

# EVERTS & FRIENDS CHARITY RACE

Stefan Everts

When I drove out the driveway of my home at around 7am last Thursday I could never have expected that I would have such a great day. I knew there would be some exciting moment, some moments of nostalgia, and I knew I would probably feel some emotion

Words and photo by Geoff Meyer

A long time ago I used to travel to just about every single Motocross race held in Belgium, and if I wasn't at a Grand Prix I was catching the Belgian Championships or an International somewhere. As I got older and my kids started needing more attention I pretty much dropped all races outside the GP's and concentrated on my family and my website [www.mxlarge.com](http://www.mxlarge.com) <<http://www.mxlarge.com>> .

I had intended to attend Stefan's race in 2010, but didn't due to I think family issues, but this year I really wanted to go. For several reasons really, seeing the King racing again, Brad Lackey would be attending and I had always wanted to interview him, Joel Robert, Eric and Sylvain Geboers, Mickael Pichon, Joel Smets, and several other legends would be there.

As I drove down the A70 direction Genk, Belgium I started thinking about all the miles I had done visiting races in Europe, and those earlier days when I first arrived in Europe, nearly 20 years ago. As I got closer to Genk I realized that it was maybe 10 years that I had visited that circuit and I did feel a little emotion, remembering when my kids were small and travelling through Europe was such a big adventure.

Finally arriving at the circuit I quickly walked over to the paddock area where I could hear some old bikes being fired up. I have to admit, the older I get the more emotional I get and the sound and smell of those old bikes brought a tear to my eyes. I used to travel to the races in the early 1970's with two of my brothers and my father and of course when you are just 10 years old everything seems so impressive.

When I saw those old RM's from the 1970's, and the CZ, even a Lindsrom Motorcycle I just felt so excited. They had Gaston Rahiers factory bike, the same bike he rode in Australia in the mid 1970's, plus bikes from Harry and Stefan Everts, and right at the end of the line of bikes was Brad Lackey and his trusty Suzuki.

As I stood and watched Lackey talking to some spectators I looked to my left and there was Joel Robert talking with Eric Geboers. A little further along Sylvain Geboers was arriving, his legendary battles with Robert in the 1970's was part of Motocross folk law, J.J. Bruno was smiling as he talked with Andre Vromans and Harry Everts was looking on.

All in all 32 World Motocross Championships were on display at Everts Charity race. Stefan himself of course with his 10, Joel Robert with his six, Eric Geboers and Joel Smets with their five each, Mickael Pichon and Steve Ramon with their two and Brad Lackey with his single victory in 1982, oh and Jacky Martens also arrived to take a look at the action. Add names like Herlings, Van Horebeek, Leok, Goncalves, and Nicholls and you had a splashing of young talent.

I walked away from this day in Genk, Belgium with a big smile on my face and for sure I will be back next year. In fact add the Veterans Motocross des Nations in September to my list of must see races.

Life is good as a Motocross fan.



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*Stephan*

## Lindstrom Motorcycles

Lindström was a type of motocross motorcycle developed by Göte Lindström. Lindström started a motorcycle repair business in the city of Limhamn in the southern province of Scania, Sweden. He started to tune the native Husqvarna brand of motorcycles, and soon developed a reputation as an expert tuner.

In 1955, with the advent of the lightweight (75kg, 165lbs) Husqvarna 282 Silverpilen, a 175cc, 2-stroke, 9.5HP motorcycle geared towards young riders, he got a material that would respond well to his tuning efforts. The success, in 1959, of a factory modified 250cc motocross version demonstrated the potential of the new design, but no racers were sold to the public at this time.

This opened an opportunity for aftermarket tuners, such as Flink and Lindström. Based on the stock Husqvarna 282 engine, Göte Lindström cast larger bore cylinders of his own design and production, that resulted in a 236cc displacement with the stock crank. Stroking the crank resulted in a 246cc displacement, just under the 250cc class limit. The engines also featured high compression heads, higher crankcase compression through the use of round balances, a larger bore, 32mm Bing carburetor and a custom made, dynamometer tested, expansion chamber exhaust system. The chassis was custom made by Egon Gustavsson, who crafted light yet rigid double cradle frame with a rear swingarm sprung by two Girling units. The front fork was a Ceriani motocross telescope-type, an improvement over the earlier "Earls type" swingarm front forks, that had previously been favored by light weight motocrosses. What remained of the stock Husqvarna were the wheel hubs and the engine cases.

The Lindström custom motocrosses competed directly, and sometimes successfully, with the Husqvarna factory motocross racers. The Husqvarna 282 Silverpilen went out of production in 1965, but much of the parts that went into the road motorcycle continued to be used in the form of a dedicated motocross, the Husqvarna motocross.

The last year for Lindström motocross racer production was 1967. At that point Göte Lindström faced a decision between a costly expansion of production, or to stop production, and was now also facing competition from the Husqvarna factory which now, since 1963, sold motocross racers directly to the public. Göte Lindström decided to stop production, and returned to servicing road motorcycles.

Meantime, with the more rigid motocross frame, improved front fork and the enlarged and tuned engine, the Husqvarna motocross was a huge success, including in the United States, where World Championship rider Torsten Hallman helped a dealer to popularize the sport of motocross and especially the Husqvarna motorcycles. The success of the Husqvarna motocross and the derivative Lindström motocross can be attributed to a combination of light yet rigid components, a high torque engine and a quality, dependable design. The Husqvarna motocrosses continued to use the same basic engine as in the original Husqvarna 282 Silverpilen from 1955, but with four speeds instead of three and with larger displacements, 250cc, 360cc and finally, in 1969, 400cc. The final year for the original 1955 engine design was 1971, now producing over 40HP, more than four times the original design.



Two former greats against two of the present breed of Motocross heroes. From left to right it's Tanel Leok on the TM getting all out of shape and Joel Smets and Mickael Pichon in the middle taking the good path to the first corner. On the right hand side is the 250cc rider Jeremy Van Horebeek trying to stick with the more powerful 450cc machines.



What I enjoyed most was watching the older riders enjoying eachothers company. Here are Joel Robert, Brad Lackey and Eric Geboers talking old school during one of the breaks in the program. I think Sylvain Geboers summed it up best when he said, "I don't see Joel (Robert) enough, we talk on the phone a few times in the year, but I don't get to actually sit down with him and enjoy his company enough. We have something together that will never go away, it's in our blood." Of course Sylvain and Joel battled hard for World Championships in the late 60's and early 70's. Both legends of the sport were presented to the large spectator turnout in the interval and they received a huge applaud from their Belgian public



Jake Nicholls was one of the youngster in the group and watching him race around on Antonio Cairoli's mini bike was a great site. Having fun and enjoying a race meeting that didn't mean anything results wise, it was just a day out in the sun and rain and you could tell he was having a ball

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JJ Bruno former Grand Prix winner, Factory Suzuki rider and likeable Frenchman was on show and finished top ten in his races.

To see five times World 500cc Champion Joel Smets and two times World 250cc Champion Mickael Pichon joking on the start line was pretty funny. The most amazing part of this combination was at the end of the American race. In this series of races the top 20 riders start on the gate for a one lap dash. The last three on each lap are out of the next set of one lap dashes. On one occasion both Smets and Pichon sat in those last three spots and the way they fought to get past the younger riders was a sight to behold. Ruthless and determination are two words I thought when watching them rubbing elbows with the GP kids.



Honda Factory rider Rui Goncalves was one of the stars of the event. His fast starts in the American races really proved to be an important part of his day. The rider from Portugal was lightning fast and like many of the current Grand Prix riders had his hands full with the likes of Everts, Smets and Pichon.



Unfortunately, Stefan Everts injured his finger (as did Mickael Pichon) and didn't race the whole day, although he did show great speed in the American races. In the scooter race against a bunch of friends and local riders he was terrible. Slow off the start and DNFed in the first lap. Legends also don't always have it their own way.