



About the author and acknowledgements

Western Australian John Steyntjes first started racing motocross sidecars in 1980.

Between 1980 and 1988 he competed in every Australian Championship across the country. In the early years he filled in for injured passengers on the day. But towards the end of his career he finished on the winners podium at three consecutive National titles – 1986 Raymond Terrace (NSW), 1987 Smithton (TAS) and 1988 Mackay (QLD) – teaming up with Cliff Cook.

Their career highlights were competing in Europe, winning the first leg of the Australian 500cc Sidecar class in Tasmania in 1987 and four consecutive State titles between 1986-89.

While still racing, John was active promoting SidecarCross at both State and National level. In 1984 he coordinated and arranged sponsorship for reigning Swiss World SidecarCross champion Emil Bollhalder to tour Australia. The following year he did the same for three-times runner-up World Sidecar-Cross champions Joseph Brockhausen and Hubert Rebele, from Germany.

To return the favour, Josef Brockhausen invited John and Cliff to compete the 1986 SidecarCross season in Europe. The Australians took up the offer and had contracts for 13 events throughout Germany, Holland, Czechoslovakia, France and Switzerland.

“In 1992, Motorcycling Western Australia awarded John the prestigious Castrol Award for his contribution to motorcycling.”

Chairman – Motorcycling Western Australia Motocross Committee

In the late 80's and early 90's John was Chairman of Motorcycling WA's Motocross Committee and was also on the National Motocross committee. To help all Australian riders become more competitive, John brought back his learnings from Europe and became an advocate for introducing the World Grand Prix race format at State and National level. This included introducing the '30/5' second start boards, consistent individual starting gates and awarding of the Top 3 numbers to riders based on their finishes the previous season.

John continued his work promoting motocross in the early 90's after he started a family and retired from the sport. He was on the marketing committee for the first ever World Motocross Nations in Australia at Manjimup, Western Australia in 1992. He also published the souvenir programs for that event and the 1993 World 125cc Grand Prix, also at Manjimup, and State Championships in the 90s.

Cont....



Racing in France - Team Cook-Steyntjes competed in 13 events across Europe in 1985, including Holland, Germany, Switzerland and Czechoslovakia.



John Steyntjes [Far right] at the Czechoslovakian International with Cliff Cook, British Champion Terry Good and multiple World Champion Andreas Husser.



Cliff Cook and John Steyntjes at the 1987 Australian Championships in Smithton Tasmania. The pair won the first leg of the 500cc CS and placed second overall.



In 1992, Motorcycling Western Australia awarded John the prestigious Castrol Award for his contribution to motorcycling.

Having two daughters, John gradually drifted from the sport. But with his eldest daughter becoming a professional ballerina in Salzburg, John got to travel to Europe regularly and attend some of the World Motocross Grand Prix events.

John recently discovered that the governing Motorcycle bodies in Australia had not maintained, nor publish the Australian and State Motocross Champion lists.

With support from others, John started the *Australian Motocross History* website to ensure the National Motocross Champions are truly honoured. And to capture and preserve this historic information for future generations.

Acknowledgments

John would like to thank the following people who encouraged him to create this website and are contributing towards it.

The idea started off as an idea for a retirement project. But with Wayne and Peter keen on the idea - and plenty of time at home during the Covid-19 pandemic to go through and sort old programs, photos and memorabilia – the project gained traction earlier than anticipated.

- Wayne Fanderlinden
- Peter Kitchingman
- Bill Watson
- Rosco Holden.

References

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