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## European Endurance Legend Cup

### New Classic Endurance Series Launched - Races in France, England, Germany

#### Pre-1987 Superbikes, Pre-1985 Air-Cooled Classics – Pro Am Riders Class

A new international series for classic race bikes of the 1970s and 1980s has been launched, bringing together three of the most popular 4 hour races across Europe and providing race classes that will stage a spectacular recreation of the glory days of endurance racing.

#### The Dates

The confirmed dates for the **European Endurance Legend Cup** are:

- 24/25 March: Sunday Ride Classic – Le Castellet (Circuit Paul Ricard), France
- 12/13 May: Endurance Legends 4 Hour – Donington Park, England
- 7/8 June: German Speedweek – Oschersleben, Germany
- A fourth race later in the season is currently under discussion

#### The Motorcycles

Regulations for four classes of machine have been defined. The classes have been chosen to reflect the machines currently being raced in classic endurance, and to keep as many machines competitive despite spanning a decade that saw enormous advances in motorcycle design, starting with Ducati's bevel-drive twins and ending with Suzuki's first GSX-R750s. In brief the classes are as follows:

**Classic:** 1968 to 1981, air cooled four-stroke, air or water cooled two-strokes, 4-valve engines to 1000cc, 2 valve engines to 1300cc - original or modified original frames. This class is expected to cater for machines from Laverda, Ducati, BMW, Moto Guzzi and earlier Kawasaki Z1000 and Suzuki GS1000s with tuned engines.

**Legend:** 1976 to 1984 air cooled four-stroke, air or water cooled two-strokes, 1300cc maximum displacement - original, modified original or aftermarket frames. This class is expected to feature big four cylinder motors from Honda, Suzuki and Kawasaki in frames from Harris, P&M, Moto Martin, Bakker, Bimota, etc.

**Super Stock:** 1973 to 1986 four cylinder 750cc or twin cylinder 1000cc machines with air or water cooling and original frames; no engine tuning is allowed. This class is aimed at early Suzuki GSX-R750s, early Honda VFR750s, Yamaha FZ750s and Kawasaki GPX750s

**Superbike:** 1976 to 1986, up to 1300cc displacement with air, water or oil cooling - original, modified original or aftermarket frames. This class is expected to feature full-on race bikes of the mid-eighties.

#### The Riders

In addition to the EELC Team Leaderboard, a new EELC rider leaderboard will give Pro and Am riders the chance to compete alongside each other even if they ride in the same team, adding another level of competition to the new series.

## The Races

The **Sunday Ride Classic** is an established classic motorcycle event held at Circuit Paul Ricard in the south of France every spring. The European Endurance Legend Cup race will be four hours long and will run into the night.

The **Endurance Legends** 4hr race is making a welcome return to Donington Park after the first event in 2017. The four hour endurance will be the highlight of a packed weekend of classic racing and paddock attractions and for 2018 will start at midday on Sunday so everyone can experience the atmosphere of Parc Ferme.

German **Speedweek** has been held at the Oschersleben circuit for twenty years, with the four hour European Endurance Legend Cup race sharing the weekend with a round of the FIM Endurance World Championship for current bikes.

## The Reaction

Jean-Pierre Bonato, Organiser of the Sunday Ride Classic:

*"The 'European Endurance Legend Cup' is a project that we have supported since the first moments, because we look to keep track of these motorcycles that have made the great hours of endurance. Visible engines, 18" wheels, special frames, the soul of endurance is here!*

*This plateau, which brings together Japanese and European machines, is part of the great tradition of endurance, while becoming certainly the most advanced plateau of classic machines given the quality of the teams involved and their degree of preparation. The opening of the season at night at Paul Ricard will be an event not to be missed with an illustrious starter to kick off!!"*

Darin Frow, co-organiser of Endurance Legends at Donington Park:

*"It's very exciting for Endurance Legends to be part of the new European classic endurance race series – the European Endurance Legend Cup – which will see teams compete in France, Germany and the UK, and racing through the day and night! We have another amazing schedule lined up for our UK round at Donington Park with some very exciting news in the pipeline, so watch this space as you won't want to miss 12 & 13 May 2018!"*

Thomas Hofmann / Manfred Weiler Organizers of the 4H Classic Endurance in Speedweek / Oschersleben:

*"We are very happy to be part of the new series of EELC events and wish to contribute to the creation of the EELC in Europe, a racing atmosphere and exciting races are guaranteed, the EWC World Endurance Championship will also be invited to Oscherleben the same weekend! "*

Christian Hames, Manager of Team Force:

*"Team Force led all four European Classic Series races last year and won the most prestigious Classic Endurance race, the Bol d'Or Classic 2017, with riders Matthieu Lagrive and Bruno Le Bihan. With the introduction of 'Ready to Race' and unaffordable machines in the European Classic Series' new Evo Class, we have made the decision, like many other teams, to join the European Endurance Legend Cup."*

## The Background

The late 1970s and early 1980s were a golden age of motorcycle endurance racing, with big bruisers of motorcycles combining hairy chested four-stroke air cooled engines from Kawasaki, Suzuki and Honda with special frames from Harris, Peckett and McNab, Bimota, Moto Martin and many others as teams struggled to master the rapidly increasing power outputs. Also in the mix were refined Italian exotica from the likes of Ducati, Laverda, Moto Guzzi, BMW, BSA and Triumph, still competitive over longer distances.

Today's European Endurance Legend Cup aims to recapture those glory days, with pre-1987 motorcycles raced for four hours by teams of two or three riders. The races begin with the traditional Le Mans sprint across the track, there are pitstops for fuel, tyres and rider changes, and if a bike crashes but can make it back to the pits, it can be repaired and rejoin the race. Different classes of bike compete in the same race, and it's not always the fastest that wins; four hours is a long time in classic racing.

### **More Information**

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