



1973 Elsinore RC250

1973 Elsinore RC250 *Right the first time*

The bike you see here, a 1973 RC250 factory racer, was ridden by motocross legend Gary Jones to Honda's first AMA 250 National title in 1973. It's a two-stroke, and at the time caused about as much sensation as if Jones had won on a sea horse.

Prior to 1973, Honda's products revolved around four-stroke powerplants. Despite the onslaught of two-strokes in road racing, Honda continued developing its four-strokes to stratospheric heights, via cylinder multiplication and otherworldly revs.

But four-strokes simply didn't stand a chance against two-strokes in motocross racing in the '70s. So in 1973, Honda stunned everyone with its revolutionary Elsinore CR250M two-stroke. It was Honda's first two-stroke, and the first purpose-built, production motocross machine from the world's largest motorcycle producer. It changed the face of motocross forever, with its light weight, 29 horsepower over a broad rpm band, and superlative handling. It was a complete package that could take on the established European hardware.

Compared to the one-off works race bikes Honda

would conjure in the '80s, Jones' 1973 championship-winning bike is amazingly stock. Key differences include a shorter fuel tank, sophisticated rear shocks mounted farther forward on the swingarm, and an aftermarket downpipe. Any real exotica showed up in drilled bolt heads, and a fabricated aluminum rear brake stay, with milled slots to reduce weight. By today's standards, Jones' Elsinore is also remarkably small, with a big motor stuffed in a frame made of alarmingly skinny steel chrome-moly tubing.

The Elsinore's formula worked though, with Jones winning Honda's first AMA National motocross championship in the Elsinore's first year. The CR250 would go on to become the most successful motocrosser in AMA history, winning an incredible 24 National and Supercross titles.



HONDA