The Start of Motocross

By Griffin Greenhalgh

A sport that can average around 50 thousand fans and about 40 riders each race, all started by two men, Torsten Hallman and Edison Dye. Hallman is a Swedish four-time motocross world champion. Dye is an importer for the United States for Husqvarna dirt bikes. These two men are Europeans that both wanted to bring motocross to the U.S. and when Dye got the job to be the U.S. importer for Husqvarna, that's when it all started.

Dye and Hallman got to the U.S. in the 1960’s. When they left they brought some European riders to get the sport started in the U.S., and it definitely worked. Since then motocross has become a favored sport in America.

Before it was brought to the U.S. it was known as “scrambles” but then it was changed to what it is now known internationally as motocross. The word motocross came from the word motocyclette, motorcycle in French, and the word cross country.

When the races started and more American racers started to join the sport, Hallman found it difficult to beat them on their own turf. The two different engine classes that they had at that time were 500 cc, and 250 cc. This track they were racing on was also designed by Dye and Hallman.

Tom White, who owns the Early Years of Motocross Museum, said that, "It generated so much interest because riders realized they could enter any moto and race." He also founded the White brothers World Vet Motocross Championship in 1985. Dye did add more races/tracks, and dirt bike racing was finally on steady ground in 1967.

Dye earned a lifetime achievement award in 1999 and was inducted to the Motorcycle Hall of Fame. Dye did sadly pass away eight years later in 2007. Hallman won in 1962-63 and in 1966-67. He was a factory rider for 14 years. He won 23 races in the first year in the U.S. Overall Motocross is a favored sport in the U.S. but wouldn't have even been a sport in the U.S. if Dye and Hallman didn't pursue their dream.