

MXA MINI-VIEW: Eric Peronnard

While most MX fans are certainly aware of French transplants like Jean-Michel Bayle, Eric Sorby and David Vuillemin, one Frenchman they probably don't know much about, but should, is Eric Peronnard. Eric is as passionate for the sport as anyone could be. It was back in 1979 that he first visited America when he accompanied former World Champion Andre Malherbe at the Trans-USA series. Since then Eric has been involved in everything from working at motorcycle dealerships to creating one of the earliest business ventures catering to off-road tours. However, it was in the mid-80's when his business interests in Supercross took a decided turn that he became the American producer for the Bercy Supercross. The Bercy event was quickly making a name for itself as the premier indoor event in Europe and it was Eric's job to find, contract and baby-sit the American riders who would be the sell-out attraction.



Taking from what he learned and observed with Bercy, Eric created the U.S. Open of Supercross in Las Vegas. Besides that marquee event (which he has since sold) Eric also promoted the first four stroke supercross in 1999 as well as the Mini-Moto Supercross held in May at the Orleans in Las Vegas. But it is his latest indoor spectacle, the Endurocross, which really has Eric excited these days. The French transplant recently stopped by the well lit, palatial MXA offices to partake in some carne asada burritos and shop talk.

MXA: You have quite a few events coming up. Which one do you look forward to the most?

Eric: They are all different. Endurocross is my baby, the Bercy Supercross is the most glamorous race that I'm involved with, and the Geneva Supercross race is really fun because it's such a low pressure race, but it is also very big for a European Supercross. Unlike the Bercy race which is similar to the U.S. Open, Geneva is more the size of the Sam Boyd stadium used for the Supercross finals.

MXA: How excited are you to have Ricky Carmichael coming to race the Bercy

Supercross?

Eric: I'm ecstatic! It's a dream coming true. It will be the 25th anniversary of the race and we worked extremely hard to get him involved. Ricky is excited about being there, and he wants to take his family and have fun in Paris. Ricky will take the race very seriously.

MXA: Who else is on the list of entries?

Eric: He's most likely racing David Vuillemin and Christophe Pourcel, but also hopefully Grant Langston, Josh Grant, Andrew Short, and some other guys. Vuillemin, Short and Langston have had a lot of wins at Bercy in the last few years, so it's going to be great. Unlike in the States, the Bercy race is an open format so riders can choose between riding 250's and 450's.

MXA: As with everything French coming to America, you're also involved with Christophe Pourcel.

Eric: I don't have any business interest with Pourcel, but I have known him since he was 13 and he is an enormous talent. I still can't believe how he came to Anaheim this year and won straight away – I mean, how many other riders have beaten Villopoto this year and that was his first Supercross! Time will tell, but I know that he is dedicated to racing and being successful in America.



MXA: Who was the best French rider to come to America?

Eric: For sure Jean-Michel Bayle. He did what no other French rider ever had. He came here, flew under the radar and exploded. JMB likes to be stealthy and after him every other French rider had the automatic pressure of measuring up to what he accomplished and of course, none have.

MXA: What did you think about the X Games?

Eric: I loved it. It's not a spectator show, but instead something that's made for TV. Still, the electricity around the event was awesome. To see Shawn White, Ricky Carmichael and Adam Jones all within a few minutes of each other was amazing. It's not something that can be duplicated. And even though people have bagged on the X Games, I think it's one of the best things that could have happened to our sport. Even Ricky was happy to see the freestyle contest because it's not something that he can usually see since he's racing all of the time.

MXA: What was your involvement with the X Games & did you have a favorite event?

Eric: I was on the rider selection committee for the Moto-X and Supermoto events. Basically, all the guys who called ESPN and didn't get in can blame me! I chose riders based on talent and their marketability, I had absolutely no political agenda. My favorite event was probably freestyle Best Trick. That was absolutely spectacular. The Moto X race was a little bit disappointing because Ricky did his job, which is to kill everybody. I'm not a big Supermoto fan, but Mark Burkhart and Jeff Ward made it interesting.

MXA: What are your expectations for Endurocross?

Eric: I don't know if I've ever been as excited about one of my races as I am with Endurocross. Each year the crowd response gets better and better so this year we created a three race series with events in Oklahoma, Denver and the Finals in Las Vegas on November 11. We have a lot of big off-road world names, such as David Knight and there are also a lot of motocross riders who are interested. Hopefully there will be a lot of fast European guys coming over to race. Last year Jeremy McGrath was interested, but he hurt himself at his own race. I'd love to ask him if he'd want to participate this year. (for more info on the Endurocross series, [Click Here.](#))

MXA: What's your opinion on all the talk of making the AMA Supercross series a global event?

Eric: It's a big series already and that will only make things more complicated. Moving riders and teams around in a major undertaking and to do it correctly we need a serious leader to make it happen. Right now we are the biggest and best sport that is not organized, there is no vision. The sport needs a think tank of people with no agenda and lots of creativity to take it into the future and unfortunately, I don't see anyone that would qualify for that in power right now.