

Getting Started in Motocross

There are basically 4 different types of riders participating in Vintage motocross:

1. The Rider who has ridden and continues to ride since the 60's, 70's, or 80's. This type of rider usually has bikes that he has kept through the years and quite probably is currently riding Modern events.
2. This Rider has not ridden in 20, 25, or 30 years and wants to find and ride the same bike they rode when they were young.
3. This rider also has not ridden in several years and want to buy and ride the bike "They always wanted" when they were younger, but probably couldn't afford.
4. This rider is a "Novice" to motocross, having never ridden and is looking for information on not only What to ride, but How to ride as well.

All 4 of these riders should do the following things to help make participating in Vintage Motocross Fun, entertaining, and safe.

1. Join the AMA
2. Join AHRMA, get a rulebook and READ IT! This will save you a tremendous amount of aggravation by understanding Class rules, Bike eligibility, Modifications, Rider classifications, etc., etc. There are separate Vintage Series, Vintage (pre-75) and Post Vintage (75-82) These Series are again broken down by Bike age and performance, and by rider skill level. Vintage: Premier , Pre 1965, mostly four strokes , 250's, 500's, and Twins Classic - 66-72 "Transision" era 125's, 250's and 500's Sportsman , Pre 1975 125's, 250's and 500's All above classes must comply with "Period" rules and have no more than 4" rear wheel travel and 7" front wheel travel. There are also 3 skill levels: Novice, Intermediate, and Expert. There are also "Age Group" classes, Open age, +40, +50, +60 with Skill levels on any Vintage legal motorcycle. Post Vintage: Historic , 75-77 The beginning of the long travel period 9" max. Grand Prix , 77 , 81 performance driven , check rule book Ultima - No Disc brakes or power valves All of the Post Vintage classes have specific class rules and also have 3 skill levels: Novice, Intermediate, and Expert. There are also "Age group" classes, Open age, +40, +50, +60, with Skill levels: Novice, Intermediate, and expert.
3. Join a Local Club. This is the best way to network from people who have already been through the "Learning curve" and can help you avoid the many obstacles.
4. Purchase quality safety gear: Boots, Helmet, Gloves, Pants, Pads, Goggles, etc.
5. Choose you Motorcycle purchase carefully: Some brands have a good following of Parts sources, aftermarket suppliers, and custom fabricators such as most CZ, Husqvarna, and Honda Ellsinore's. Some brands, such as Montesa, Ossa, and even Kawasaki, have very few parts suppliers and limited availability of NOS parts.
6. Sign up for the proper skill level. If you haven't raced in 25 years, don't try to come out and compete with the Expert riders (unless you have been Trail riding regularly). Enter the Intermediate class and work your way back into shape and speed. Don't worry; your peers will let you know when it's time to move up. If you have never ridden before, feel that you are out of shape, or just don't want to ride too fast, enter the Novice Class. That is what it's here for! If you are a current Modern bike rider, don't come to Vintage to "Cherry pick". Pick the proper class for your riding skill and have fun.
7. Prepare your bike properly, Remember, 25 year old parts like chains, Tires, shocks, carburetors, anything rubber, bearings, cables, and such should either be replaced, refurbished, or updated to save you from pushing your broken bike back from the far side of the Track.
8. Start an exercise program at least 60 days prior to coming out for Racing. If you haven't raced in ages, consult a Physician before starting your exercise program. But remember, Motocross is extremely physically demanding and requires you to be in shape in order to be competitive.

9. Practice on your Motorcycle prior to racing. Speak to Club members about local riding areas to refine your skills and set-up your bike properly.

10. Come out and have fun! If you have aspirations of being World Champion, Vintage Motocross is not the proper venue! For most of us, those days are long gone and probably never were. We are all here to enjoy old bikes, the sights and smells of friendly competition, to ride safe, and have fun!

Useful websites:

www.ahrma.org

www.ahrma-northatlantic.org