

Transcript

Pushing the speed barrier: Trailblazing Women in Motorsports – Audio 1

Helen Owton

Hello, my name is Helen Owton and I'm joined here with Lorna Stevens, who is doing a PhD with us at the Open University on women's experiences of competitive motorcycling. Today, she's here to talk about her own experiences of competitive motorcycling. So Lorna, thanks for joining us today. If you can start by telling us a bit about your background in motorcycling. You know what got you into it.

Lorna Stevens

Well, you can blame my brother mostly for this. My older brother, he's about 18 months older than me. And is my only sibling. And so everything that he did, I did basically. And so when I was about 12 or 13, I was riding his motorbikes around the garden and up and down the bits of, verge near the road and, falling off and crashing into hedges and basically learning how to ride a motorbike.

So, it was him and his bikes, basically just a little 50cc things. And then because I lived in a village, well, we lived in a village, but no busses, no trains. It was either you had a car on, your parents took you everywhere, or you got your own transport. So, the moment I was 16, I got my first moped, which was a beautiful Honda CB50J with a massive top box on the back to put my books and my helmet in and everything.

And, lo and behold. I was free to, to do whatever I wanted to do, whenever I wanted to do it, which was fantastic. So yeah, for me, it was like a road to freedom.

Helen Owton

And what got you into competitive racing?

Lorna Stevens

Well, the Ducati Owners Club. So at that time, the, the racing scene was quite, I suppose a different distance.

But through the Ducati Owners Club. They used to run their own track days because track days didn't really exist then either. So you could actually, through the club, go and learn how to ride your bike around a track. And it was generally at Cadwell Park. And they also ran their own little race series as well. So I did that for a couple of years.

But soon realized that, that I couldn't afford to do it because if I broke my bike, then I didn't have my bike as a means of transport anymore.