongside her prints, have also featured in exhibitions at motorcycle events across the globe.

But the thing Rachael loves most about motorcycling is its camaraderie. She says: "Wherever you are in the world you always see someone you know. It's like an enormous, very exciting family. The motorcycle racing world is also such a leveller: whether you're a celebrity or regular punter, it is the racing that is the star of the show."

Rachael's dream is to take her photography concept to other forms of motorcycle racing and motorsport. She says: "I'll always be involved with the TT: its history never ceases to amaze me and there is nothing like the thrill of watching a superbike screech down Bray Hill. And I'll never leave the racing world because the paddock is too much like home."



**"I'LL NEVER LEAVE
THE RACE WORLD
BECAUSE THE PADDOCK
IS TOO MUCH LIKE HOME."**

ANDREA COLEMAN

FOUNDER OF THE TWO WHEELS FOR LIFE UK

Andrea Coleman was born into international motorcycle sport with a flourish. Her father, Jack Williams, the notable developer (among other great racing machines) of the fabulous 'Boy Racer' (the AJS 7R), had been a factory rider for Rudge in the pre-war world road-racing championship and her mother was the indomitable Thora Bullus. Thora's father, Thomas, was one of the founders of organised motorcycle sport in the entire UK in 1903 and Thora's brother, Tommy, was famous in Europe before the war as the hugely successful factory rider for the German NSU concern. A British rider for a German factory, in the 1930s? It hardly seems credible now. And yet, just before it was too late, Tommy married Hilde, the daughter of NSU's managing director and they settled together in Yorkshire, UK. There is a memorial to Tommy Bullus at Hockenheim. Most of the on-line history and tribute material concerning Tommy is in German.

This is important to Andrea. She was born into a somewhat cosmopolitan family that had been, like the rest of the world, suddenly plunged into a horrifying geopolitical crisis. These two factors -- the needs created in an unequal and unreliable world and the ever-present potential of the motorcycle with its worldwide motorcycle family -- have shaped Andrea's life. She first visited grand prix paddocks in the 1950s to see her father at work. At the time, Jack was the manager of the AJS Matchless (AMC) grand prix team.

Andrea's own interest in international motorcycle sport began in the 1960's when she drove with a friend to a hill-climb at Freiburg in southern Germany. In the 1960s it was a long and uncertain drive from London to Bavaria but that commitment and sense of adventure was to characterise her entire life.

Andrea rode her motorcycle to many events to support her brother, Peter Williams, as his career started and developed.

She started her own road-racing career in the early 1970s while holding a demanding and rather glamorous job at Chelsea Football Club. But racing and adventure won out and an already fast-paced life took another turn when she married Tom Herron and moved to Northern Ireland. There, they both raced on closed-road circuits until Andrea crashed painfully, and surrounded by her broken bones, stone walls and trees, she saw the error of her ways. But by then Tom was more than ready for the bigger picture and after Andrea sold her Yamaha TZ250 to contribute to a Kel Carruthers' Yamaha for Tom, they left Ireland for the challenges (and there were many and they were often unreasonable) of competition in the FIM world road-racing championship of the day.



The little team and its great rider were very successful in the 250cc and 350cc classes and in late 1978 Tom was invited to join the world Suzuki grand prix team alongside its established star and double world champion, Barry Sheene. Andrea had known Barry since they were both children in the paddocks in which their fathers worked.

It is a matter of tragic history that Tom Heron lost his life (Andrea would say needlessly) in a non-championship race in Northern Ireland in May of 1979. Shattered as she was, Andrea thought long and hard, as she began to stabilise after the shock, about the life ahead for herself and her twin daughters, Kim and Zoe, still less than three years old.

She built two businesses while she dedicated herself to the girls. As they grew, she had a little more time to be adventurous and she accepted a job trying to explain to the world the virtues and value of the outspoken and lively Randy Mamola. It was said by one of Andrea's admirers that she achieved one of the great public-relations feats of all time -- transforming Randy's public image from superbrat to saint. Although Andrea always knew he was a saint.

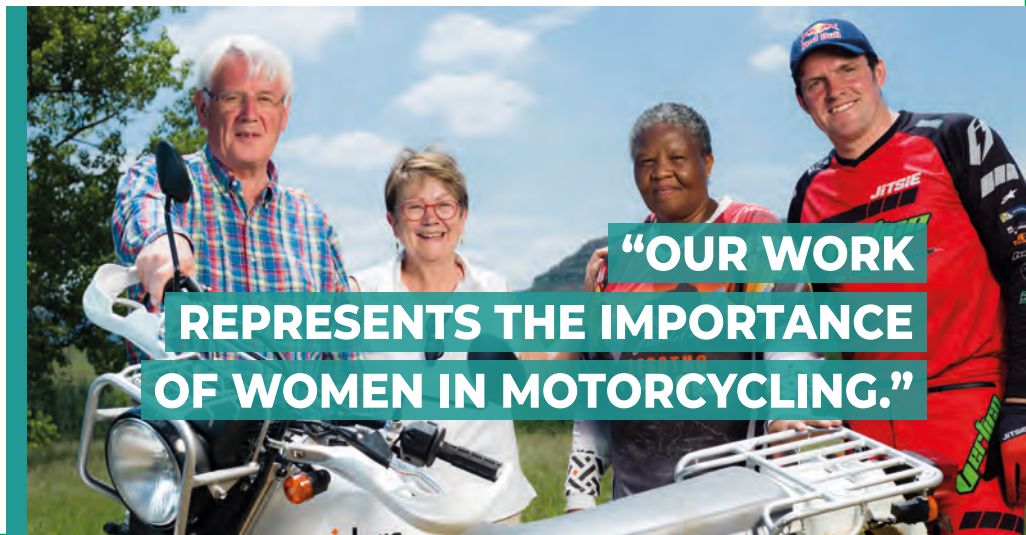
Randy, whose childhood went missing while he became a child racing prodigy, was dedicated to the welfare of children. Andrea arranged many visits to children in hospital and this led to a relationship with Save the Children. That in turn led to his interest in Africa and humanitarian work. An-

drea and her husband, Barry Coleman, together with Randy, established Riders for Health in 1989. They began to develop systems that enabled ministries of health in Africa to distribute health-care for children and others using motorcycles that did not break down. The transformation in the countries in which Riders operates is remarkable. It was not long before the work was recognised by the FIM and Riders became the official charity of motorcycling worldwide.

In the year 2000 Riders (www.riders.org) became the official charity of MotoGP and with the amazing support of Dorna has raised money for the work in Africa ever since. Now retitled Two Wheels for Life (www.twowheelsforlife.org) they create unique experiences for fans of MotoGP including the now famous Day of Champions

(actually the brainchild of Kenny Roberts Snr), held for the past 30 years on the Thursday before the British MotoGP.

“Our work represents the importance of women in motorcycling”, says Andrea. “Initially I was inspired by my mother’s commitment to humanitarian issues and when Riders began it was clear that women were at the heart of the challenge. Firstly, it was vital to reach women with vaccinations for their children. And then many if not most of the health workers who needed to ride motorcycles were women. Now we have female mechanics as well as riders and in fact most of the Riders programmes in Africa are led by women. I think the FIM is proud of what we have achieved. And we are grateful for their belief and trust in us from the start.”



MARIA COSTELLO MBE

FIRST WOMAN TO CLAIM A PODIUM FINISH IN A RACE AROUND THE ISLE OF MAN TT UK

Maria Costello 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 into racing literally after an accident when a car driver knocked 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-fe-



male team to score podium finishes in the British Sidecar Championship 600cc class.

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 Federation Internationale de Motorcyclist (FIM) 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 Clas-

sic 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.

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.

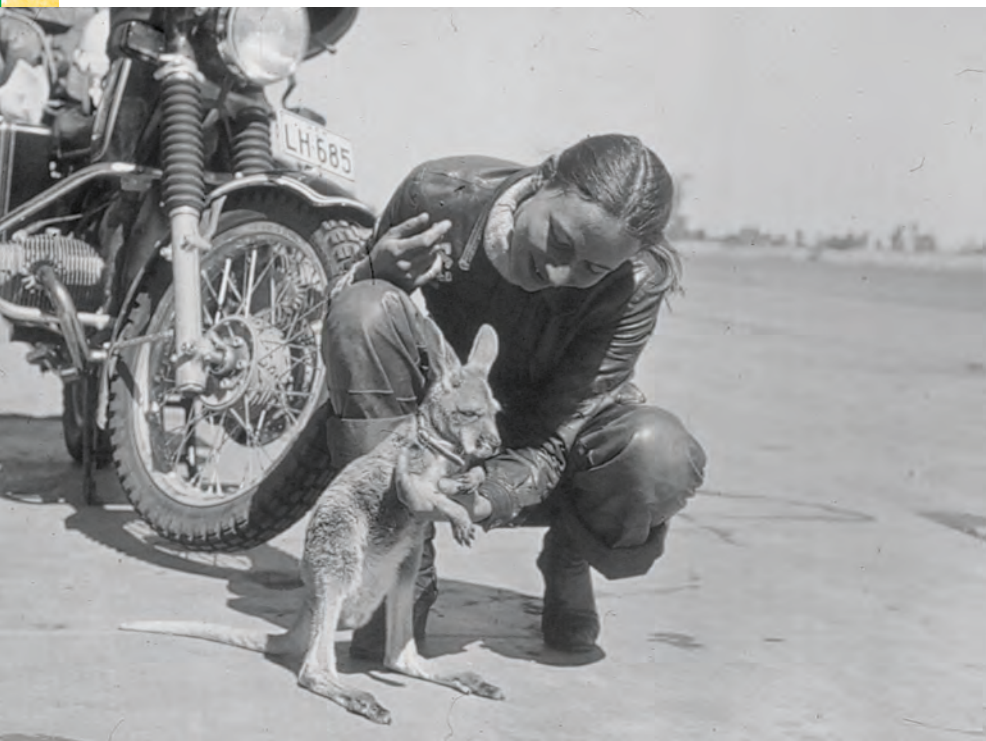
Her undeniable uniqueness, the fact that she's a woman challenging gender stereotyping and succeeding in a male-dominated area, also attracts elusive and highly sort after coverage from all forms of media: lifestyle, tabloid and broadsheet newspapers, TV, radio and online media. Her talents, achievements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



“DREAM - BELIEVE - ACHIEVE”

ANNE-FRANCE DAUTHEVILLE

JOURNALIST AND WRITER
FRANCE



"We will be born together," Spring told me. In normal circumstances, that should have happened on 21st March, but Spring had an emergency, so it left on the 20th at 6.48 pm, and I, due to a delay, arrived on the 22nd at 12.20 am. That makes me an Aries with Scorpio ascendant. I come from a Protestant but cheerful, bourgeois but vaguely broke family, had a decent education, and then everything changed because of May 68. Back then, I was starting a career in advertising in Paris. While the unions and students battled with strikes to bring down the old world, I was on foot: no more métro, no more buses, nothing. When the dust settled, I bought myself the only vehicle that didn't need a driving licence as I didn't have one: a Honda 50cc, in other words, a moped. In September, I went on holiday, heading for the Mediterranean that I had never seen. A month of pure happiness at just 70 km/h on a flat road. Back in Paris, I got my motorcycle licence. The revolution was a success – because of May 68, I discovered the road.

It didn't happen right away. Going from one agency to another, I was climbing the ranks, coming up with campaigns for increasingly important clients. It's called "Becoming Successful". But every summer, I got on my bike – a real one with foot-control speed pedals and handlebar acceleration – and off I went to explore France. Bliss. One day, I realised my job made me less happy than my rides, that my salary was costing me too much. The first excuse for packing it all in was the right one: a rally from France to Iran. There were girls who

were passengers, but I was the only rider, and on a huge Moto-Guzzi loaned by the importer at that. The official end of the adventure was in a place called Isfahan, but some decided to continue to Afghanistan, then on to Pakistan. I followed them, and then I came back to my cats. I had learnt two fundamental things: I am made to travel alone, and, on my own, I have to be able to pick my machine back up when it's decided to lie on the ground. That was in 1972, and that summer is when my real life started.

I wrote my first book with infinite joy and absolute certainty. I was made for the road and for the page. I had to be taken seriously. That's why, in 1973, I decided to go around the world. On a tiny motorcycle, a Kawasaki 100, I started in Canada to get to Alaska. From there, a plane took me to Japan, another from Tokyo to Bombay, and I returned from India to France via Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, and so on. But this time, there was no-one between the world and me. Of course, I had been warned: as long as I was travelling in a "civilised" country, I wouldn't be risking my life too much, although... In all those countries where the men have dark eyes and matching skin, I'd be best off reserving my place in the cemetery before going.

We didn't know that in a Muslim country that hasn't been ravaged by war, a woman on her own is sacred – she is owed respect, help and attention. I remember in India, this man looks at me and says, "Mister-Mem-sahib, I think you are completely crazy!"

before going away laughing his head off. I remember the owner of a petrol station in Pakistan: it's boiling hot, I'm adjusting my carburettor in the shade of his shop, and he brings me a fresh bottle of Fanta and refuses to let me pay for it. I remember the truck drivers at the Afghan border patting me on the shoulder saying: "Very brave woman!". I remember the three men changing my inner tube a little further on, when I got a puncture in the middle of nowhere. Two for the wheel, the third between the sun and me to give me shelter. I remember the four gentlemen sitting in a chaykhana on the trail to Bamiyan asking me the ritual questions: "Where do you come from? Where are you going? Who are you?" – moments of amazement and enchantment as we measure the abyss of differences that separates us. To be able to ask each other questions, share laughter, exchange words, is like a miracle. When I grab my helmet to leave, they ask me to take a picture of them. They're next to each other, with serious

faces: they offer me their faces, their memories and perhaps a little of their soul. A woman walking alone is surprising in three-quarters of the world, but on her own on a motorcycle? It's unimaginable, exceptional.

I'll tell you more about Afghanistan because I loved the country and its people; they were proud people, proud enough to allow themselves to be curious. In their country, I discovered what I encountered during all my wanderings, in Australia, in South America, across Europe: differences don't push us apart, they offer ways for us to find out how we are similar. We exchanged idle words when there weren't any, and what I couldn't say I drew in the dust. Each time, we were amazed that we managed to communicate, not through culture or language, but through roots. We recognised one other, as human beings. And that, that is treasure.

**“SOMEWHERE
ELSE IS JUST
A LITTLE FURTHER
DOWN THE ROAD.”**



MARTINE DE CORTANZE

FIRST WOMAN TO FINISH
PARIS-DAKAR
FIM WOMAN LEGEND
FRANCE



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 Buggatti School in Le Mans, Cortanze dabbled in a few circuit races, including the racing 24 Hours of Francorchamps for 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!

De Cortanze 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 Gaillefontaine. 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.

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,

2015



then 1st amongst the French (12th generally) at the World Championships in Auzeno (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).

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. De Cortanze 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.

De Cortanze 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 Women's FIM Legend in 2015.

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



COURTNEY DUNCAN

3-TIME FIM WOMEN'S
MOTORCROSS WORLD CHAMPION
NEW ZEALAND

Courtney Duncan appears on my screen, her eyes hold with a steely focus, yet she exudes the calm energy of someone who's wrapped up two World Championship titles.

Duncan has achieved what so many young girls and boys dream of as they hit the dirt, attacking their local club's Motocross rounds with youthful ferocity, believing they could one day win a World Championship. She's done it not once, but twice, with her third championship title well and truly within reach.

At the young age of 25, Courtney's journey has already involved the highs of support, determination, passion and the lows of injury, immaturity, struggles and mistakes. The perfect building blocks to creating a solid foundation for a multiple-time World

Champion to sustain performance and longevity.

"I grew up in a small town. It's a pretty rural community", Courtney explains, as she was raised in New Zealand's South Island, the Otago town of Palmerstone. "I got a bike when I was seven, a Honda CRF50". She brought it to the paddock, picking up critical skills and learnt fast under the experienced guiding hand of her moto-loving stepfather. "Everyone had bikes. We all got together and went racing. We just set up a few pegs and markers on the side of the hill and went and had some fun. It kind of escalated from there." It sure did and wasn't long 'til the appeal of local competition was her next target.

The wins started appearing as regularly as the gates were dropping. Club days into lo-

cal events into regional competitions, the wins rolled in, "I think your parents see it at a young age and see that you have the heart, the drive", indeed her parents recognised the fire in their daughter that needed to burn brightly. Before Courtney knew it, the Duncan crew were hitting the road on the regular, travelling her skills all over New Zealand. There weren't female categories ten years ago, she just raced the boys. And she beat them.

"Nothing caught my attention like racing dirt bikes did; there was something special about it," reminisced Duncan. She dabbled in other sports, but it was questionable for her whether it was for enjoyment or just an effective way to get out of more school.

The tipping point came when at age 12 – 'I happened to catch the World Championship on TV. At the time we had some



Kiwi heroes like Ben Townley and Josh Coppins killing it overseas. That was kinda the turning point for me. As soon as I saw that it inspired me to want to go over there and be a World Champion." It was not a question of if, but when for Courtney. "I've always wanted to be the best. That wasn't just at racing, it was everything I did right down to playing cars with my friends or kicking a soccer ball."

Her success in the Juniors propelled her into the Seniors, where again without a women's category, she was thrown in with the boys. Much to their bewilderment, in her first MX2 round (shortly after a knee reconstruction), she took the overall win at the 2016 Woodville Grand Prix off the 39

other competing men. Smiling, she recalls, "No-one wants to get beaten by a girl, and definitely not when you're a grown man". This was a history-making outcome.

Crossing the ditch, Australia came next, where she found more success. Dreams were fast becoming a reality as Courtney readied her passport and headed to America, leading her to a rightful place racing in the World MX GP.

Starting in 2016, the first three years on the FIM World Women's Motocross Championship circuit were spent navigating her newfound rookie status, making progress but not stringing together enough wins to collect the championship points. She re-

members "many injuries and silly mistakes, costly mistakes made in crucial moments followed."

Many of Courtney's off seasons were spent injured, "Sitting on the couch, watching your competitors get better and you're not getting better. You're spending each day in the recovery rooms."

Courtney felt herself entering a deep rut, coming up short (by only two points in 2017) of a Championship win three years in a row.

"There was a lot of frustration, a lot of disappointment to the point where I nearly walked away from it. There were nights that I lay in bed questioning myself, 'what am I doing wrong, what's it going to take to get this championship?'" Courtney said. In hindsight she recognises that "you don't learn unless you make these mistakes".

They say change is as good as a holiday. And in 2019 for Courtney, change was as good as a World Title. Pre 2019 season, and after 10 years in the Yamaha camp, she announced her move to BIKE IT Dixon Racing on a totally new bike, a Kawasaki KX250F, a manufacturer she had never ridden before. Something clicked, it was the fresh start Courtney needed to kick back into gear. She went on to dominate, indeed, obliterate the field, winning 9 out of 10 races to wrap the championship up, making her officially the world's fastest female motocross racer.

It took her 3 years to get that maiden Crown in 2019, "for it to finally happen, that 10 seconds after, I was kind of numb, it was surreal - you've finally done it. I would go through it all again to experience that feeling right there." This made Courtney the third official Kiwi World Champion behind Shayne King in 1996 and Ben Townley in 2004. Catherine Prumm took out the Women's World Cup in 2006 and 2007, a year before it became a World Championship.

Her smooth as butter success in 2019 was not to be repeated in 2020. Courtney had a monumental crash in the second WMX race at Mantova (round three), so big she snapped her handlebars, resulting in a DNF. "That pretty much put me on the back foot there, in a six round series, you cannot afford a DNF. That was really tough, it made me have to claw back and dig really deep." The huge loss of points meant she would have to top every race that followed if she wanted to secure her second title.

Not only did Courtney have to battle from the back of the pack, but Covid-19 began throwing the entire calendar in total disarray, many of the rounds she wasn't even sure she'd make due to extended quarantine and last minute cancellations.

The championship went down to the wire, with the final results being a tie on points. Still, Courtney came out on top due to her superior number of race wins for the season. After achieving what seemed the impossible come back, she and DRT

Kawasaki were crowned the 2020 FIM World Women's Motocross Championship winners for the second consecutive time.

2021 sees Courtney back on her Kawasaki KX250F, with the same team, as she douses the flame with petrol to win her third consecutive championship. "Hopefully, I can leave a legacy in the sport and become one of those greats," she muses.

After starting the 2022 season nicely with a podium finish, Duncan had a heavy fall during the free practice of the second round of MXGP in Portugal. She broke her collar bone and missed two rounds because of the recovery. She made a great comeback by winning the first race in Spain and finishing

the season with a double victory in Turkey, resulting in getting 12th place overall. Duncan is eager to chase her fourth title in 2023.

When asked if it's everything she imagined: "I have to pinch myself to think that I'm in that exact position that I dreamt of as a kid, dreaming one day I'd be over in Europe winning World Championships."

Dream big kids, as Courtney will tell you, "You can make it happen if you have that determination, discipline and heart."



"YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN IF YOU HAVE THAT DETERMINATION DISCIPLINE AND HEART."

GILLIAN DYKES

MOTORSPORT VOLUNTEER SOUTH AFRICA

Gillian Dykes was born on 10 April 1964 in Nakuru Kenya. How she got involved in motorcycling wasn't an easy path. Her parents had absolutely no background in motorsport, and they actually even forbid Gillian to get involved with motorbikes.

Gillian's first contact with motorsport happened when she was in her teens. She got an opportunity to be a junior marshal in a motorsport event in Kenya. Gillian was fortunate enough to go on a testing session with famous Finnish rally driver Rauno Aaltonen and she was mesmerized by his feet dancing on the pedals. From that day forth Gillian knew she wanted to be a competitor. So, she navigated the motorsports world and eventually married a driver. Gillian's husband is an ex-rally driver and motocross rider.

When Gillian gave birth to their son in Botswana, she became very involved in the motor club, organising races, and officiat-

ing. Motorsport South Africa (MSA) are extremely proactive at encouraging their volunteers to obtain the licences and eventually Gillian became a Clerk of the Course in Motocross, Off Road Bikes and Cars, Enduro and Karting.

In 2006, then FIM Africa president Mrs Beulah Schoeman invited Gillian to get involved with FIM Africa and became her mentor over the years. Gillian has been on the Cross-Country Commission at FIM Africa since then. In 2012, she earned the Outstanding Contribution to Motorsport Award granted by MSA. More recently she also became Director of FIM Africa Cross Country Rally Commission and a Commission Member at FIM for Cross Country.

Gillian's biggest goal was to assist riders from Southern Africa in doing the Dakar Rally. So, in 2011 she flew to Qatar to obtain her FIM Cross Country licence. This helped her with riders from 2013 to 2015

whom she had managed at the Dakar rally. She was then offered the position of Jury member at the 2016 Dakar rally which she held until after the 2019 Dakar. Gillian also obtained a FIM MX licence and was Clerk of the Course at the 2017 Motocross of African Nations and also at various other FIM Africa events held on the continent.

Gillian feels she never really faced any actual obstacles during her career. It was just difficult to get into something such as Cross Country as it was not an active discipline at the time. Gillian also admits that social media comments from riders can be harsh and hurtful, but at the same time constructive but does leave one wondering why to volunteer. Then a hug from a rider who has crossed the finish line makes it all worth it. The best in motorsport for Gillian is that she adores the fact that we are a family. She often boasts that she could find a place to stay provided by another biker anywhere in the





**“DO WHAT YOU LOVE
AND LOVE WHAT YOU DO.”**

world. Gillian loves Cross Country for the large spaces, spectacular locations, and the atmosphere in the bivouac. She is extremely privileged to do what she loves, and she will never forget that.

Now the whole family of Gillian participates in motorsport. Their son is also a keen motorsport enthusiast and rode for Kenya under the FIM Africa MX of African Nations as well as various off-road events. Gillian, her husband, and their son competed in the Toyota 1000 Desert race for several years in various categories and all three of them won in their respective classes. So, you can say they are a family of petrol heads, and the rule book often causes arguments at meal times!

In 2019 Gillian became a Commission member for Cross Country, but due to covid pandemic, but felt she never had the opportunity to be of use to the commission. Therefore, in 2022 she gave up “her real job” to allow her to go to any event. Fortunately, 2022 has been a year of travel and motorsport in Kenya, Abu Dhabi, Qatar, South Africa and Uganda either for World Championship events, Motocross of African Nations to other types of motorsport with 4 wheels!!! However, her heart is in the dust and the dirt and not the tarmac circuit!

FRANÇOISE EMERY

FIM CEO
SWITZERLAND



The story of the current CEO of the FIM started in a very small Swiss village called Aigle, where Françoise Emery was born in 1972 to a family with two other daughters, a wine-making father and a mother who stayed at home taking care of the children and the people working in their vineyards. Motorsport could not have been more far away from the family activities but Françoise was extremely fortunate to have parents who encouraged their children to make their own decisions in life. The children were not expected to remain within the family business and follow their parent's footsteps in the winemaking industry even if they would have been the eighth generation to do so.

Françoise - like her two sisters - was able to have a good education and to choose her own path in life. After graduating from the university where she studied Economics and Management, Françoise wanted to work in an international environment. She was hired by one of the biggest auditing companies of Switzerland. After four years working as an auditor in the company, Françoise had a chance to go, together with her husband, to Hong Kong. She worked for two years as a volunteer in the Swiss Embassy and was in charge of the Swiss cultural activities in Hong Kong. She also took care of the economical side of the embassy together with her colleagues. After two very interesting years, Françoise and her husband moved back to Switzerland where she continued to work in an international environment. She was hired by a Swiss-headquartered American company, which was one of the global leaders in

medical technology, services, and solutions for Europe, Asia and Africa. The workload was very demanding and Françoise was working 15 hours per day for almost the whole four-year period she remained within the company. Even though the work was interesting and she had the opportunity to learn a lot, Françoise knew that this was not the job of her life, this was not her dream.

The years in Asia and in the international companies in Switzerland had led Françoise to realize that she really wanted to evolve in an international environment with various cultures and languages. Internationality was the red line of all the activities she had done since her graduation. She decided to resign from her position at the American company, knowing that the working environment was very important for her as well as the connections with other people. She wanted to find something that would combine these two aspects.

Soon, a head hunter sent Françoise a job description that was a perfect match of what she was looking for. She would get both: international environment and working with people. Françoise wanted the job but she had no idea what the company was. She had just received the document describing what this open position would include. Once the head hunter told Françoise that the company was the Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM), Françoise shouted: "Oh my God!" – she had no idea about motorcycling, as she came from a small village and had no education motorcycling-related education. She played tennis sometimes, did gymnastics

and used to compete in skiing, but motorcycling was something she definitely was not familiar with. She decided she had nothing to lose. She liked the job description and decided to send her application to become an assistant of the Financial Director at the FIM.

In December 2003 Françoise opened the door of the FIM headquarters and was pretty nervous of what was ahead of her. But soon she realized that the Financial Director was such a lovely man. They had a very nice discussion together and Françoise also had the possibility to meet the then FIM CEO Guy Maitre, who she also found

very sympathetic. She soon realized that the job was a perfect match for her. If she got the job, she would be able to work in an international environment and with people that seemed very friendly and professional. The Financial Director told Françoise that he did not ride bikes himself so Françoise thought she might have a chance after all. And she really did - two weeks thereafter, she was hired by the FIM.

During the first two years in FIM, Françoise learnt a lot about the FIM and eventually, when the Financial Director decided to leave, Françoise and the current Financial Director of the FIM, Lucile Ackaouy took



over the Finance Department. During the next few years Françoise was in charge of the subsidies for the National Federations and Continental Unions. This gave her a great opportunity to learn what kind of activities were carried out in different Continents. It was a very interesting period for her which taught her so much about the FIM.

In 2006, Vito Ippolito was elected as FIM President and decided that after 100 years of existence of the FIM, it would be time to implement a strategic plan. Françoise, like everyone else at the FIM and in the National Federations, got a letter from the CEO asking for contributions to the strategic plan, how they would see the vision, the mission and the values of the FIM. Françoise, as FIM financial manager and mother of a young boy, took the opportunity to share her ideas. She took her pen and started to lay down a few ideas that eventually took 2-3 pages. She said everything she had in mind, how she saw the FIM should be in 20 years, where it should put its focus, among other relevant ideas. She really appreciated the possibility that was given to everyone to be involved in the crafting of the future of the FIM.

Françoise's ideas were so well received by the CEO and the FIM Board of Directors that she was invited to join to the newly established steering committee that also included the FIM President, the Deputy President, the Vice President, the CEO as well as the CONU representatives. For Françoise, it came as a very big surprise to be invited to join this committee as an outsider in the motorcycling world and after spending only

few years at the FIM. She appreciated the opportunity greatly and found it extremely useful. During two years, the committee worked on the strategic plan and deployed enormous efforts to exchange with the national federations, riders, media and the industry in order to take into consideration every aspect of the FIM activities.

In 2008 in Durban, South Africa, the FIM General Assembly approved the first ever FIM Strategic Plan Framework that defined the mission, the vision and the values of the FIM. That's how Françoise came on board and pursued her path by dealing with strategic and governance matters. She became a member of various board committees and had a much more direct connection with the Board of Directors' matters. Soon Françoise was appointed as Strategic Plan Director and she worked very closely with the CEO and the President as a member of their office.

When Jorge Viegas was elected as FIM president in 2018, he wanted to have Françoise as a Deputy CEO. A few years later, in spring 2021, Françoise made history by becoming the first-ever female CEO of the FIM. This is a role that she is very proud of, as she hopes that her example will give enough courage for other women to aim for higher roles and that people will realize that everything is possible if you work hard, stay humble and loyal and if you work for the benefit of your members, i.e. the National Federations in the case of the FIM. Françoise hopes to be the first of many other women to follow her footsteps, although she is aware that motorcycling is still seen as a male-dominated world. How-

ever, she remains confident that the FIM, the world governing body for motorcycle sport and the global advocate for motorcycling, gives equal opportunities to everyone.

**“EVERYTHING
IS POSSIBLE
IF YOU WORK
HARD, STAY
HUMBLE
AND LOYAL.”**

DEBBIE EVANS

HOLLYWOOD
STUNT RIDER
USA

Debbie Evans was born on February 5, 1958 in Long Beach, California. Her father, Dave Evans was an avid Trial and Enduro rider. He was the trial rider doing the long out of sight wheelie in the Bruce Brown, Steve McQueen movie "On Any Sunday", which is considered by many the best movie ever made about motorcycle sports. Evans first started by going camping and riding as a family on the weekends for trial competitions. Debbie's dad taught her and her little sister to ride. Their mother also rode a little but Debbie thinks it was more to make her dad happy. Debbie started riding when she was six years old, and ended up competing in Trial when she turned nine, racing against the boys, among which World Trial Champion-to-be Bernie Schrieber, future world MX rider Danny LaPorte and future Supercross Champion Jeff Ward. Debbie was the only girl competing, with all those future superstar boys, but she never saw herself as a girl

rider, rather just as another competitor. Bernie's father told Debbie's father that his son had really started practicing harder, because he was tired of being defeated by a girl. Debbie doesn't remember beating him, but if she did, it must have had a massive impact on him. Even if Debbie was the only girl rider for the most part, people were very kind to her, the spectators loved seeing a girl competing with the boys, and doing extremely well. She never asked for any advantages, nor did she expect to be treated any differently than the guys. She always considered herself as a competitor; in fact, when certain guys would beat her, she would be frustrated because she knew she could win against them. Debbie is aware that even until today, she is still the only woman to compete in the Top Class in Trial World Champi-



onship. She finished 18th out of 23 riders at the 1978 Trial World Championship. Bernie Schrieber won that event, his first World Championship victory ever. So that was a fairly historic event, not only for Bernie, but for Women Trial riders as well. Trial was a natural choice for Debbie, because the whole family rode trial and enduro bikes. She also did enduro and really loved the fast part of that but trial has always been her favorite discipline. Debbie liked the challenge of conquering an obstacle. Her most famous balancing trick is probably head-standing on the seat. Debbie's father showed her a picture of a former male gym-

nast that also did trial, who pulled off that trick. So Dave and Debbie talked it through as to how he did it, where he moved, and how. Debbie tried it and did the headstand the very first time she tried it. In 1980 she performed the trick in a motorcycle documentary film titled "Take it to the Limit". When Debbie was just 15, the Yamaha Factory started to sponsor her. This was when she really got serious about the sport. The reason why Yamaha noticed Debbie's riding skills was because she was featured in the magazines, she was doing live show performances on her OSSA trial bike at schools and sometimes during speedway races at the Costa Mesa Fairgrounds. They

wanted to promote the TY-175, the perfect motorcycle for women and young riders at that time. When Debbie was in High School, Yamaha would buy her an airplane ticket, she would leave Friday afternoon, and they would fly her somewhere to do her balancing headstand and wheelie show somewhere around the nation. Debbie would travel to places like Supercross races or AMA National Championship Flat Track races to perform her stunts in front of thousands of people. Yamaha loved the publicity. Debbie's live show really provided Yamaha with a lot of advertising for their TY-175 Trial bike, and it put Yamaha right

out front at these huge races as Trial was a pretty important discipline in the US in the 70's.

Debbie met her husband while riding for Yamaha. Lane Leavitt, 3 time US National Champion, rode for the Bultaco Factory when he met Debbie. He coached her and she made it to the top class of Expert. Debbie was riding against the men at the top level. They also competed in the US Nationals together. To date, Debbie and Lane still ride vintage trial motorcycles and they have a blast everytime they do.

The best memory of her long career is without a doubt the 1978 Scottish Six Days Trial. She had always dreamt of riding at that event someday, but she never believed it would be possible for her. A friend of theirs, Bill Kniggie, who worked for Husky motorcycles, asked Debbie if she had ever considered competing in the event. Debbie told him that she had secretly wished to, but there were so many obstacles that she did not think it would be possible. Bill contacted Cycle News and presented them the idea, and the readers of Cycle News donated enough money for Debbie to make it happen. Yamaha provided her with a plane ticket, then Gordon Farley, former British Trial Champion, lent her a TY-175 to ride. A man named Bill Emerson, who had a company called BERM specialties which imported motorcycle parts from the USA, provided Debbie with ground transportation and accommodation at the Scottish Six Days. She was the only woman to compete that year. She was pleased with her result: 109 out of 280 entries and 4th in the under 200cc class. This was back when all the



best trials riders in the world took part in the event every year. For Debbie, no other Trial competition on earth compares to the Scottish Six Days. She is extremely thankful that her secret dream came true and forever grateful to the people who helped her make it happen.

Thanks to all the publicity Debbie was getting from the live shows and competing at the US Nationals, the US World Round, and the Scottish Six Days, a stunt coordinator who needed a double for an actress who had to jump a motorcycle over a 40 foot wide ravine gave her a call. Debbie was given an old Yamaha DT 400 with metal on the front and the back to make it look futuristic. Not to mention, there was not much suspension on motorcycles back then! Debbie came out for an interview and they set up the test jump on flat ground, and she managed to pull off the distance needed to make the jump. She got the job!

The movie had so much riding for Debbie to do and she loved every minute of it. She also got to learn about the other aspects of physical stunt work. As an athlete as well, she had found what she had been training for all her life and did not know it! This was the beginning of her Hollywood stunt career. She has now been working as a stunt-woman for 44 years and counting. She has done over 400 movies and TV show appearances including movies like The Matrix Reloaded and The Fast and the Furious. She feels like she was born for that job, and Trial riding was her college education for being a Hollywood stuntwoman. The major part of her work now involves stunt driving all kinds of vehicles. She did a motorcycle

stunt job very recently.

In 1998, after having three children and a 18 year break from the sport, Debbie returned to compete in the Women's Trial World Championship and Trial des Nations. She got a modern bike and had to learn the new techniques before she went over to the season opener in Italy. 10 times US National Trials Champion Geoff Aaron came over and helped her for a few days. All in all, Debbie trained several days a week for several months.

The first two competitions she joined were unofficial world championships and Trial des Nations in Torre Pellice, Italy. The first one, Debbie finished 8th in the world at age of 40. After that the FIM started sanctioning the Women's World Championship and the women's Trial de Nations. Debbie rode the FIM-sanctioned events several more times and represented the USA in the Trial de Nations.

In 2003 Debbie was inducted into AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame. It was a dream that she had but she never said it out loud. She had visited the AMA museum and had seen all of the famous motorcycle champions' names on the wall. As a kid, Debbie watched them race, her dad was friends with many, and she had read about so many others in Cycle News and the magazines. She never thought that one day, her name, could be up on that wall as well. It was an absolutely amazing feeling! One she will never forget and she is still so grateful for the honor. At that time very few women were in the Hall of Fame for competition.

"NEVER LET OTHER PEOPLE'S SHORT SIGHTED IDEAS OR LIMITATIONS OF WHAT YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH STOP YOU FROM PURSUING YOUR DREAMS. IF I HAD LISTENED TO OTHERS WHO TOLD ME A GIRL OR WOMAN CAN'T DO THIS OR THAT, I WOULD NOT HAVE ACCOMPLISHED WHAT I HAVE. TAKE THEIR NEGATIVITY AS A CHALLENGE TO PROVE THEM WRONG. WORK HARD AND NEVER GIVE UP! IT IS AS WE SAY IN CALIFORNIA, TOTALLY AWESOME TO BREAK THROUGH THE BARRIERS!"

ANA EZPELETA

**DIRECTOR OF THE TALENT
PROMOTION DEPARTMENT,
DORNA MOTORSPORT
SPAIN**



Ana Ezpeleta was born in Madrid, 30 December 1985 in a family where her father was a true motorsport man: Carmelo Ezpeleta, the current CEO of Dorna Sports who owns the marketing rights of MotoGP World Championship series and Maria Gonzalez who at the time was an English teacher, now self-employed.

Ana grew up in the circuits, surrounded by motorcycle racing. She has also always been passionate about design. These are her two passions. After high school Ana wanted to study interior design. However, she started her university studies in business because she thought that an interior designer should have a global knowledge about how a business is run. During her Master of Science Degree Ana chose subjects related with the management of design firms.

From 2001 till 2005, Ana did an

internship for Dorna Sports in the financial and accounting department during the month of July every year. Also in 2001, she started working in International Event Services for the FIM MotoGP World Championship, at the MotoGP VIP Village (the corporate hospitality) and attended as many events as were compatible with her university studies.

In 2010 Ana joined the one-year interior design course at Marangoni. This was the education she had aspired to for a very long time. In this course, she learnt to develop the design of an interior from many points of view. She had the opportunity to design interiors of different types.

After 10 years working at the MotoGP VIP Village, at the end of 2010, Ana decided to pursue her passion for design and left behind the racing. She therefore started an internship at Studio Mendini for a few months, followed by a brief period at a small architecture studio in Milan. Finally, she was able to start working for Lissoni Associati where she remained for one and half year.

After two years of leaving her motorcycling



“PASSION AND COMMITMENT.”

passion aside, Ana started to miss it very much, even though she was enjoying the job at Lissoni. A new position came up at Dorna Sports: New Tracks Development Manager. This consisted in managing the requirements for new circuits. This was the perfect combination between Ana's passions: helping to design new racing circuits. Therefore in January 2013 Ana returned to Dorna Sports, this time as a full-time employee.

At the end of 2013, Ana was also offered the possibility to organise the Asia Talent Cup (ATC), which was supposed to be secondary to her job in the circuits. Slowly but surely the Talent Programmes' importance

grew very much, and the circuit design slowly passed into other hands. Now Ana cannot think of doing another job. To help young riders accomplish their dreams is a very fulfilling job. Ana also gets to design the bikes, among other assignments. She most certainly still fulfills her two passions in this job!

As Director of the Talent Promotion Department, Ana's job is to make sure that all of the projects under its umbrella are run smoothly. The department has grown continuously since its inception in late 2013 when the first selection of the ATC took place. At that point, Ana was still the New Track Development manager and the ATC

was a minor part of her job. As the department grew, her responsibilities grew with it. Firstly with the introduction of the Junior Talent Team participating in the FIM Moto3 Junior World Championship, followed by the BTC, Road to MotoGP Programs, the NTC and Dorna's latest project: the FIM MiniGP World Series managed jointly with the FIM. The department is also involved in the organisation of the Red Bull Rookies Cup together with Red Bull.

Ana feels that the best moments in her job are when she sees the happiness of these young riders when they win a race, or when they get selected to go on to the next phase in the Road to MotoGP. Each and every project that has carried out through the talent promotion programme is a small milestone for Ana. Also, to be a respected part of the MotoGP community as a woman is a big milestone. But the most important one for her is to count on the great team of people with which she collaborates on a daily basis. Ana knows that it is not easy to find a group of people with which you can work for so long and overcome so many challenges and have the great kinship that they have built. She is grateful for this every day.

ASHLEY FIOLEK

YOUNGEST WMA CHAMPION,
4-TIME AMA WMX CHAMPION
USA

The most iconic woman in American motocross is 29-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



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.

After retiring from full-time racing, she decided she wanted to expand her work in this area by starting the Ashley Fiolek Foundation (AFF), a charitable organisation. Through the AFF and their program's Ashley hopes to inspire underserved children,

young adults and women to pursue their dreams, open up to new possibilities and to make positive decisions for healthy and successful lives.

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.”**

SUE FISH

MOTOCROSS CHAMPION
STUNT RIDER
FIM WOMAN LEGEND
USA

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 mo-



tocross 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.

Sue finished her professional racing career in 1985 when she secured third at the Women’s National Championship in Palm-dale, 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 Women's 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!”



KIARA FONTANESI

6-TIME FIM WOMEN'S
MOTOCROSS WORLD
CHAMPION
ITALY



Kiara Fontanesi was born on March 10th, 1994 in Parma, Italy, at 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 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.

In 2019, because of physical problems Kiara took a break from riding and made the most important decision of her life: to become a mother! In 2020 Kiara finished on the podium at the WMX season opener in Matterley Basin, in United Kingdom, at her first race as a mother only three months after she gave birth to her daughter Skyler.



**“IT’S NOT OVER
UNTIL IT’S OVER.”**

Kiara finished 4th in the championship that year.

In 2021, Kiara made history again by becoming the first mother to win the Motocross World Championship race. She finished the championship 3rd, which made her eager to compete again in 2022.

However, life had different plans and Kiara had her second daughter, Alaska, in August 2022 with plans to be back on track in 2023.

Kiara's victories have given life to the KF8 MX and Sport Training project in Ponte

Taro (Parma, Italy) dedicated to all the sports. The Project is a one-of-a-kind initiative that aims to help the young talents develop and succeed in the motocross world.

JESS GARDINER

11-TIME AUSTRALIAN
ENDURO CHAMPION,
6-TIME ISDE WINNER
AUSTRALIA

Jess was born in a hospital that is now a nursing home, at Jamisontown Private Hospital in Penrith, NSW, Australia on the 21st March 1993. Her family had always loved dirtbikes and had them in their lives. Jess was fortunate to be born in a family who

loved camping weekends away, always towing motorbikes somehow.

Jess was just a young kid having lots of fun and enjoying the adventures that her parents took her on. She never once before the age of 12 thought that she would be chasing this as a part time profession. Jess actually spent most of her nights and hours during the week at dancing practice and rehearsals.

Jess had a Yamaha PeeWee 50 from about age 4-5. She wasn't great on it but she managed and came back with a smile on her face every time. Jess got a 90cc quad when she was about 8-12 years old. She loved that thing, and was always hooning around. So much that she tried to convince her parents that they should move interstate so she could race them. They laughed at her and to her surprise she was very lucky to have a YZ85cc small wheel for her 12th birthday. That's when they said: "Sorry we aren't moving but we will help you to race on 2 wheels if you like it". Jess started off learning clutch control, skills and how to ride a lot better at Penrith Minikhana club. Basically you ride around cones and in between rope and on a mini mx track to learn and progress. She was terrible at the beginning, she cried a lot because she just wanted to beat the boys. She made the replica obstacle courses in her back yard to practice every afternoon after she finished her homework, after school of course. School always came first and then she could ride!

It escalated quickly from there, Jess got a lot





better, she started winning competitions and then she really stepped into the motocross scene. This is where she had to choose motorbikes or dancing, as doing both at this level was becoming too expensive for the family to support. She took part in various club races the following year and by the time she was 14 years old, she was racing state rounds and then Nationals at 15! Jess started to meet a lot of people from the sport, from coaches to supporters and she also made new friends that all helped her out somehow. Of course her parents and step parents were there for her day in and day out starting to put so much into this

sport she had chosen. Geoff Ballard became a huge influencer who helped Jess' transition from motocross into off-road (enduro) racing in her last years racing in the Junior category. Jess did really well in off-road and much preferred the more technical riding style required as well as the family environment of camping involved.

Jess scored her first factory ride on the Yamaha Ballards off-road Team for her first 2 years in the senior category. Jess decided to then take on the World Enduro Championship in Europe which she had competed in for many years as well as the Interna-

tional Six Days Enduro. Jess had a total of 6 consecutive victories with team Australia and won individually twice at the ISDE. She has finished 3rd 3 times in the World Enduro, and she still plans to continue improving in the next few years.

Jess holds 11 Australian Championship titles, 1 European Championship title and 1 French Championship title.

She now runs her own race team in Australia called the Yamaha MXstore Ballards Off-road Team since 2018. In this team she has herself in the women's category, Jeremy Carpentier in the Pro E2 men's and Danielle McDonald in the Junior girls.

Jess also runs many coaching schools across Australia since 2019, which is growing ever more. It is called Off-road Riding Institute. She will continue competitive racing for several more years to come as she lives and breathes racing. For her there is nothing better than the adrenaline rush of riding a motorcycle, battling for race wins and the smiles in the pits when you see your friends every weekend!

Racing motorcycles has taught Jess a lot, from budgeting, planning, goal-setting, self-control, patience, writing press releases, communicating with sponsors, managing skills and most of all, it has given a love for a sport that helped her to learn hard work, determination, respect and satisfaction.

SILVIA GIANNETTI

RALLY FORMER RIDER AND SOCIAL TOUR IN PERU ITALY

What for many teenagers in the 1980s was a sympathy and "fashionable" interest in motorcycles, in Silvia Giannetti was a disruptive beginning of a passion that, as it grew and fed, would become an important thread of life.

Along this path of diverse, sometimes random motorcycling experiences, an interest in nature and adventure led Silvia on a few African trips and then finally to meet the Italian Rally rider Fabrizio Meoni (winner of Dakar in 2001 and 2002), who encouraged her to continue and, indeed, to get involved in a few races and thus was born a career almost entirely dedicated to races in Africa. In those races she won several times in TT Raid World Championship trials (Tunisia rally, Rallye des Pharaons, Rallye Dubai), until she reached the one that all riders in rally, amateur or professional, dream of: the Paris-Dakar. Silvia took part in two editions (2010 and 2011) finishing second and third respectively in the women's category, after having lived through the sad experience of the 2008 edition famous for its cancellation shortly before the start due to risk of terrorism.

Having hung up her helmet and still with the images of the South American lands in her eyes, where the rich caravan of the Dakar disembarked, clashing with the poverty and hardship of those populations, Silvia decided to build a project with which to give concrete support to the tribes of the Amazon rainforest: The Social Tour Peru.

Thus began a new phase that led her to seek funds for the Peruvian natives and so the many events, motorcycling and otherwise, where she was invited thanks to the acquired notoriety, became an opportunity to raise funds that, once landed in South America, Silvia will convert into goods to support the people: food, clothing, school supplies that she will personally distribute by going into the forest and overcoming an initial distrust of the natives.

Of course, the vehicle by which Silvia travels is the motorcycle, that every year for a period over two months, has accompanied her for tens of thousands of kilometres between the asphalt and the treacherous paths

A black and white photograph of Silvia Giannetti sitting on a motorcycle in a field. She is wearing a racing jacket and a helmet. The background shows a vast, open landscape under a cloudy sky.

**“COMMITMENT AND
DETERMINATION ARE THE
BRIDGE WITH OUR DREAMS.”**

of the Amazon rainforest.

The Social Tour Peru born on since 2018 and has grown over the years, now welcomed by the farmers of the vast turmeric and ginger crops and the Peruvian tribes where Silvia is awaited each year at her appointment with a welcome made of affection and sincere gratitude.

"Motorcycles, sports and activity in nature have been the object of my interests since childhood, crossing then my whole life. They have crossed each other, walked together and contributed to the formation of who I am today and, have taught me that commitment and motivation win not only races, but also the obstacles of life. Sport has taught me and given me so much and that is also why, once I left racing, I pursued other goals by creating the Social Peru project, with the same determination and commitment and so the trophies gave way to the fantastic smiles of the children of the forest."

MARIBEL GIORDANI

LATIN AMERICAN WOMEN'S ENDURO CHAMPION ARGENTINA

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 ride 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 ingre-

tated 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 still exists even to this day. For that reason, she competes in both Women and also mixed category events. 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 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 was created in Argentina, a category that is part of Maribel's years of work, as she 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.

**“MIND COLD
HEART HOT.”**



SANDRA GÓMEZ CONTERO

X GAMES MEDALIST, FIRST SPANISH RIDER TO WIN AMA CHAMPIONSHIP SPAIN

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. Him 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. At 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. She is still 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 take part in it and to win three medals, it was like a dream come true.

Focused on Trial and Superenduro, Sandra is a restless dreamer and good little sister. In 2013, following her big brothers' career path (he also started in Trial), Sandra discovered the Hard Enduro, the hardest races in the World. She was invited by her friend to compete at the Rally-Hardenduro Romaniacs. Since then, she loved these races which push riders to the limit physically and mentally 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 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 En-





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

durocross 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 to her is to race the International Six Days Enduro. Sandra managed to take the second place 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 riding 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. Sandra is now also the president of the Spanish Women in Motorcycling Commission.

In 2019, Sandra’s priorities changed when she decided to focus more on Hard Enduro and compete in some races that never before saw a female participant. Redbull Romaniacs in Gold Class was too much that year, because of the level of difficulty of the competition but also because of the inclement weather. During the next year, in 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic hit the world, Sandra was focusing on preparing this race, that usually takes place in the summer, but that year the date was in October, which added to the challenge and made it even harder. Sandra was competing

in September in Trial and Enduro World Championships, finishing 3rd and 4th. Sandra completed the hard year in a best possible way to be the first female ever to finish the Redbull Romaniacs in Gold Class. She spent more than 35 hours on the bike and pushing it in the Romanians mountains under the rainy autumn weather.

2021 has been a year for Sandra to confirm she is the best woman in Hard Enduro as she finished again the Romaniacs and secured great positions in other races competing always with the men. She also continued racing in Enduro (finishing ISDE in 3rd place) and Trial (4th in the World Championship and first in TDN).

But the dreams never end for Sandra and there is one more she has pursued since she was a child, namely the legendary Dakar Rally. This dream came true in January 2022 in Saudi Arabia. .

During her life, Sandra has always worn her helmet with pride to chase her dreams and just ride, win, and improve. She never thought she was less or worse than a man. She used to compete and fight against the boys and men, and still does. 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 considered resuming her university career on several occasions. Sandra feels it’s hard to be a woman in a man-dominated World, but this sport is the one she likes the most.

VANESSA GUERRA

**FIRST WOMAN TEAM
MANAGER Moto2
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP,
TV PRESENTER AND
YOUTUBE VLOGGER
SWITZERLAND**

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 De-

gree 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. 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 fe-



male 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 Interna-

tional 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.

2015 marks the starts 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 Vanessa joined 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.

Vanessa has hosted the 1st FIM Women in Motorsports Conference in collaboration with the FIA, and she also presented corporate events for brands such as Yamaha Europe and Tissot.

In 2020, Vanessa also became a Podcast Host for Red Bull Spain and hosted virtual events during the global pandemic. She has also collaborated as MotoGP consultant for the documentary "Brad Binder: Becoming 33".



“NO ONE IS BORN AN EXPERT AND KNOWLEDGE IS AVAILABLE TO US, WE JUST HAVE TO BRAVE ENOUGH TO GRAB IT AND DEVELOP TO OUR FULL POTENTIAL.”

VELIA HARGREAVES

FIRST FIM LATIN AMERICA VICE PRESIDENT CHILE

Velia Hargreaves was born in Santiago de Chile February 15, 1960. In her family no one practiced motorcycling, the closest touch to the horsepower was Velia's father riding horses in Chilean rodeo and also doing horse trail riding. In Velia's early years horses were part of her life.

Velia first got into motorcycling at the end of the 1990's when her two sons started to practice recreational enduro. Her first experience in motorcycling was more imposed than voluntary and she was worried that her children would practice a sport that at the time she considered dangerous for them. Despite her fears, the children enjoyed a lot riding enduro and being in contact with nature, so Velia joined them at their practices.

Over time, enduro became a family sport for them as the whole family was enjoying their weekends in the nature. Once the children developed their sports skills, they decided to start competing in the National

Enduro Championships in Chile. Velia has always felt that she did not choose motorcycling, motorcycling chose her. Once her children began to participate in the national championships, Velia felt that there were many things to improve in the organisation and development of the championships, a feeling shared by other parents and riders. At the beginning, Velia was criticising the organisation and was part of the mass that does not contribute but only claims. Then the president of the Chilean Motorcycle Federation, Mr. Sebastián Echeverry, made Velia aware of the work needed to improve the organisation and development of the championships and of the fact that this would only be achieved by being part of the solution and not the problem. He proposed that Velia work as a volunteer. Together with other parents they decided to create a Federated Enduro Club and be part of the organisation of the Championships to bring positive changes to the sport. This is how Velia began to be part of the world of motorcycling



herself. As a Federated Enduro Club, they had the right to appoint an enduro sports marshal in the championships in order to contribute and improve the championships. At that time, Velia dedicated her time to studying the enduro sports regulations. In 2020, her club offered to appoint her as the official marshal to represent the club, which she decided to accept as a great challenge. Velia became the first female marshal in an Enduro Championship in Chile. She still remembers clearly the feelings in those first races and the enormous responsibility of not only being a judge, but also of acting as a row model to empower woman in such role.

In 2003, the first FIM Enduro Seminar was held in Chile and Velia was the only woman who participated. In 2004, the FIM Environment Seminar took place in Chile, and since then, she fell in love with the environment and was fascinated by how sustainable behaviours, practices and habits

could be implemented in motorcycling. Since then being an Environmental Officer has been a great passion for Velia.

A large number of Latin American and World Championships have been held in Chile, including two ISDE events, three Enduro GP's and one Cross Country Rally in compliance with the KiSS programme (Keep it Shiny and Sustainable) and in all of them Velia has worked as a national environmental officer, which has provided her with invaluable experience.

The Continental and World Championships gave Velia the opportunity to meet other members of FIM Latin America and FIM, as well as to present her work in motorcycling. Perhaps for this reason, in 2013, the then President of FIM Latin America, Mr. Pedro Ventura Senior offered Velia to take over as Director of CFM FIM Latin America - a

newly created women's commission. This was a new challenge and a new solution-oriented opportunity to contribute to the fair inclusion of women. Motorcycling was already a major passion in Velia's life and from her position as a woman, she has taken every chance to deploy and foster women's capabilities in the world of motorcycling.


As Director of CFM FIM Latin America, the next step for Velia was to join the FIM CFM. It was a new goal and a new challenge to be part of the "big league" and to work with FIM, representing Latin American women, seeking to acquire new knowledge and tools for the development of women in motorcycling. For Velia, being part of FIM CFM and Director of CFM FIM Latin America has been a great challenge and a major responsibility in addition to her role as En-

vironmental Officer.

In 2018 Velia was also offered to be the Director of the Environmental Commission of FIM Latin America. Her passion for environmental sustainability naturally led her to accept this new challenge.

In 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic changed everything. The activities of the Latin American federations were put on hold. Faced with uncertainty and stillness, together with the President of FIM Latin America Mr. Pedro Ventura Jr, Velia looked for ways to continue to work, be present and communicate with the world of Latin American motorcycling. This is how various activities were born, among them the weekly webinars on different motorcycling topics that FIM Latin America carries out. In addition, she worked on different development and education projects for the comprehensive training of riders. Velia's passion for volunteering in motorcycling led her to take on a new challenge and become the Coordinator of the FIM Latin America Family.

From Velia's first day as a volunteer, being a judge, participating in national and international championships, directing a commission, each step is an achievement. She has never aimed at reaching a specific position, each step has been an opportunity and a challenge that she has accepted. Velia feels that she still has many new challenges ahead and that motorcycling will continue to challenge her to give more and she hopes that one day she'll be able to see an environmentally sustainable, fair, equal and inclusive sport for women.



**“IF YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING
DON'T BE AFRAID, JUST DO IT!”**

MARÍA HERRERA

FIRST WOMAN TO WIN SPANISH CHAMPIONSHIP Moto3 RACES SPAIN



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.

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 was riding in the World Supersports championship and in parallel in the first ever MotoE World Cup. Throughout the year, she showed that a woman can also succeed on a very heavy motorcycle when she finished 5th and 6th in Italy in

MotoE races, fighting for the podium in both races.

In 2020 and 2021, María was crowned as the ESBK Spanish Champion in 1000cc class for two consecutive years. In 2021 she also finished 3rd in the European Championship in the World SBK 600cc category.

History was made in 2022 at the Grand Prix of Aragon when MotoE™ star Maria Herrera lined up on the grid as part of an all-female team. For the first time ever a team comprising of only women participated in a Grand Prix, thanks to the collaboration between Herrera, Angeluss, Aurora Angelucci and the MTA Moto3™ squad.

Having now proven that a female rider is able to race large bikes as fast as any male rider, María has the ambition for the future to set up a racing school, which will be open to both genders and where she intends to raise many young female top talents! At the moment she is already raising awareness and supporting and training female riders together with the Spanish Motorcycling Federation. Currently María is also helping women to fight against breast cancer, raffling helmets to raise and donate money.



**“CORRER O MORIR
RACE OR DIE.”**

LEAH HEYGATE

5-TIME CHAMPION OF MOTOCROSS
OF AFRICAN NATIONS
ZAMBIA



Leah Michelle Heygate was born in Ndola, Zambia, on the 16th of November 1999. She has lived on a beautiful farm just outside Chingola ever since.

Leah's dad is really the only one with a racing background. In his days, he was one of the best Motocross racers in Zambia and he has taught Leah much of what she knows today. He is the one who got Leah into racing and has supported her through it all. He still rides and races occasionally but more for the enjoyment of the sport than the competition aspect. Leah's mother doesn't have much of a background in racing, however, she got involved in the sport because of the family and continues to play a role. Leah's family has contributed to get her where she is today.

Leah can remember going riding with her dad on his bike around the farm when she was very young. She guesses that's what lit the spark in her belly so early on. When Leah was five years old, her parents got her a Peewee 80 and she has never looked back. Leah raced on her Peewee for a few years without being able to get points as it didn't fit into any of the classes. She didn't really mind as she just loved the thrill and the sport and was really too young to understand the whole point-scoring system. Along the years, her passion for the sport grew with her, she made it through the classes taking part in championships here and there but what kept driving her on and what keeps her still going is just her love for the sport. Leah believes she will forever be in the motocross scene: it is where she belongs and feels most alive.

Leah hasn't stopped racing since she

started. She raced in Zambia for the majority of her life and represented her country at the Motocross of African Nations (which was previously called the AMU) since she was 9. It wasn't until 2013 that Leah got noticed and acknowledged. A dedicated ladies class was first created in 2013 at the Motocross of African Nations and has been present ever since, Leah finished respectively in first and second position and then crashed in the last race, as she was leading

and made a mistake which led her to run into a steel sign. Luckily she was able to get back up and finished second. A very remarkable result for a 13-year-old! 2014 wasn't Leah's best year as her confidence dropped after a crash. However, in 2015 she achieved her best result and the highlight of her racing career. The Zambian team went to Zimbabwe for the Motocross of African Nations and South Africa had a strong bunch of ladies, one of which had

recently been to Europe, which was quite intimidating for little 15-year-old Leah. Nevertheless, she raced her heart out to win all the heats with a 30 second plus gap. This achievement will always remain in her mind as her best race.

Racing however does imply challenges and Leah thinks every female rider knows that it is difficult to find people that will support and stay with you throughout your racing career. Breaking into the scene is still difficult. At the moment, Leah races the South African National Motocross ladies class, however, they still do not race alone as they are combined with the Vets class. Leah always says that "Being a lady in this sport is not easy but it is darn worth it".

Motocross sets Leah's heart on fire. It brings people together from all different backgrounds and is a mental and physical challenge which is what feeds her passion and perseverance in the sport. It is an intoxicating hobby that she loves.

**“BEING A LADY IN
THIS SPORT IS NOT
EASY BUT IT IS
DARN WORTH IT.”**



TOMO IGATA

PIONEER IN ASIAN CIRCUIT RACING 2016 FIM WOMAN LEGEND JAPAN

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

In 1987 Tomo Igata became the fourth female International A class rider in Japan and was delighted to ride in the same class as her sister. However, as she had to retire from racing due to a big accident, Mari set up a female road racing team, called "Team Mari", and Tomo Igata became the first rider.

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

Tomo Igata took part in the Japanese Grand Prix in 1992 at Suzuka as a wild card rider,

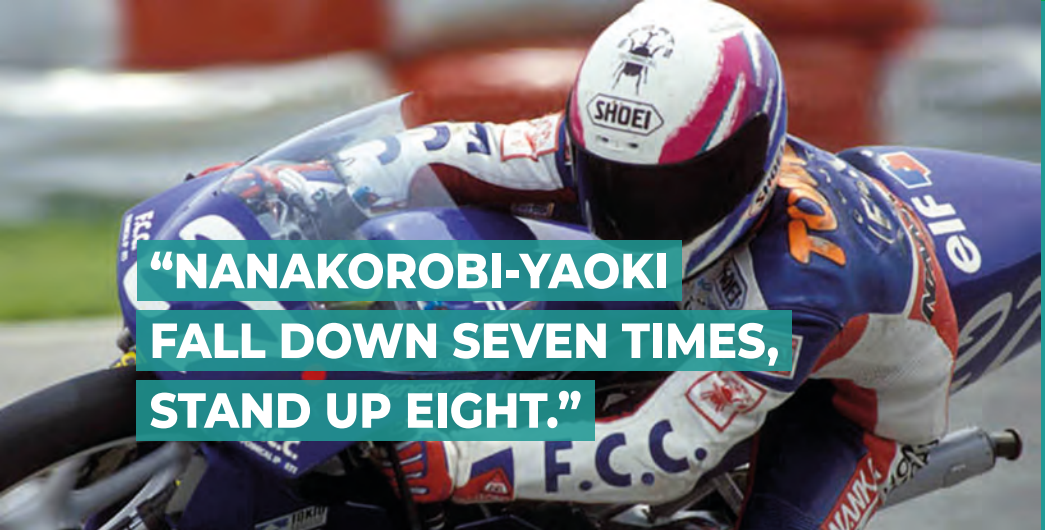
which lead her to move up to the World Grand Prix 125cc class from 1994. She joined team "F.C.C Technical Sports", which had supported Ueda and Sakata in the past.

Tomo 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, Tomo 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. Tomo Igata also finished eighth in Malaysia.



Tomo 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



“NANAKOROB-I-YAOKI FALL DOWN SEVEN TIMES, STAND UP EIGHT.”

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.

As a road racer, Tomo Igata faced no problem regarding gender when competing with other road-racers. However, when dealing with many ordinary female riders, passionate about riding, yet struggling 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.

Tomo Igata named this “Beauty Riding – Ageless Women Style” as it is indeed a very smooth and beautiful riding style.

Tomo Igata has been 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 Igata identified herself as part of the LGBT community and, being engaged in motorcycle activities among women, as a leader and female rider, it deeply afflicted her and made her contemplate whether to stop her activities for women. However, road racing on circuit is a competition with no gender distinction, so, after deep long thought, Tomo Igata made the decision to continue devoting herself to motorcycling. 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 Tomo 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 Tomo Igata. She since has devoted her life to promoting the idea of Women on Motorcycle and sharing the delight of Beauty Riding with many women riders, who ever since enjoy “long-lasting safety and happy ageless motorcycle life”.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of motorcycle riders increased and Tomo Igata's team has been expanding the women's safety riding lessons. In 2021, Tomo Igata enlarged the mini-bike race activity as the first entry point for women riders to enjoy the circuit race and thanks to the help from the Motorcycle Federation of Japan (MFJ), they got seven new CBR150R bikes that were used by more than 100 women on the circuit.

STEPH JEAVONS

FIRST PERSON TO RIDE AROUND THE WORLD
ON ALL CONTINENTS ON A MOTORCYCLE
CANADA



Steph Jeavons is an author, journalist, and adventurer who in April 2018 completed a solo trip around the world that took her to all continents. This was the first time in history someone had ever achieved that. Steph's journey lasted a few days short of four years, during which she logged 53 countries and more miles (over 74,000) on a 250cc Honda than anyone who's come before.

Born in Canada in 1975, Steph has lived most of her life in Wales and considers it home. She got interested in motorcycling in her late teens when she met some biker friends. Even before learning to ride a motorcycle at 21, Steph was unconventional, leading a successful school "uprising" to allow girls to wear trousers in the winter.

Prior to starting her adventure around the world, Steph worked in conventional jobs in accounting and human resources; and ran an off-road motorcycle school before leading desert motorcycle tours in Morocco.

Steph's journeys have been real adventures and naturally she has been forced to face many obstacles. For example, in March 2015, having ridden through Europe, Asia and Australia, Steph persuaded a small sailing yacht crew to let her join them on an expedition across the notoriously rough Drake Passage. After a week of seasickness and iceberg alerts, the crew lowered the bike into a small inflatable zodiac and precariously navigated through the icy waters to the shores of Antarctica, before Steph

was hitching a ride home on a Russian ice breaker!

In Iran, Steph suffered heat exhaustion, got hit by a landslide in India and by a truck in Colombia. She has ridden the highest motorable road in the world. She also got caught in a Himalayan landslide on the highest motorable road in the world; rode Rhonda (her Honda) on Antarctica; visited, in turn, the hottest, driest, wettest, and coldest places on the planet; and graciously turned down six marriage proposals. All this because of a dream she had kept hold

of in her early twenties during some really tough times.

Unwilling to stay still for very long, Steph led successfully the first-ever all female motorcyclist trip to Everest base camp in 2019 - barely a year after completing her trip around the world. It wasn't an easy challenge as due to record-breaking rainfall that led to many landslides and horrendous conditions, only half made it to the base camp. As if riding around the world wasn't enough

of a challenge, Steph runs a company called Moto Junkies (motojunkies.co.uk) that takes people on road and off-road adventures in Wales.

Steph has also now published her second book called "Home by Seven", which tells about the riding around the world adventure and is available on her website steph-jeavons.com. Steph also works as a seasoned speaker



“IT’S ALL PART OF THE ADVENTURE!”

KATTIA JUÁREZ

DIRECTOR OF FIM
INTERNATIONAL
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
EL SALVADOR



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 the 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 open she had to pass a military fence to be able to enter her classes. Sometimes, Kattia attended her math classes in the middle of a burst of fire. One day, after a shooting, she hid for hours in a trench. She had to leave the University, in the dark, under the rain, accompanied by the International Red Cross with a white flag, as she was 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, at the age of 45. She finalised her

engineer degree in El Salvador State University.

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 her 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 to motorsport. Her father dreamed of his daughter being an architect, but it was clear to her that 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 degree in Business Administration (MBA) and pursued other studies in sustainability. Recently, she finalised studies in Business Sustainability Management from the prestigious University of Cambridge. 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 career, she had to compete for a place in a world dominated by men, which was not easy.

Kattia became a mother when she was very young. After the war, her life changed. She founded a company linked to the automotive world and got in touch with motor-sports. One day, her 6 years old son Guillermo 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 in 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, motor-sport 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 whom she is now very close. In this world of motorcycling she met her love and married a motorcycling leader, Ignacio Veneda.

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 creativity. Working with the eight Ride Green Ambassadors is an immense opportunity to positively influence motorsport

fans and take a stand for the sport as an enabler of sustainable development.

People often 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, strategies and projects for a sustainable sport. She loves to support organizers in the field and works mainly in the off-road events. From time to time, she loves to hug her husband and ride on the roads of the mountains of Andorra where she now lives and runs her sustainability consultancy company together with her motorcycling family.



**“BECAUSE THE EARTH
IS OUR COMMON TRACK,
LET’S THINK AND RIDE GREEN!”**

JANIKA JUDEIKA

DIRECTOR OF THE FIM WOMEN IN MOTORCYCLING COMMISSION LATVIA

I was born in the USSR in 1988. At that time, my country was part of the Soviet Union, but in 1991 we became an independent country - Latvia. Since childhood, I have been proud to represent such a small but, at the same time, powerful country. In my early childhood, I was very fond of sports, we used to play various games in the yard, and I rode Jawa motorcycles influenced by the boys. Technical things have been close to me since childhood, but I preferred athletics. My two sisters had other interests. One was a dancer and the other an artist. I grew up in a family of teachers, my mother and grandmother were teachers, and I promised myself "never" to become a teacher, but the exact opposite happened. After high school, it was only possible to combine studies with sports at the Sports University, so my profession was a sports teacher/coach.

Around 2009, I realized that I wanted to work and improve myself in other sports-re-

lated areas. In parallel with my studies, I continued my career as an athlete in bobsleigh, which allowed me to look at sports and better perceive things through an athlete's eyes.

Looking back at the beginning of my career, I must admit that life has always taken me to areas considered a "man's world". While training in athletics and studying at the Latvian Sports School, I went to a competition with a friend who loved motorsports and participated in the FIM Women's Motocross World Cup. This was followed by a visit to this friend at the Stelpe track (MX track), where I fell in love with motorcycling. I learned from familiar people, worked as a volunteer, as a judge's assistant, and as a secretary in the Motocross Commission of LaMSF until, in

2010, the Latvian Motosport Federation invited me to work for them.

I started off by replacing a colleague, which resulted in 7 years in the position of Deputy Secretary General. I'll be honest - it wasn't easy to settle in because of my gender and age. I started working at LaMSF when I was only 22 years old, as a young girl in a male-dominated world. Today, it is all much dif-



ferent because, not only the general position on gender equality in sports organizations, but also the worldwide position have developed. I managed to prove myself with my actions, initiatives, and ideas. In 2012, I was entrusted to lead the Junior Team at the FIM World Junior Motocross Championship, and I also became a member of the LaMSF Motocross Commission.

In 2013, in parallel with my work at LaMSF, I worked as an Observer in the FIM Europe Motocross Commission because motocross was and still is part of my heart. In 2014, I became a full FIM Europe MX Commission member, receiving the same tasks and responsibilities as my (male) colleagues. I am very grateful to my colleagues, who always helped and guided me back then. In 2015, while working for the Women in Motorcycling Commission, we organized the first Eastern European Motocross Championship in Latvia (Stelpé) with the support of FIM grants. Later, together with Infront and the MX Commission, we organised the first MXGP Academy for young girls. In 2019, I started working at FIM CMS, and my first dream came true.

In parallel with motorsport, I also work in the Latvian Bobsleigh and Skeleton Federation. Since this sport is subject to IOC Gender equality guidelines, I have learned and experienced how to reduce this issue in other sports. This was truly invaluable. I still work in the International Bobsleigh Federation as a judge and a member of the jury commission. Having already established myself once in bobsleigh helped me under-



**“WHEN BUILDING
A CAREER IN A MAN’S
WORLD, WHICH,
TO SOME EXTENT,
MOTORCYCLING IS, A WOMAN
HAS TO PROVE HERSELF TWICE.
IN SUCH SITUATION,
SELF-CONFIDENCE IS VERY MOTIVATING.”**

stand who I am and what I can do. I also met my biggest supporter, my husband, through motorcycling. He helps me achieve my goals, run my daily life and take care of our two babies. I believe that everything is possible with family support! All you have to do is set goals and trust yourself.

KIRSI KAINULAINEN

FIRST WOMAN TO WIN FIM OPEN CLASS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FINLAND

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 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 an extremely competitive mindset and even though she was doing lots of different kinds 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 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 the Finnish Championship and in 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 says she is at her best when the situations are tight. In 2013, Kirsi's life changed when she started to be a passenger for multiple time sidecar World Champion Pekka Päiväranta. 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 to-

JUTTA KLEINSCHMIDT

FIRST WOMAN EVER TO TAKE OUTRIGHT VICTORY
IN THE MOST DIFFICULT AND LONGEST RALLY
OF THE WORLD, THE DAKAR RALLY
GERMANY

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 “Motor-sport 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 acted as the FIA Senior Advisor for Cross-Country Rally on a part-time basis from 2018 to 2021. In 2019 she joined as President of the FIA Cross-Country Rally Commission until 2021. She set out the strategic vision and took part in the development of Cross-Country rallies and, among other things, introduced new, environmentally friendly technologies in this sport.

Kleinschmidt was also part of the FIA Women in Motorsport Commission from 2016 to 2021. 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 was 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 worked 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.

Jutta is currently a racing driver in Extreme E, a racing series for fully electric SUVs, that takes place in the most extreme regions of the world. The aim of the series is to use new technologies to draw attention to climate change.

**“EVERYTHING
IS POSSIBLE!”**



NITA KORHONEN

FIM FMN & CONU LIAISON DIRECTOR FINLAND

Nita Korhonen was born a bit over a year after her father - circuit racing world championship medallist and Montjuïc 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. 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,





“WE RISE BY LIFTING OTHERS.”

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. 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 6th December Nita got a call from the FIM’s newly elected president Jorge Viegas. He wanted her to move to Switzerland to work as Liaison 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.

In 2019 Finland’s Ministry of Education and Culture acknowledged Nita’s work for equality in sport by awarding her the “Pii-ikkarit” trophy at the ceremony held in the House of Estates, in Helsinki.

IRIS. KRÄMER

FIM WOMEN'S TRIAL WORLD CHAMPION
FIM WOMAN LEGEND
GERMANY

It all started when Iris Krämer was a child. Her father, Willi Krämer, 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 Mecate-

no 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 re-

gional 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
UP AND DOWNS
AND SOME OBSTACLES
AND I LOVE IT.”**

ULLA KULJU

WORLD'S FIRST PARAPLEGIC FEMALE MOTORCYCLE RACER FINLAND

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 March, 26th 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 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 sitski. Soon she found herself on the Finnish disabled Alpine ski team and, amazingly, won the gold medal in the National championships in Giant Slalom, less than a year after 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. 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.

Some 12 years after the 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!


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 ended her racing career with 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 in the end of 2020 due to covid-19 affecting her racing financially. She continues to improve her design of a ground-breaking, 3D printed sliding race seat for her bike and special 3D-printed magnetic foot pegs that will help disabled motorcycle racers around the world to keep their leg on place while riding. She has been helping other disabled motorcycle racers to get back on their bikes and back to racing. She continues to design new aids for disabled riders for motorsports in the future and acts as a god-mother to newly paralysed disabled motorcycle-racers of the future.

Ulla has inspired people with and without disabilities all over the world, and she says she is going to continue 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, YOU CAN DO IT!”**

LIVIA LANCELOT

2-TIME WOMEN'S MOTOCROSS
WORLD CHAMPION
FRANCE



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 relieved – 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.

A new chapter opens up for Livia in 2023 as she transitions from Motocross Grand Prix to World Supercross.



**“GET UP
ONE MORE
TIME THAN YOU FALL.”**

KIRSTEN LANDMAN

FIRST FEMALE TO FINISH HARD ENDURO RACES SOUTH AFRICA

Growing up on dirt bikes, which started off just for 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 111MegaWatt, 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 very physically demanding. Kirsten 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 to success.

Kirsten hasn't had the easiest of careers: plagued by injuries, her professional career hadn't even kicked off when it came to a complete halt after a near death experience, racing at a highspeed during an 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 willpower

and determination to get back to doing what she loved the 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 after six months, preparing for her first appearance on the world stage at Redbull Romaniacs 2014.

Overcoming such an injury

and major setback gave Kirsten a whole new outlook on life: not many people are offered a second chance to live 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 the 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 was what she was destined for – doing what was said to be "impossible for a woman" because "female riders weren't capable of racing Hard Enduro". Kirsten, whose whole life had been defined by what she was allowed to do and what she could not do, decided to set goals for herself and to become the first woman to compete in world extreme Enduro; and she did exactly that.

Now, 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, 111 MegaWatt, Braveman, King of the Hill and Roof of Africa, and she still has many other races on her todo list.

In 2020, Kirsten set her heart on what is said to be "the toughest rally race for any motor-sport enthusiast" – the Dakar Rally. Consid-



ering that this was a completely different discipline in motorsport from what she was used to – and the biggest of it all, she was facing her biggest fear: getting back into high speed racing and facing those demons from the accident she had experienced in 2013 head on.

Kirsten set out to achieve everything she aspired to – she raced a very calculated successful Dakar Rally, becoming the first African woman to complete the Dakar Rally on a motorcycle, placed 55th overall and 3rd in the female motorcycle category.

As she returned home after the Dakar Rally, Kirsten was on a high from a great year of racing, and with a new year of excitement to travel and race internationally planned, for 2020 was abruptly halted with the world-wide coronavirus outbreak.

Looking back at the last two years, with its extreme difficulties across all aspects of life, from losing sponsor contracts, to salary cut-backs, having no races whilst dealing with injuries and health issues – Kirsten thinks of it with gratitude. She is grateful for health and fitness, family and friends and finding

happiness in the smaller and simpler things in life. It really made her reconsider her vision and her future. Her accident, back in 2013, gave her a second chance at life and she feels that this pandemic has granted us all another opportunity to step up and make the most out of our lives. Things certainly haven't got any easier but Kirsten feels that if you really want something bad enough and feel the love and passion for it, then you have to work even harder.

Now, as 2021 comes to an end, Kirsten sits with even bigger goals and aspirations. She wants to do better, motivate, and create opportunities for change through her passion for motorsports.

After the Dakar 2020, she

thought she had reached the pinnacle of her career, but she also believed that her career had only just started. Kirsten started 2021 with the goal to get back to the start line of Dakar 2022, this time competing in the Malle Moto Class. She feels the need for a bigger, more adventurous challenge and that's why she wanted to compete in the original class. To be tested physically, mentally, and now mechanically, completely unassisted.

Kirsten believes that we, as humans, are our only limitations, and any setbacks and challenges we are faced with should inspire us to learn from them and move onwards and upwards. She always says nothing is lost if something has been learnt. We can look back at these tough times in sorrow or we can move forward towards living your best life.

She chooses to set off on two wheels doing what she loves the most, having fun while doing it and making her mark, taking a stern stand, and proving that we, the women in motorsports, can and we will!

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 ONLY TIME
YOU SHOULD EVER
LOOK BACK IS TO SEE
HOW FAR YOU
HAVE COME.”**

MONICA LAZZAROTTI

FIM WorldSBK MEDICAL DIRECTOR
ITALY



Monica Lazzarotti was born on 2 December 1965 in Genoa, Italy. She got her passion for motorcycling from her father, who used to be a motorcycle police officer of the Polizia Stradale (road police) when he was younger and he really loved his job. Soon also Monica developed an interest in motorcycles. During the weekends she usually went to a circuit close to her home to see Motocross races with her father.

As a child, Monica's first scientific passion was to imagine becoming a physicist after she had read Walt Disney Comics with Mickey Mouse in this role. When Monica was a teen she decided to become a doctor. No-one from her family had worked in the medical field but at the time she immediately decided to specialise in Sport Medicine after graduating.

Monica liked scientific subjects. Her initial idea was to become a researcher, which she did in her first years as a doctor. Monica has always been interested not only in detection and treatment of medical conditions, but her favourite aim is to understand the mechanism or to analyse the underlying physiological basis.

In 2003 Monica started in Clinica Mobile in MotoGP World Championship series and in parallel she was also working in Trial: first in the Italian Championship, then in the World Championship.

Monica's first appointment as MotoGP doctor was at Mugello Circuit in 2003. She was very impressed about this round because two Italian riders and one rider of Repubblica di San Marino (Valentino Rossi, Lucio Cecchinello and Manuel Poggiali) won in the different categories. The spec-

tacular reaction of the fans was something Monica had never experienced before. Monica's first approach with the FIM happened in 2007 when she became a member of the CFM (FIM Women in Motorcycling Commission). At the time Monica was introduced to Dr Kreutz and Dr McManus from FIM CMI (FIM International Medical

Commission) and during her first years in Clinica Mobile, Monica collaborated with both doctors. She feels that it was key to have experienced the onset of the inclusiveness initiatives and programmes for women in the motorcycling world. In 2010, after being four years a member in the FIM Women in Motorcycling Commis-

sion, Monica joined the FIM International Medical Commission where she currently is a member of the bureau. From 2014 onwards, she has been the FIM WorldSBK Medical Director. In Italy, Monica is also the Italian Federation's coordinator of the National Medical Commission and the head doctor in charge of the medical matters (Federal doctor).

In September 2020, Monica was elected as a member of the FMSI (Italian Federation of Sports Medicine) Federal board. She doesn't want to give up her activity as a sport medicine doctor in private practice: she started to work with athletes in 1996 and hasn't finished yet.

After spending two decades working as a motorsport doctor in the highest level, Monica feels that all "the pieces of her working life" are her career highlights. Everything she has achieved is a consequence of a previous step. She doesn't want to think that one section is more or less important than the other one. Monica bought a bracelet decorated with the following engraving: "Summer is a state of mind". She feels it is a positive way to approach life.



**“SUMMER IS A
STATE OF MIND.”**

CELINA LIEBMAN

FIRST WOMAN TO WIN GERMAN SPEEDWAY CHAMPIONSHIP GERMANY

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. In 2020 Celina was the first woman to score points in the toughest league in the world, the Polish League. At the end of the year, she suffered a serious fall, breaking her elbow and smashing her wrist. Her best result in 2021 was fifth place in the German Championship.

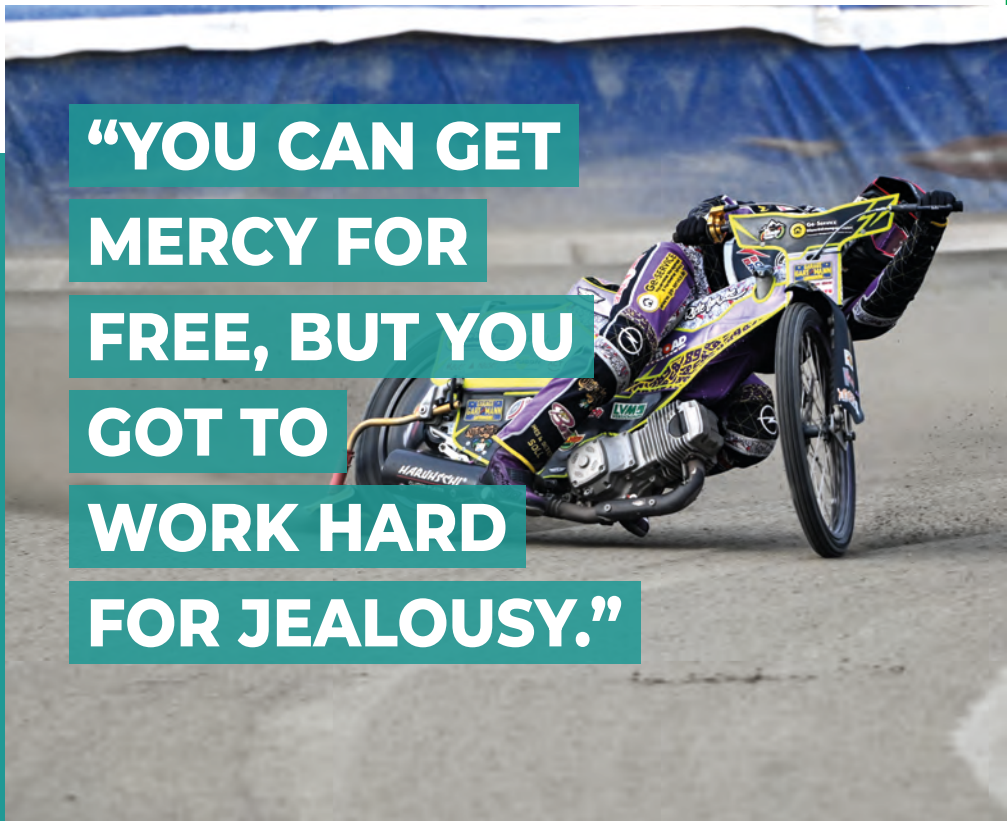
2022 was an extraordinary year for Celina with almost 40,000 kilometres of motorway. The young woman made history several times. Beginning of May Celina took part in the world championship qualification in Daugavpils, Latvia. Unfortunately,

she didn't qualify, but she did so well that the FIM gave her a chance to race with a wild card in Prague at the Speedway Grad Prix 2 (U21 World Championship). In July the first Speedway Women Academy took place in Diedenbergen and there Celina showed her strength by not missing a single point. In September she moved the audience when she became German Vice

Champion in the U21 category.

As if all that wasn't enough, Celina was the first woman to start at the Golden Helmet in Pardubice and at the last race for SGP2 in Torun she was nominated as the first reserve. In December there will be another highlight for her: the trip to the FIM training camp in Australia.

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



CAMELIA LIPAROTI

6-TIME CROSS COUNTRY WORLD CUP CHAMPION
ITALY

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 eleven times to the finishing line – a prowess! – on Quad and, since 2018, 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, Camelia has travelled across all the deserts of the planet, often competing, winning 6 FIM



“PINK IS
THE NEW BLACK.”

World Cup titles 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.

Camelia and the Dakar Rally story still goes on. In 2020 and 2021, as she was driving a Yamaha YXZ1000R SSV, Camelia discovered new interesting people and the amazing landscape of Saudi Arabia. She enjoyed astonishing experiences and a continuous learning. Camelia gained outstanding success and a podium during the 2021 Dakar Rally, reaching the second position overall in the T3 category.

The call of the Desert is strong and new adventures await Camelia in 2022!

MORONGO MAHOPE

FIRST BLACK FEMALE SUPERBIKE RACER SOUTH AFRICA

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.

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.

In September 2019 Morongoa was approached by the Owner of Ducati South Africa to race for the team. He had seen Morongoa riding at a social event, was very impressed and offered her a ride as the first sponsored lady racer. Morongoa got on to a Panigale V4 the next weekend for her very first race on a 1100cc bike as a test and immediately loved it. Morongoa raced the V4 beast for the last few races in 2019. In 2020 began a new chapter in her life when she started racing the Panigale V2 to date.

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.”**



LETIZIA MARCHETTI

FMI MANAGEMENT COUNCIL MEMBER
FMI TRAINER AND RIDER
ITALY



From the age of 3 her mother's greatest dream was to make Letizia a dancer. Growing up it also became Her dream, so she continued to study dance up to high levels and become a Trainer.

But being a rider? And who would have imagined it! Letizia had never thought of joining a world that had nothing to do with her own.

Born in the province of Rome in 1978, Letizia Marchetti is already an icon of Italian motorcycling, in fact, she holds the record of being the first woman to have won a race of the National Trophy 1000 SBK.

Her first race experiences began in 2004, debuting in the Women's Trophy. "I was 23 years old - says Letizia - when my partner David, biker, made me try his R1. Before that moment I had never ridden a motorcycle, I just followed him in his outings with friends. He explained me how to put gears, clutch etc... And it went well!

Soon after I took an R6 and I started to ride with David and his friends. Then there was the first test on track, in Misano, where at the time we raced in the opposite direction compared to today. And there, the world turned upside down. I was with David and already at the first exit I realized that at the Quercia Curve I was going much quicker than him. In the second round I passed him and I took detachment. So began my, but also our, sports adventure. I took courses and, always helped by David, I enrolled in the first Championships".

"My first races were with other girls, difficult to face because we were all on the same level. Then when I started to win, the team proposed to me to run in mixed races. At the beginning it was hard! In these races the riders were certainly cleverer than me and I was seen as a lamb in a lion's enclosure!

When the women's championship waned, for lack of members, there were only the men's championships. Confronting them was tough. At the beginning, I had to endure a lot, even in verbal terms. But then I started to win and, after a while, they recognized me not only as a woman who ran, but also as a real rider their equal. No one would have expected that soon I could win in the "Superbike" category, with a clear gap! It was difficult but constructive. It allowed me to improve more and more and specially to show that a woman can do it". "It has been understood that sport is for everyone, it makes no sense to talk about male and female sports." The rest is history, an extraordinary career in which Letizia Marchetti won several Ital-

ian women's titles, but the greatest results were achieved in 2013, where Letizia triumphed in the National Trophy 1000 SBK with BMW. A woman who wins a men's championship.

Letizia, who has a natural vocation for teaching, became a Federal Road Racing Trainer in 2014 and established the first Federal School of Motorcycling for women.

But certainly, more unexpected was the world of Federal politics, in fact, in November 2020 Letizia was elected to the Federal Management Council of the Italian Motorcycling Federation.

"I have to say that after that initial phase of

loss, because I really did not expect it, I accepted immediately. The idea of remaining in a world full of passion, like motorcycle racing, of representing the voice of athletes and being a reference point for them, convinced me to apply. My goal, also given the recent appointment as Coordinator of the Athletes Commission, will also be to give voice to the women's world and make more girls passionate about motorcycling".

2020 was the debut year of the European Womens' Cup of which Letizia was and is currently the godmother, as well as the benchmark, for all participants.

"When I see the girls of the Women's Euro-

pean Cup, I get a crazy urge to put on my race suit and go in with them. I never abandoned the motorbike, but racing is another thing. I miss the emotion I felt when I wore the suit, before starting the race. The competitive spirit, the taste of the challenge. But that I find again in the role of Management Council Member. Activity that now represents another race to win".

Precisely, as a result of this statement, in 2022 Letizia decided to return to competition, after 4 years of absence from racing!

She is the only female rider to participate in the Yamaha R7 Cup in Italy, finishing in 7th place in the overall standings out of 25 male riders, and also the only woman in-



**“WHEN GRIT, DETERMINATION
AND STRENGTH ARE YOUR POWER
AND STRENGTH, NOTHING AND NO ONE
WILL EVER STAND IN THE WAY OF YOUR DREAMS.”**

SUANY MARTINEZ

SOUTH AMERICAN QUAD CHAMPION BOLIVIA

Suany Martínez was born in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, on August 30, 1991 to a family that shared their love for motorsport. Her father was racing Quads for many years together with Suany's brother, so she joined them as she was old enough to ride as well. When Suany was barely 9 years old, her passion for quads began. Her father gave Suany her first quad in 2000. The first time Suany got on it she fell but it didn't affect her excitement towards motorsport at all. She went out on a quad with her father from a very young age and she has wonderful memories from the times when everything started. One day, her dreams had come true.

When Suany turned 16, she took part in a quad competition for the first time. At first, she was racing just for fun, as a hobby. She also travelled part of the Amazon in a quad caravan with her father's friends for a week or so, sometimes even more.

Suany was torn between her passions, and she decided to study English and cosmetology in England and in the United States. This would become her other artistic side. Even though she was doing something that

she loved, this was the time she realised that her greatest passion was racing. When she returned to Bolivia and finished her studies, she said: "It's time."

Suany started in the Rally Raid when she was 23 with the support of her parents, it was challenging but she achieved it. Her racing in a male-dominated motorsport world was not easily accepted in her country, since at that time it was still uncommon to see a female rider. This was even more true as Suany was participating the legendary Dakar Rally.

Indeed in 2017 Suany became the first Bolivian woman to race in Dakar. The first time she took part in the event, she could understand what she was going to get into and she liked the challenge. She could not count on the support of many people, namely the rest of the riders of her country. In fact, at the beginning she was mocked by many, even for some media that were on the lookout for the slightest mistake, but that pushed her to improve even more. Not only did she have the pressure that all pilots endure in Dakar, but she also had to deal with extra pressure as a woman.



In the Dakar series, Suany finished in the top 5 of the women's category, and it was then that she understood that she could keep improving and be successful in the Dakar.

In 2018, Suany was able to compete in the Dakar again. This time she had a serious accident in the race, but she continued racing

for seven days until the fever, more than the pain, forced her to give up. She started to reflect on the amount of effort she had to deploy for the competition for such challenging races. Suany knew that when one really wants to achieve something, there is nothing that can get in the way.

Unfortunately, the Dakar Rally 2018 did not end very well for Suany. She was repatriated to Bolivia, to be hospitalized for two months. She was operated and needed a long recovery. But her passion never faded: the following month she was racing again. Even if the Dakar did not go as expected that year, Suany managed to take part in the

South American Quad Championship in 2018 and the Latin American Quad Championship in 2019, both in the open category amongst the male competitors.

Suany continued racing in Bolivia in 2019 and she also managed to get the title of National Downhill Champion and South American Vice-Champion.

Now when Suany was racing in Bolivia, she performed very well, gained most of the podiums, and over time people began to understand that being a woman does not imply any form of weakness. Suany learnt a lot from competing with the male riders and even with her father. She has also learnt

from each race when she struggled with mechanical failures and accidents which contributed to build up her self-confidence as a pilot and as a person.

Suany is the only Bolivian woman to have finished the Dakar race in 2021. After completing the 9 stages of the South American Rally Race (SARR) in 2022, she became champion in Quads class Q2 category.

Suany seeks to inspire more women who, like her, fight for a dream and to tell them that we can achieve anything we set out to do.

**“BEING A WOMAN
IS NOT AN IMPEDIMENT
TO ACHIEVE YOUR DREAMS.”**



MARY MCGEE

AMERICAN MOTORSPORT RACING PIONEER
FIM WOMAN LEGEND
USA



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 fol-

lowing year she was second in the same class – the result she repeated twice on the following years in Pacific Coast Championship.

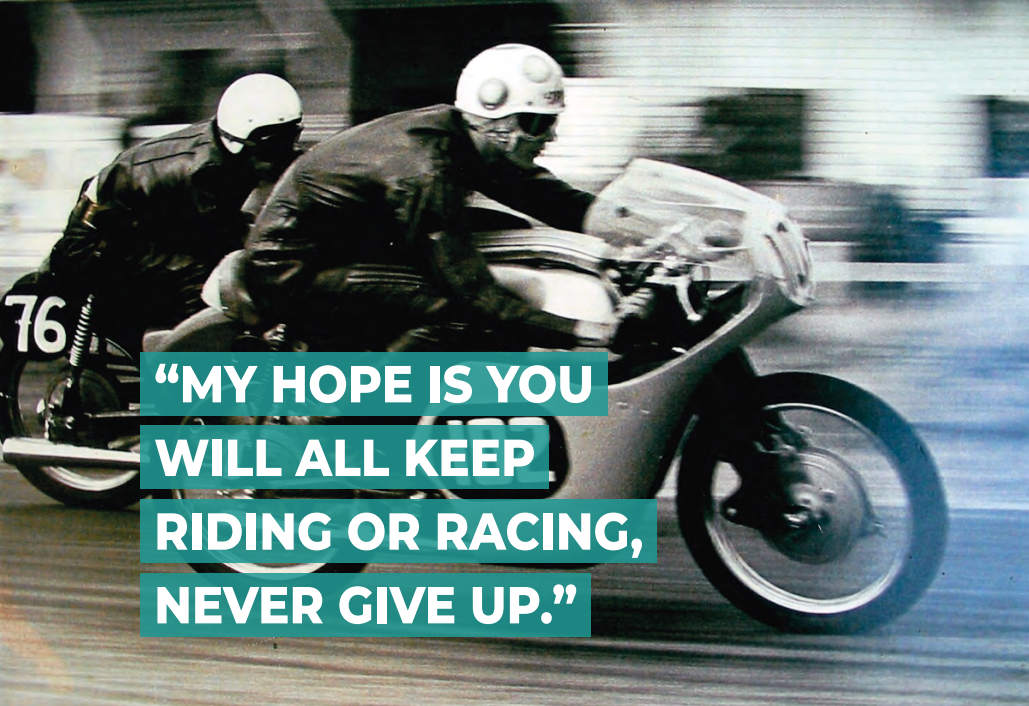
In 1957 Mary bought her first motorcycle, a 200cc Triumph Tiger Cub and despite knowing nothing about motorcycles she soon fell in love with motorcycles. However, her main goal back then was to improve her car racing skills through road racing. Mary - wearing her pink polka dot helmet - passed the audition 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 com-

peting 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. 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



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

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.

SARIKA MEHTA

ROAD SAFETY AND WOMEN
EMPOWERMENT PROMOTER
INDIA



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.

However, 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. Sarika 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 that she was fine for five long days.

In the end, the incident had bigger implications on Sarika's life. She needed to defeat 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?

So the 38 year old mother of two once again did 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 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 hoisting the tricolour at Khardung La pass, one of the World's highest and most treacherous motorable roads, on August 15.

Two years later The Biking Queens spread the message "Ride for Women's Pride" by visiting 21 countries covering over 21,000 kilometers in three continents. It took 89 days for the women to ride from India to London.

Sarika also wanted to support the community during the Covid-19 pandemic. Biking Queens got help from their friends and families and distributed food to about 5000 poor people every day during the lockdown.

The efforts of the Biking Queens have been recognized among others by Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in Delhi and they have also received support from UN Women and the World Health Organization (WHO).

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.



SHELINA MOREDA

PROFESSIONAL RACER AND COVER GIRL
USA



International professional racer and cover girl model, Shelina Moreda grew up riding motorcycles on her family's dairy farm in Northern California, USA. She got a dirt-bike 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 license 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 pursue the dream. Shelina races at professional level and has competed 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 a 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.

In 2017, Shelina signed with Covergirl, as a model for the worldwide makeup brand, and is their first motorsports Covergirl ever. In 2019, she stepped up to the big bikes and started competing for the first time at professional level on a 1000cc motorcycle in the MotoAmerica Stock 1000 Championship. Shelina also runs She'z 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 and push each other, and have high expectations. One of the women coached by Shelina is Daniela Frederick, who just won the west coast regional championship in the USA, making Shelina very proud of her and the effort she has put in. Shelina wants to make her as fast as she is, because then Daniela will push her to get faster too.

When it's off-season for racing, Shelina dedicates herself to rescuing animals from

fires. She was featured with her group on Mike Rowe's television series for their work in the fires. She was also featured in the television show "Motorcycle Startup" which profiles her racing and her dirt bike camps for girls and shortly appeared in a movie called Bennett's War. Shelina is also now doing speaking engagements and motivational talks for large companies and in 2021, she has done more commercial appearances and advertising campaigns for companies.



**“RIDE IT LIKE
YOU STOLE IT.”**

MIDORI MORIWAKI

MOTORSPORT RACING PIONEER
JAPAN



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 the 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. 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 the FIM as an Expert Member of the FIM Women in Motorcycling Commission and, in the same year, she became the Team Principal for the Suzuki 4 Hours 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 motor-



sport. 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 MIE Racing entered the FIM WorldSBK Championship participating in a joint project with Honda and Althea Racing, fielding British rider Leon Camier and Japanese rider Ryuichi Kiyonari aboard the CBR1000RR-R FIREBLADE.

Midori still manages the project that continued with the satellite MIE Racing Honda Team and factory HRC rider Takumi Takahashi in 2020, and Argentinean Leandro Mercado in 2021.

ELINA ÖHMAN

4-TIME SNOWCROSS WORLD CUP CHAMPION SWEDEN

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 years of pushing and convincing her dad that she would like to 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 sea-

son 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 but didn't have much success for a while. 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 moti-

vated 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.

A snowcross rider in a pink and black racing suit is shown in action on a pink ski-doo snowmobile. The rider is wearing a helmet and goggles, and the snowmobile has various sponsor logos including "ski-doo", "Bihl", "RACE DIV", and "17". The background is a clear blue sky with some light clouds. The rider is leaning forward, and the snowmobile is in a dynamic position, suggesting a turn or a jump.

“NEVER STOP FIGHTING

FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN.”

TAYE PERRY

2-TIME SOUTH AFRICAN CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPION SOUTH AFRICA

Taye Perry was born 31 August 1991 in East London, South Africa. Her father and Taye raced together since she was about 15. He is the reason Taye got into riding, all thanks to a few old photos she stumbled across. She spent a lot of time out in the South African bushveld, and from time to time, in local motocross tracks too. Her very first race was the Sun City 200, an off-road race where she was the only female in the motorcycle category. She got her first trophy that day: she finished in 4th place in the 125cc class. She was hooked.

After all the basic learning, Taye rode off-road and on dirt tracks. As her bikes got bigger, the need for a challenge kept growing, together with the competitiveness. For Taye, there is no better feeling than flying past competitors through the African bush on a motorcycle.

Right from the very beginning, Taye has always pointed toward bigger, longer and tougher racing. From off-road, to cross-

country, to desert racing and finally to rally raid and the biggest rally on earth: the Dakar.

Taye's biggest achievement has definitely been Dakar 2020, organised in Saudi Arabia, where she faced the toughest days and choices of her life. She still sees it as the best teaching experience she has ever had. Taye had dreams of competing with the world's best racers, and she believed that the Dakar competitors would live up to that expectation. It took more than a year to plan, and she strived for funding well past the deadlines, but she finally got on that start line. She felt right at home with the



**“WHEN YOU RISK NOTHING,
YOU RISK EVERYTHING.”**



tough, dangerous and long-distance racing days, and as the days went on, Taye kept improving her pace - right until the 11th stage, where she encountered a fatal mechanical fault. But facing what might have been the devastating end of her Dakar, she kept it together and held out in the desert, for as long as there were still competitors out there for a possible tow, she had hope. She finished that stage minutes from midnight, and went on to climb 30 places back up the field on the final stage. Her first Dakar was done, and she would be back.

Another achievement Taye cherishes is when she finished 3rd overall at the 2019 Toyota Desert 1000 race, as well as her two South African Cross Country National titles in 2014 and 2015.

Taye has faced many obstacles on her way to the top of her game, the most common one being funding as she is one of the very few women in the sport. Other challenges she has had to face is adapting, and Taye believes she is now pretty much a pro at learning and adapting fast to different machinery and setups, which isn't easy for her petite height and size. She loves the challenge though.

In the end Taye feels that nothing beats the freedom of being on a motorcycle, especially at full flight, when all the training, conditioning, instincts and reaction timing put the riders on that edge where anything is possible. When the motorcycle becomes an extension of one's self.

KATJA POENSGEN

FIRST WOMAN TO ACHIEVE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
POINTS IN CIRCUIT RACING 250 CC CLASS
FIM WOMAN LEGEND
SOUTH AFRICA

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 de-

ecided 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 mate-



rial. 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 Transibiran 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.

Katjas 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.



POLYTIMI KYRIAKOPOULOU

MOTORCYCLING ADVENTURER
CROSS COUNTRY RALLY RACER
GREECE



Polytimi Kyriakopoulou was born in 1966 in Athens, Greece. She is a woman, a mother of four daughters, an architect, and she is fond of nature and two wheelers. She is also a person with great drive and motivation, interested and passionate about travelling and adventures with her motorcycle. She always strives to improve her racing skills, giving herself the challenge of aiming for something bigger.

Polytimi got married when she was young. She studied Architecture at the National Technical University of Athens (NTUA) and by the time she graduated, she was already a mother of three daughters.

In the first years of her professional life, Polytimi worked in architectural offices and was engaged in studies and supervision of several projects, while her husband, who is also an architect, was in charge of the management of the technical department in a large private company.

In light of the challenges faced, their desire to work together, and the arrival of their fourth daughter, they decided to establish their own architectural design and construction firm. They continued to live and work together, which conveys some difficulties, but at the same time is very productive.

Polytimi has been riding her motorcycle since the age of 16 and throughout the years she has travelled and done many trips, either with her husband or by herself. Of course, free time was almost non-existent for a mother of a big family, so it all started in reverse order when it comes to her racing life.

In 2005, Polytimi had her first experience in

off-road riding. She had bought her first motorcycle, an HP2 1200 BMW, and she decided to do her first off road lesson. Her first racing experience and her first rally race and navigation happened a year later and she carried on racing ever since.

Polytimi participated in her first race abroad, in 2009: a five-day race starting in Bulgaria and finishing in Thessaloniki, Greece. Her first experience of riding, discovering new places, meeting other people who share the same passion, was most fas-

cinating for her.

Having participated in international events held in Greece and in neighbouring countries, and having competed against international competition challenged Polytimi to participate in other events around the globe.

Cross Country Rally races are something special for her. In addition to the technique of riding on dirt, rocky or sandy soils, on steep and difficult routes with very frequent, adverse weather conditions, requires

a clear mind and calm thinking, quick and smart decision-making skills, proper situation management and endurance with strength and perseverance.

Polytimi indeed is known to be persistent and strong: someone who does not give up even in the most extreme or adverse conditions. She likes to think that a person can achieve anything with willpower. Passion, energy, desire to live, riding motorcycles on off-road trails, travelling to amazing places, preparing the motorcycle and herself for the next race or adventure, either just finishing or winning and getting distinctions gives her the motivation to start each day with an infinite energy. It is her vision, her passion, her aspiration.



“FINISHING IS WINNING...

WHEN I HAVE A GOAL,

SUCCESS IS A SURE

ACCOMPLISHMENT.

I BELIEVE THAT EVERYONE

WITH THE POWER OF WILL,

DARING AND OVERCOMING

THEIR FEARS, CAN ACHIEVE

ANYTHING.”

LESLIE PORTERFIELD

PREVIOUS HOLDER OF THE GUINNESS WORLD RECORD IN LAND SPEED USA

Leslie Porterfield was born in 1976 in Tulsa Oklahoma USA. She moved with her family to Dallas, Texas, when she was 3 years old.

Leslie started riding motorcycles when she was 16. She had never ridden a motorcycle before but she decided to purchase an old street bike from a neighbour for USD 200 as a means of transportation. Everyone kept saying to her that firstly she would never be able to get it running and secondly she would never be able to ride it. But she did and quickly fell in love with motorcycles. From that moment on, she was convinced that she would become the fastest rider in the world. Leslie didn't care what the others said: she was fearless and determined to overcome all the obstacles on her way. She knew that one day she would set a new world record.

After getting many speeding tickets, Leslie decided to try racing. She enjoyed her time on the track. She road raced, drag raced,

and got into off-road riding as well.

Over the years Leslie has ridden Bajas and travelled all over the US and Canada on various types of motorcycles. She holds an accounting degree, which has been useful in her business ventures. Leslie owned and ran a construction company for a few years. She built houses and bought and repaired homes to sell. She also worked in the motorcycle business as a mechanic and opened a large used motorcycle dealership in Dallas in 2005. With her acute sense of business, the dealership became one of the most successful ones in Texas.

Leslie had a dream of going to the Bonneville Salt Flats and setting a record over 200 mph after seeing "The World's Fastest Indian" in 2005. She purchased a used Suzuki Hayabusa and headed to the salt for the first time in 2007. Unfortunately, she crashed that year at the high speed of 227 mph and was transferred by helicopter to the hospital. She broke seven ribs, had a punctured lung and a concussion. She was



badly bruised and severely injured. However, this didn't stop her - she decided to come back the next year.

Leslie rebuilt the motorcycle and went to set her first record at SpeedWeek in 2008. Her first record was 209 mph (336.353

km/h) with a naked bike (no fairings). She was the first woman on a conventional motorcycle to get into the Bonneville 200MPH club.

At the following event in 2008, Leslie set a record at 232 mph (374.208 km/h), making her the fastest woman in the world on a motorcycle and getting her into the Guinness Book of World Records. She held the

record until 2019 when Erin Sills reached 237.275 mph (381.857 km/h). Leslie went on to set a production class 1000cc record at 200 mph, and continued racing Honda's and Suzuki's on the salt. Leslie then reached a top speed of 246 mph (395.899 km/h).

In 2008, the AMA named Leslie as the American Motorcyclist Association Racing

Female Rider of the Year.

In July of 2012, Leslie became the mother of twins, a boy and a girl. She retired from racing and focused on her children. Unfortunately, she can't take the risk of another head injury and she suffers from lasting nerve damage that makes it difficult for her to race, so now she is enjoying riding dirt bikes with her kids for fun, travelling and exchanging with other motorcycle enthusi-

**“ONCE YOU
BECOME
FEARLESS,
LIFE BECOMES
LIMITLESS.”**



JANE QUEAIN

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN
TRAILBLAZER
AUSTRALIA



**“THERE IS NOTHING
TO COMPARE WITH
MOTORCYCLING.”**

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 ³/₄ (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 mini-

mal 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!

“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 motor cycles. 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 motor cycling, 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 motor cycle 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?

Text from the book: Fast Women – Pioneering Australian Motorcyclists by Sally-Anne Fowles

MINA REEVE

FASTEST FEMALE RIDER
IN THE EAST AFRICA
SUPERBIKE
CHAMPIONSHIP
KENYA

Mina Reeve was born on 12 April 1991 in Nairobi, Kenya, to a family who didn't have any background in motorcycling although some relatives of hers in the United Kingdom do ride superbikes, motocross and off-road, but more for leisure rather than competition. Mina started gaining more of an interest towards two-wheelers when she watched a superbike competition at the TGRV circuit (Kenya) with some friends and family when she was 26 years old. She then tried to attend more of these events to understand how they worked both as a spectator and a pit crew member. This led her to ride pillion on a superbike so she could get

a proper feeling, and eventually she ended up buying her own bike.

November 2018 was when 27 year old Mina first learnt to ride a motorcycle and she took part in her first competition less than half a year later, on 13 April 2019. Surprisingly, she did not finish last in the Sport 300 category on her Yamaha YZF R25. It was nerve-wracking and exciting all at the same time. Everyone thought Mina would be an obstacle on the track, but she proved them wrong. With adrenaline coursing through her body at each race, Mina kept climbing up the leadership board.

On her debut year, Mina was competing in a new sport and fighting for the 2019 title, beating most of her opponents and getting recognised as the fastest female in the East Africa Super Bike Championship and the best lady biker by FIM Africa. That year was indeed really stunning for the newcomer. Mina managed to get a podium finish in her last race of the 2019 season, which led her to finish 3rd overall in the competition. A lot of people did not think she could achieve such a performance, and that her rookie nature would not get her far. Mina remembers starting at the back of her first race, but she managed to persevere and make a name for herself on the track.

A key highlight of Mina's career was the opportunity to travel to South Africa to compete at Red Star Raceway in Johannesburg, but unfortunately her work commitments did not allow her to do so. Another point worth noting is that the rules for circuit racing under the Superbike Association in Kenya had been changed. According to the new rules, Mina would not be allowed to



compete with her Yamaha R25 by 2023 unless Yamaha decided to locally manufacture that particular model locally, having sold at least 5 units. This makes Mina very wary about her future prospects in the sport and unfortunately, one has no choice but to accept things as they are sometimes. Despite all these obstacles, Mina is trying to find ways of remaining in the world of motorsports in Africa and beyond, and compete where she can and with the available resources. She gets strength remembering

the highlights of her career so far. She likes to recall the time when she had the pleasure of getting training in the UK at Donington Park in 2019 and Cadwell in 2018, and meeting legendary British road racing champion Ron Haslam.

Mina also enjoys the mobility side of motorcycling. Getting through traffic in Nairobi is so convenient when on a bike. She also loves the feeling of being in control. The adrenaline helps to focus and forget about other sources of stress in life,

and this helps her calm down and relax. Mina would say it is almost therapeutic and highly addictive. She also likes the reaction of people when they realise it's a girl on a superbike.

All in all, Mina's short but memorable racing career has so far been an interesting journey with a lot of falls, failures and memorable triumphs. If she had to do it again, she would not have changed a thing.

“ALWAYS

GET BETTER!”



TARU RINNE

FIRST WOMAN TO ACHIEVE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS IN CIRCUIT RACING FINLAND

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.

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. Every-

one 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.



**“NEVER
GIVE UP.”**



LYDIA ROBIN

FIM TRACK
RACING COMMISSION
COORDINATOR
FRANCE

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 fanatic of this one sport, she is a big fan of basketball, motocross and everything around the data processing atmosphere, these universes are totally differ-

ent 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, M. 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. 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, M. Thierry Bouin on the FIM Long Track World Championship as well as continuing to work for the French commis-

sion 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.

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 Federation 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 shinning 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.”

LAIASANZ

14-TIME TRIAL
WORLD CHAMPION
6-TIME ENDURO
WORLD CHAMPION
QUEEN OF DAKAR
SPAIN

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-years-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-years-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 times FIM Women's Trial World Champion, 9 times Women's Trial European Champion, and 4 times 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. 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 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 trou-

bles 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 OiLibya 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 OiLibya 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 debuted at the main race at the Erzberg Rodeo, the Red Bull Hare Scramble. Although she made a huge effort and passed successfully the hardest part, Carl's Dinner, she was not able to reach her

goal of finishing within the maximum time limit of 4 hours.

In 2020, Laia participated in the Dakar Rally, finishing this extremely hard challenge for the tenth time in a row. In the following year, Laia participated again in the Dakar, for the last time on a motorcycle; in the future she will race in the car category. She also raced in a car in the Rally Andalucia in May and is

participating in the Electric Car Championship (Extreme E). At the end of the season, she was crowned World Champion of Trial and Enduro, with 20 World Titles in total!

In 2022 Laia shifted her professional focus onto four wheels. Her efforts in motorsports were recognised by María de Villota sporting Award and Mujeroy's Leadership Award.

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



BEAULAH SCHOEMAN

FIRST DIRECTOR OF THE FIM WOMEN
IN MOTORCYCLING COMMISSION,
FORMER FIM BOARD MEMBER
AND FIM AFRICA PRESIDENT
SOUTH AFRICA

Born on 29th 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 Admin 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 Int. Motorcycle Circuit Racing and a FIM Motocross event.

Before her retirement as President of FIM Africa in March 2015, and as a FIM Director 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

Beulah became the Titular representative for MSA for FIA and FIM and regularly at-



tended 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.

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
- Finalist – Sport Category – SA Women 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 Con-

tribution 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."**



ERIN SILLS

LAND SPEED RACING WORLD CHAMPION AND ADVOCATE FOR WOMEN IN MOTORCYCLING USA

Erin Silles is a 45-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 Silles. 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 land speed 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 devastating 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 Silles 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.

In 2019, Erin became co-chairwoman of



media company, WomenRidersNow.com which was originally founded in 1999 and is the largest and longest-standing resource for women in motorcycling in the United States.

Erin currently serves on the AMA Specialist Sport Commission, the FIM Women in Motorcycling Commission and the board of the AMA Heritage Foundation. She is also an off-road adventure riding coach with RawHyde Adventures where she trains peo-

ple 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 sup-

port 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.”**



ADELINE & AUGUSTA VAN BUREN

FIRST WOMEN TO CROSS THE USA ON SOLO BIKES USA

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 July 4th, 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.”**

THERESA WALLACH

ADVENTURE MOTORCYCLIST, ENGINEER,
MECHANIC AND AUTHOR
UK

Theresa Wallach was a woman engineer who not only was a pioneer in the sense of being one of those who took up such work when it was rare for a woman but also in her adventurous expeditions in Africa and America, which would have been just as pioneering for any man at the time.

Born in 1909 into a middle-class family in the south of England, her German-born father was a stockbroker and gentleman-farmer, which sounds very mundane. However, he had also been an eminent explorer and collector with one of the most significant private anthropological and archaeological collections in the country.

Apparently enamoured of motorbikes from a very early age, Theresa was too young to get her start in engineering during the First World War but in 1928, her father allowed her to take an engineering degree at Northampton Polytechnic, which was part of the University of London, gaining a Cer-

tificate for her Mechanics and Heat Section work in 1931 and graduating in 1932. She then worked for British Thomson-Houston, the engineering and heavy industrial company. However, for Theresa's future in and around motorbikes, her time at university was seminal in that her (male) engineering student colleagues taught her to ride a motorcycle. She proceeded to buy her first motorcycle, a blue BSA, which she had to hide from her parents who were horrified in equal measure by her acquisition and the trousers she found she had to wear to ride the machine.

She joined the London Ladies Motor Club and this led to her taking part in Brooklands races, astonishingly winning the first one she entered. The LLMC also engaged in tours and light-hearted 'gymkhanas' and introduced her to other women riders. This may have been how she met Florence Blenkiron, who in 1934 gained the first British Motorcycle Racing Club (BMCRC)

Gold Star held by a woman, for lapping Brooklands at over 100 mph. Theresa would not achieve her own Gold Star until 1939 but, with another pioneer female engineer Beatrice Shilling, would then become one of only 3 women to earn the Gold Star.

The meeting with Florence Blenkiron would be life-changing. They became friends and shared a house in the south of London and from 1934 began the planning for their great adventure. In 1935 she and Florence set off on their headline-grabbing 8-month trip from London, via the Sahara Desert, to Cape Town by motorbike. Their Panther M100 was fitted with a sidecar and camping trailer, which unsurprisingly perhaps had to be frequently hauled out of soft sand. They encountered many technical and social difficulties along the way, as they were often in areas where such a vehicle had not been seen before, let alone one ridden by two Englishwomen. At every stage across the French-controlled Sahara Desert, they were required to check in at military forts within a pre-agreed timetable or risk a huge fine to cover the costs of going out to look for them. More than once they had to rely on the hospitality of the forts whilst awaiting spares to be shipped from England. They were followed, sometimes literally by journalists in aero planes, by the press and their arrival in Cape Town was both a media triumph and something of an anti-climax as it became apparent that the Panther could not survive a return trip and Theresa, at least, had no money. Having made her way home to the UK by sea

Theresa was penniless, sleeping rough in the streets of London. It would not be until 2 years after her death that the book of the London-Cape Town venture would be published. The Rugged Road, is titled as authored by Theresa Wallach and resulting in a best-selling book "Rugged Road" which is still in print.

The years before the war were very tough for her as she was unable to gain any benefits from the promotion of the trip which the motorcycle and other companies were exploiting.

During the Second World War she was a despatch rider in the women's Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), and later the first ATS Unit mechanic sergeant, repairing tanks. After the war she went to the USA, picking up various motoring-related jobs, including test driving for Lagonda cars, to fund her extensive motorbike tours around the entire country.

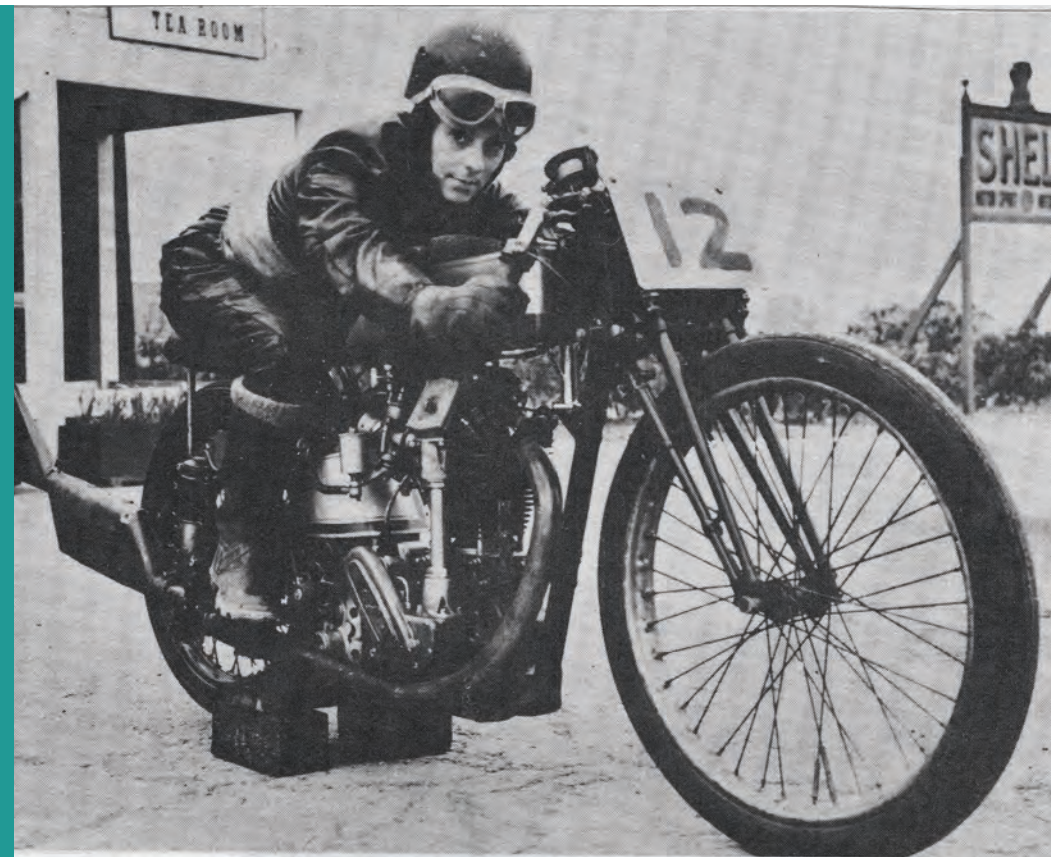
Returning to the UK in 1950 she again made the newspaper headlines when she found herself without money but in need of repairs to her motorcycle in the depths of the English countryside – when the garage-owner asked her if she had come far, she replied "About 30,000 miles!". She soon returned to the USA for good and set up her own firm in Chicago selling and repairing British-made motorbikes, such as Nortons, and also teaching motorcycle riding, also publishing her successful book 'Easy Motorcycle Riding'. In 1973 she sold her Chicago shop and moved to Phoenix, Ari-

zona where she opened her 'Easy Riding Academy' from her home in a suburb near the motorway.

Always keen to spread her love of motorbikes she helped set up both the London Ladies' Motor Club in the 1930s and then the Women's International Motorcycle Association in the 1950s. She served as

WIMA's first Vice-President, and was active in the association until her death in Phoenix in 1999.

Text from 'From Brooklands to Phoenix, Arizona, via Capetown - Theresa Wallach's pioneering life with motorcycles, copyrights: Nina Baker, Engineering historian, DL, PhD, BSc, FIES, HONMWES



EMILIE WESTBYE

TRIAL RACER, PRESIDENT OF THE
NORWEGIAN MOTORSPORT FEDERATION
NORWAY



Emilie was born in 1989 in Fredrikstad, one hour south of Oslo, the capital of Norway. She grew up in a farm with her parents and younger sister. When Emilie was 10 years old, she told her dad that she wanted a horse. The Westbye family had a perfect room for a horse but Emilie never got one. Instead, a couple of days later, Emilie's dad brought her to a local trial club, to watch his friend's son ride. The people at the club were so nice and welcoming, and Emilie had a chance to try a trial bike for the first time. The yellow GasGas 50 cc Emilie borrowed was the coolest machine she had ever seen. That was the turning point for her, and she never looked back.

For many years, trial was Emilie's main activity, and she even competed in the European and World Championship series. She didn't get the best possible results but she realised that she was on her way to the top. Then suddenly everything changed when Emilie got ill. This was a major turn in her life when she could not exercise, ride and be an athlete the same way that she was used to. Emilie believes that her experience was comparable to that of many other athletes that have to step away from their sport before they are ready for that. You are not quite sure who you are anymore. You start to question yourself: What's my mission? What do I do now? What am I when I'm not a motorcycle rider?

Emilie took a new path in her life. She knew she wanted to be part of the motorcycling family, so she followed a coach training course in the national sports federation in



**“SURROUND
YOURSELF WITH
SUPPORTIVE
PEOPLE, AND
EVERYTHING IS
POSSIBLE.”**

Norway as well as in her own federation. Soon after, Emilie became a coach for young motorsport girls in Norway, as well as a board member in her local club. Quickly, she realised that she had some management skills, and she took on new challenges as they arose. Emilie was a board member both in her club, in the national federation and in 2019 when Emilie was 30 years old she was elected to be the youngest president of the history of the Norwegian federation. In Norges Motorsportforbund, motorcycles, snowmobiles, boats and radio-cars are all under the umbrella of

the same federation, so it is a very complex organisation. Emilie had new challenges to face yet again.

However, Emilie soon realised that being a president is in many ways the same as being a rider. It is ups and downs, challenges ahead that need to be solved, and always striving for perfection. What she has learned is that taking it step by step is the key to good performance over time. And even more importantly, it is vital to surround yourself with kind, helpful and supportive people. Then it is possible to make

almost anything happen together.

Emilie also highlights that not everything can be planned carefully in advance, and what the future holds is mystery to all of us, so she is satisfied that she always lets herself just ride along and let the path be made as she goes. Motorsports will always be in her heart, and she is most grateful that she can do what she loves every day. For Emilie, the absolute best thing about motorsports is all the wonderful people she has met, and the memories they share together.

JEMMA WILSON

5-TIME WINNER OF INTERNATIONAL SIX DAYS OF ENDURO RACE AUSTRALIA

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 trailrides.

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. 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 Trailrides 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, mo-

tocross 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.

**“SET GOALS
AND STOP
AT NOTHING
TO ACHIEVE
THEM!”**







Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme

Route de Suisse 11
1295 Mies
Switzerland

www.fim-live.com

©FIM 2023

Impressum

EDITOR

FIM Women in Motorcycling Commission

LAYOUT

FIM Design

TRANSLATION

Amel DEBBAH

PROOFREADING

Jake MILLER

Erin SILLS

Tracy SIMPSOM

Ganna DUMONT

The content of this publication is based on the best knowledge and information available at the time the FIM Women in Motorcycling book was published (24 May 2023).

DREAM

BIG

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN MOTORCYCLING