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# Riders prepare for World Mini Grand Prix in Mesquite

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Honda America Trackside Crew Team Manager Chris Real works Monday to get everything ready for the World Mini Grand Prix at the Mesquite MX Park, which began today at 8 a.m. / Tracy Worthington / Desert Valley Times

Tracy Worthington  
Desert Valley Times

MESQUITE - Excitement is building throughout the Mesquite MX Park behind the Palms Golf Course on Peppermill Palms Boulevard for this week's World Mini Grand Prix motorcross event.

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Entrants on Monday signed up for races, paid gate fees and readied the vehicles in which they'll live for the next week.

"Some people camped for a couple of days waiting to start pulling in," said Carol Clark, who mans the gate.

"More than 1,000 participants have pre-registered for the races and the event's sponsor, the National Motorsports Association, anticipates 300 or more additional riders to register by the time practices start today", said Ron Henricksen, president of NMA.

The World Mini Grand Prix is a qualifying race for the Ponca City Grand National Championship races that take place at the Oklahoma Motorsports Complex in Norman, Okla., July 22 -28. Racers from all over the U.S. are participating.

In 2011 more than 750 riders took part. This year it looks like it's grown to more than 1,000 and the numbers don't include families or vendors, Henricksen said.

New vendors Stacey Matthews and her husband Dennis, who own Hyper X a motorcross clothing retailer, traveled to Southern Nevada from Sacramento.

"We usually do other national races and decided to give this one a try, Matthews said. "I hope we do well. It was a long way to go. It is really nice here, though.

"When I checked the weather I realized I had to get summer clothes for this area," she said. "It is really warm compared to home."

The competition during the races is not just on the track.

"We try to keep our red bikes out in front to beat out the green ones, orange ones and blue ones," said Chris Real, Honda America trackside crew team manager. "The riders race each other, the manufacturers race each other and the crew chiefs race each other. When the wind picks up and threatens to blow awnings off, we all pitch in to help each other out."

The friendly competition leads to lasting friendships, he said.

This is the third year the NMA World Mini Grand Prix has sprung to life in the desert just across the border and the hope is NMA will be here to stay, said Jason Ellis, manager/owner of the Mesquite MX Park.

He also hopes to bring more races and other events to the area.

Mini prix practice begins today. Races are Wednesday through Saturday starting at 8 a.m. and continuing until dark or the scheduled competitions are done.

Spectators must pay \$15 Friday and Saturday. Wednesday's fee is \$45 and the charge Thursday is \$30.

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