

THE TEAM

Among the many teams that share the AMA paddock with the factory racing teams, no other organization can boast the success of the Erion Racing Honda team. Celebrating its 16th year as Honda's premier support team, the Erion Racing Honda team personifies professionalism in every aspect of its effort. The longevity of the association between Erion Racing and American Honda is not hard to understand. Honda has always sought excellence in its competitive endeavors, and the Erion team has produced numerous championships from one of the most formidable teams in all of American road racing—the latest win being the 2008 Formula Xtreme title, with champion Jake Zemke winning Erion's third consecutive title.

For 2009, Jake Zemke returns to the team competing for the new AMA Daytona SportBike Championship aboard the CBR600RR. His teammate this year is 22-year-old Chris Peris, who brings a wealth of AMA and World Supersport experience to the team. Notably, Erion has nurtured some exceptional talent over the years, including 2006 MotoGP World Champion Nicky Hayden, Zemke, Eric Bostrom and Josh Hayes.

Headed by Kevin Erion, a former racer and AMA national title holder, and anchored by Technical Director Rick Hobbs, the Erion team has amassed an impressive win record over the years, one that will likely never be equaled, including seven Formula Xtreme Championships between 1997 and 2008 (1997-2000, 2006, 2007), four consecutive Formula Xtreme titles from 1997 to 2000, two SuperTeams Championships in 1994 and 1996, a perfect season in 1999 (the team won all nine races) and back-to-back AMA 600 Supersport crowns in 1999 and 2000.



The Erion team continues to prove the dominance of Honda's mighty CBR600RR. On this machine, Honda and Erion riders on CBR600RRs have won every Formula Xtreme title since the class went to 600cc in 2004. CBR600RR-mounted riders on the Honda and Erion teams won every one of the 21 races in 2004 and 2005. Since 2004, the CBR600RR has won 34 out of 42 Formula Xtreme races, including three Daytona 200 victories.

What is the secret to the Erion team's success? In Kevin Erion's words, "When you are fortunate enough to align yourself with a company such as Honda you can count on the quality and performance of the machines. It's our job to get the most out of the support we receive, and that takes a concerted effort by everyone on our team."

THE MACHINE

Erion Racing Honda CBR600RR (Daytona SportBike)

Dating back to its introduction in 1987, Honda's CBR600 has amassed a record as the winningest 600-class sportbike ever made, and there's no end in sight. On this machine, Honda and Erion riders on CBR600RRs have won every AMA Formula Xtreme title since the class went to 600cc in 2004. In 2008, Erion Honda's Jake Zemke won the AMA Formula Xtreme title. The CBR600RR also captured the World Supersport Championship for the fifth consecutive season.

For 2009, Erion Honda will compete in the new AMA Daytona SportBike championship with the CBR600RR and riders Jake Zemke and Chris Peris. Both riders will also straddle the CBR600RR for the fabled season opening Daytona 200.

The 2009 Daytona SportBike class rules are similar to the 2008 Supersport class rules, with a few key exceptions. On the chassis side teams are now allowed to utilize aftermarket radiators, brake master cylinders and rotors, triple clamps, shock linkage and axles (to allow quick wheel changes for the Daytona 200). On the engine side teams can change to aftermarket back torque limiting clutches and intake funnels.

Perhaps the biggest change is the move to a single fuel supplier and a single tire brand, which removes a lot of potential variables in performance between teams.



Technical Credentials: Honda CBR600RR

The CBR600RR that lines up for Daytona SportBike competition in Erion trim in 2009 is a proven formula with further improvements that put even more pavement between it and the competition. In addition to new mono-block front brake calipers that increase braking power and feel, the 2009 CBR600RR (as well as the CBR1000RR) are available with optional Combined ABS, a new advanced braking system designed specifically for supersports motorcycles. It is the most sophisticated braking system offered to the motorcycling public, one that employs an Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) through all-new technology.

The standard version of the CBR600RR that forms the foundation for the Erion racing machines is more than 16-pounds lighter than the previous generation, which makes it the lightest bike in its class.

Smaller, lighter, more powerful and amazingly agile compared to all machines that have come before, the CBR600RR achieves a superior power-to-weight ratio with all its inherent benefits. The RR incorporates next-generation Fine Die-Cast technology that allows the frame to become smaller and drastically lighter. In order to both reduce weight and enhance mass centralization, the number of component parts and welds used to build the frame dropped significantly from the previous frame.



The CBR600RR is also a powerhouse, thanks in part to its innovative two-stage PGM-DSFI fuel-injection system. One set of injectors installed at the entrance to the intake ports provides an ideal air/fuel mixture for strong, smooth acceleration at low- to mid-range settings. At higher engine speeds, the system's second set of "showerhead" injectors installed in the roof of the airbox kicks in to deliver extra fuel to cool the high-volume air intake. The CBR600RR sports an impressively large air intake port built into the nose of the front cowl, precisely where the airstream hitting the fairing flows at its strongest. As a result, engine performance is not only stronger throughout the powerband, but the power curve is also more linear.

In the suspension department, the Erion machines utilize a fully adjustable 41mm inverted Honda Multi-Action System (HMAS) Showa cartridge-type fork that provides smooth, responsive performance coupled with excellent rigidity and low unsprung weight. Integrated into the CBR600RR's rigid but lightweight swingarm is the Honda Unit Pro-Link® rear suspension system pioneered on Honda's MotoGP racers.

Following on the heels of an unbroken string of Formula Xtreme and World Supersport championships, the 2009 season promises to be another showcase of the CBR600RR's dominant capability. The Erion team had a very competitive program in 2008 and by utilizing some of the new options available in 2009 the team hopes to add yet another title to their mantle.



JAKE ZEMKE

How is a champion defined? Is a champion defined only by on-track accomplishments or does the path traveled, relationships developed and professional reputation built contribute to earning the title? If a champion is a combination of all of the above then Erion Racing Honda's Jake Zemke is overwhelmingly worthy of being called a champion.

Piloting Honda's CBR600RR race machine for Erion Racing Honda for another season, Zemke notes one important difference from last year's bike. "This year's bike is a little different because this year I'm running number one!"

A family man with four children and also a dedicated racer, Zemke wrapped up his first-ever Formula Xtreme title in 2008 aboard his Erion Racing Honda CBR600RR.

"I've ridden for the Erion Racing Honda team on numerous occasions over many years and we have a long history together. When I came back onto the team in 2008 after being gone for a few years, a lot of the same faces were still with the team—along with a few new ones. As a smaller team we don't have the number of guys you see on other teams but all our crew works really efficiently. We all work extremely well together. It was really awesome for me to be able to win the 2008 Formula Xtreme title for the team."

In 2009, the all-new AMA Road Racing Series presents many new challenges for the riders and teams, but Zemke believes that amidst the unknowns the Erion Racing Honda team is quietly confident.



“2009 is going to be a little different from last year. In 2008, I rode two classes: Formula Xtreme, in which I won the number one plate; and 600 Supersport, in which I finished runner-up. Both classes ran 600cc bikes, but this year there is only one class for 600cc bikes and that’s the Daytona SportBike class. That’s the class I will race.

“Our team is definitely made up of a strong group of guys and it gives us all a lot of confidence going into a new season—a new competition like this where there’s a lot of unknowns. The new series presents a lot of unknowns for everybody, but for me I have a lot of knowns. I have a known motorcycle, a known crew, a known tire and I’m a known rider for the team. We’re just know-it-alls!”

The new 2009 AMA Road Racing series sees the introduction of spec tires to all classes. With the entire paddock equipped with Dunlop tires, Zemke believes it will be great for the competition and a bonus for him as he is now in his 11th consecutive season racing on Dunlops.

“Personally I have been on Dunlop tires since 1998, so I’m going into my 11th season with Dunlop. The spec tire doesn’t feel a whole lot different than what we have run previously. The grip levels are very good.

“It’s not going to be the same situation as when World Superbike first went to a spec tire and their performance dropped off quite a bit in the beginning. Our tires have performed great from the get-go and I only see it as a great thing for our sport. The spec tire rule eliminates the excuse of, ‘Oh well, that guy got this tire and that’s why he did better.’ Everyone has the same rubber now. So let the best teams win and no more excuses. Let’s go racing!”

STATISTICS

Formula Xtreme

2008 - 1st AMA Formula Xtreme
2006 - Wins first Daytona 200
2005 - 2nd AMA Formula Xtreme
2004 - 2nd AMA Formula Xtreme

Supersport

2008 - 2nd AMA Supersport

Superbike

2007 - 3rd AMA Superbike
2006 - 7th AMA Superbike
2004 - 3rd AMA Superbike (wins first Superbike victory at Brainerd International Raceway)

PROFILE

Born: 1975, San Francisco, CA

Residence: Paso Robles, CA

National #: 1

Began riding: 1982, age 6

First race: 1985, age 9

Training: Motocross, trail riding, mountain and road bicycling, running

Hobbies: Motocross, trail riding, wake boarding, running, snow boarding

Height/weight: 5'5"/150 pounds

Marital status: Married, wife Rebecca, children Derrek, Shawn, Gavin and Sachiko

Current racebike: Honda CBR600RR

Technical director: Rick Hobbs

Lead technician: John Ethell

Technicians: Lee Vaughan,
Matt Zurbuchen



CHRIS PERIS

Chris Peris is a young man on a mission—a determined racer chasing his dream of making it to the top of the sport. Starting out riding dirt bikes at the age of seven, the Canadian-born racer showed commitment beyond his years, uprooting himself from his hometown of Calgary, Canada at the age of 14 to commence his racing career in California. Now, at 22, he's right where he wants to be: riding a CBR600RR for the Erion Racing Honda team.

“I started out road racing 125s at Willow Springs in California. I raced there for a few years until I was old enough to race back in Canada. I was signed with the Canadian Factory Honda team when I was 16 years old and raced my first road-racing season in Canada. Ever since then I have basically jumped between AMA racing in the U.S., Canadian Road Racing and World Supersport. In 2006 and 2007 I raced the World Supersport series plus AMA races in between rounds and in 2008 I ran a full Superstock season in the AMA as a privateer and that went pretty good.”

Peris will race his CBR600RR in the Daytona SportBike class in 2009, which suits him just fine. “This year I am fortunate to have been given the opportunity to come aboard and ride for Erion Racing Honda. Honda has had a lot of success racing 600s, so I definitely want to be running up front at every race. It would be really nice to get a few wins in this year as it's going to be pretty competitive.”



Peris believes the experience he earned racing World Supersport in Europe will really play into his favor when it comes to racing America's best.

"Racing over in Europe in the World Supersport class is about as competitive as it can be. The entire grid—38 guys—qualify within a second and a half of each other. I think that racing over there has definitely helped me out. I'm used to riding really close to other guys and the competitiveness. I can handle the pressure when you're looking for hundredths of a second. I am sure that experience is really going to help me and the team here.

"I'm looking forward to racing the Erion Racing Honda CBR600RR. It's a great bike to ride. Nice and nimble, light, handles really well, has a lot of power and I really believe it is going to be a tough bike to beat."

Look for Chris Peris to stir things up in 2009 at the front of the Daytona SportBike pack.

STATISTICS

Formula Xtreme

2005 - 4th AMA Formula Xtreme

Supersport

2008 - 3rd Supersport (Canada)

2007 - 3rd Supersport (Canada - missed conflicting AMA rounds)

2006 - raced various World Supersport

2005 - 6th AMA Supersport

Superbike

2008 - 4th Superbike (Canada),

10th AMA Superbike

Superstock

2008 - 5th AMA Superstock

PROFILE

Born: 1986, 22 years old

Residence: Calgary, Canada

National #: 10

Began riding: 1994, age 7

First race: 1999, age 12

Training: Cycling and gymnasium/weights

Hobbies: Snow boarding, mountain biking and motocross

Height/weight: 5'7"/145 pounds

Marital status: Single

Current racebike: Honda CBR600RR

Technical director: Rick Hobbs

Lead technician: Masahiro Iizuka

Technician: Kei Maeda

