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Women's moto dawns anew in Perris

Print

Motor Scene

Image Gallery

Moto-Mom Kristy Marcotte gives last-minute advice to twin daughters Brittany and Bryanna, the "Killer Bs."

C.J. Stewart photo.

Moto-Mom Kristy Marcotte gives last-minute advice to twin daughters Brittany and Bryanna, the "Killer Bs."

C.J. "Sparkplug" Stewart

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Perris Raceway has agreed to run multiple women's classifications with separate class divisions during the entire Hot Summer Nights 10-round motocross racing series running now through October.

Three motos are reserved just for the ladies.

Moto racer Heather Majcherek felt the need to form an alliance that supports women to come up with solutions to the problems faced by the girls.

"We're here to support each other and foster the evolution of an even playing field for the women of our sport," said Majcherek. "If you truly want to be taken seriously then it's time to either put up or shut up. We now have six classes available to date."

Majcherek has gone out of her way to offer women a chance to form their own club of sorts.

"The guys have had their clubs for years now," she said. "I've offered women to pit with me, loan them bikes and gear to start racing motocross so that newer ladies to the sport don't have to go to the tracks and be by themselves.

"We're a really friendly and honest group of mature ladies and women. No girly attitudes or games. Come on out and we'll teach each other how to take care of business and have fun doing it."

They're lining up

Tiana Falls of Murrieta is tall, fast and very self-disciplined for a 12-year-old.

"I've been racing my 125 KTM for six months now and I feel really

comfortable on it," she remarked. "I know that all the ladies here tonight are aware that this is the first time, other than the 'girls' play ride day in March, that we have raced together in our own respected classes."

Jeff Falls, Tiana's father, explained the debacle that women are experiencing in motocross racing: "If my daughter was a boy over the age of 12 they would race the amateurs in their own class instead of racing them with the professionals. Why do they tell the amateur ladies that they have to race the pro women?"

"The faster young ladies can't turn pro until they turn 16 years old. It doesn't make sense. Other race series don't tell the boys that they have to race the pros like Carmichael and Stewart. Come on. At least they fixed the problem for this series."

"My main goal right now is that I really want to win the Loretta Lynn's National in Tennessee," said Tiana, "but with gas prices at what they are, I hope we can afford and are blessed to make it there."

"I really can't comprehend on what is going to happen if we decide to travel there or not. All I can do right now is pray and give it my best shot to compete back on the same starting line as the professional women at the nationals."

Another view

Denise Richards, a real estate agent out of Canyon Lake, put it this way: "Racing is new to me and it seems unusual that all the women have been lumped together to this day and age in racing until this evening."

"There are at least a dozen distinct riding levels of all the women registered for this event, from young to old, with varying experience and seat time. Now, with the guys there can be at least 84 classes of riders out of the 19 motos from this evening. The rulebooks have it figured out for them."

"I was really impressed that the promoter divided the ladies' classes up separately. Now I won't be racing with 11-year-olds. But still, it's amazing how political racing can be. If the issue is for the betterment of the sport then it should be done."

Intermediate buzz

Motocross twins Brittany and Bryanna Marcotte, 15, are the only two beginner class intermediate level racers at Perris Raceway right now.

"At Loretta Lynn's our ladies didn't qualify because you have to beat the professional women racers to get to the podium," said the girls' mom, Kristy. "The nationals haven't separated the women's classes like they have for boys. That makes it hard to get sponsors when the best you can do is finish tenth or so."

Brittany and Bryanna originally wanted to play football when their

parents wanted to get them into sports. "No" was the answer.

Then the sisters wanted to play hockey. "No way. Too dangerous," said their parents.

"Then one day my husband asked our daughters if they wanted to ride dirt bikes. They said, 'Yes!' Of course, he asked them that because he wanted a dirt bike," recalled Kristy.

Bouncing around classes

Lauren "Bunny Ears" Hammond is only 11 and has been bouncing around racing various classes with the boys, teen ladies and adult women for quite some time.

"I learned to ride when I was 5 years old when my dad bought my older sister, Haley, and me a Yamaha PW 50," said Lauren. "We had to take turns riding it and had to share a pair of safety gear.

"My sister would have no problem taking turns switching the gear for me to wear and letting me have the bike. I, on the other hand, would have a full-blown conniption fit when my turn was up. Back then I wanted to ride all day long if I could.

"This year I will be trying to qualify for Loretta Lynn's and traveling with my instructor, Debbie Matthews.

"I think this a great sport to get your confidence up. And it's only about you when you're out on the track. In the pits, it's all about everybody having fun. It's so exciting."



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