

# THE APRILIA SUCCESS STORY

## BORN INTO RACING

With **294 Grand Prix races won in Road Racing World Championship**, Aprilia holds the **record for the most wins** of any European manufacturer in the history of maximum motorcycle competition. These are joined by an impressive **54 world titles**: 38 in Road Racing World Championship (20 in 125 and 18 in 250), 7 in Superbike (Rider and Manufacturer double win in 2010, 2012 and 2014, manufacturers in 2013) and 9 in Off Road disciplines (7 in Supermoto and 2 in Trial).

In December 2004 Aprilia becomes part of the Piaggio Group which, with the reorganisation of the Noale Racing Division, takes the Veneto-based brand to victories in World Championship Motorcycle Racing and broadens the horizons of sport activity: from the return to the off road discipline, world rally to the début – in 2009 – of the Aprilia RSV4 in World Superbike.

During the same period Aprilia has also accumulated 28 World Titles and a countless collection of European and national titles. Every weekend, all over the world, Aprilia motorcycles take to the track on international and local circuits, holding high the honour of Italian and European motorcycling, feeding the biker's desire to race and raising up young riders destined to enter into the world championship world.

## 60s and 70s

Aprilia begins manufacturing motorcycles at the end of the 60's and already in 1970 produces a motocross "fifty" which would evolve into a 125, until arriving at the first competition motocross bike in the mid 70's.

After the début in the Motocross sport in 1975, **Aprilia enters World Championship Motorcycle Racing** to challenge the unbeatable Japanese in the extremely competitive **250** class.

## 80s

The year is **1985** and the **first bike** has an alloy aluminium dual beam frame paired with a Marzocchi fork and a rear mono-shock mounted on a pro lever type suspension. Its motor is a two cylinder 2T Rotax with horizontally placed cylinders. In its début on **23 March 1985** in Kyalami South Africa Loris Reggiani finishes 12th. For the rest of the championship the bike performs so well that Reggiani takes the bottom step of the podium (third place) at Rijeka and then again at Imola.

In 1987 the Aprilia 250 rises quickly to the top. A new chassis and engine advancements take it to second place (Salzburg and Rijeka). Victory is within reach and, in fact, comes at Misano. The date is **30 August 1987** and Reggiani rides his AF1 250 to its **first success** in a Gran Prix race.

In **1988 Aprilia begins in the 125 class** and immediately, in the French GP, achieves its **first podium** in the eighth-litre category.

# 1990 - 1995



A few seasons later, hungry for results, the Aprilia 250 changes radically starting with its name: the **RS250V** is born for the **1991** season and the new bike immediately proves to be an exceptional machine. **Victory** arrives with Chili on the Assen track, immediately replicated by **Reggiani** at the Paul Ricard. And then a great talent explodes: **Max Biaggi wins the European 250 championship.**

1991 also brings the first victory in the 125 class for Aprilia: **Alessandro Gramigni** wins in Czechoslovakia.

In **1992** the **first Aprilia title in World Championship Motorcycle Racing** arrives: **Alex Gramigni is 125 World Champion.** And so the 250 is solidly at the top: Chili wins at Hockenheim, Assen and Donington, Reggiani at Jerez and Magny Cours, while the rookie, **Biaggi**, wins his first GP at Kyalami. Aprilia also wins **two world championships in offroad**: Tommy Avhala is crowned World Trial Champion with the Aprilia Climber and Aprilia is Manufacturer Champion. After a **1993** in which both the 250 and 125 bikes confirm their competitiveness but just barely miss the title, the year of praises arrives: it's **1994** when **Max Biaggi** wins in Australia, Malaysia, Holland, the Czech Republic and Barcellona to become **250 Class World Champion** on an Aprilia.

In the same year **Kazuto Sakata is World Champion on his Aprilia 125**: he wins in Australia, Spain and the Czech Republic. Aprilia also collects eight pole positions and nine fastest race laps. Aprilia also makes its *début* in the 500 class with Reggiani riding an extremely agile two cylinder: an innovative choice in classic Aprilia tradition.

In the **1995** season Biaggi and Aprilia are unstoppable: Malaysia, Germany, Italy, Holland, Great Britain, the Czech Republic, Argentina and Europe bring the season victories which take **Max Biaggi** to confirmation of his status as **World Champion** and **Aprilia to its first Manufacturer title.** Sakata, on the other hand, is unable to repeat the performance in the 125 class and closes out the season in second place: Aprilia wins three times anyway, in Great Britain and the Czech Republic with the World Champion and the third time – in Brazil – with Masaki Tokudome. In the 500 class the two cylinder takes several steps forward, enough for Reggiani to end 10th in front of several official four cylinders.

# 1996 - 2000

In **1996 Max Biaggi is three-time champion:** Malaysia, Japan, Spain, Italy, France, Great Britain, the Czech Republic, Catalonia and Australia are the stops along a triumphant road which leads Biaggi to the **third consecutive world championship**. And the **manufacturer title** arrives thanks to Tokudome's victories in Indonesia, Japan, Germany and San Marino, Perugini in Malaysia and Great Britain, a very young Valentino Rossi in the Czech Republic, Oetl in Italy and Gary McCoy in Australia.



In **1997** Aprilia wins two more World Championships: 125 class Rider and Manufacturer. The new colours bearer is **Valentino Rossi** who literally dominates the smallest class, taking 11 victories in 15 races: Malaysia, Spain, Italy, Austria, France, Holland, San Marino, Germany, Brazil, Great Britain, Catalonia and Indonesia.

The **1998** season is a triumph for Aprilia who, in the 250 class, wins 13 of the 14 GP races, leaving only the opening race in Japan to the competition. **Loris Capirossi** wins the Rider championship. The superiority of the Aprilia 250 has been such that its riders have taken all three steps on the podium four times. Aprilia also wins the **250 World Manufacturer Championship** with a large gap.

In the **125 class Kazuto Sakata wins the Rider Championship** thanks to a season of dominance in Great Britain, France, Spain and Japan.

**1999** is the year of **Valentino Rossi** who wins the **250 title** astride a fabulous two cylinder Aprilia RSW, winning on 9 occasions. Behind Rossi the Aprilia "customers" also shine with Battaini, Waldmann, McWilliams and Lucchi. Thanks also to them, Aprilia makes it a double win with the **Manufacturer Championship**. The bold two cylinder 500 project has a moment of great brilliance at Donington: Harada comes as close as ever to victory after the podium that Paul Ricard wins, and the fourth places from Mugello (where he had taken pole position) and Catalonia. 1999 is also the year for **Aprilia's début in the SBK championship**. With the two cylinder **RSV Mille** the Veneto-based manufacturer establishes itself for the first time with the great 4 stroke competition bikes.

# 2000 - 2005

Consecration arrives in **2000**: participating for the first time in Superbike with an official team, Aprilia astonishes: **Troy Corser** takes five victories and four Superpoles, just missing the title. In the World Motorcycle Racing Championship the triumphs continue: **Roberto Locatelli is World Champion in the 125 class** for the fifteenth world title in Aprilia history.

In **2001** SBK also brings great satisfaction with three victories (two for Corser and one for Laconi), eight podiums and three Superpoles. It is an interlocutory year in the World Motorcycle Racing Championship: in the 250 class Aprilia takes five victories while only two come in the 125 class (Cecchinello in Catalonia and Sanna in Germany).

But in **2002** the comeback is ready: Aprilia bankrupts the World Motorcycle Racing Championship with an extraordinary **four of a kind** comprised of 4 wreaths: **two world manufacturer titles** in the 125 and 250 classes and **two rider titles** in 250 with Marco Melandri and 125 with Arnaud Vincent. The eighth-litre Aprilias win 8 of the 16 races on the schedule, but it is in the 250 class that their supremacy is absolutely crushing. The fourth-litres from Noale win 14 of the 16 races. 2002 is also the year of the three cylinder RS Cube début which Aprilia introduces in the brand new regina MotoGP class.

In **2003** Aprilia wins three titles: 125 Manufacturer (with 10 wins), 250 Rider (a **resounding Manuel Poggiali** wins the championship in his début) and 250 Manufacturer (thanks to 14 victories). The MotoGP season is more troubled: the RS Cube makes a fine début in the hands of Colin Edwards and Nori Haga, takes a fastest race lap time during the French GP and shows encouraging performance; then comes a dark period which fades only toward the end.

**2004** and **2005** are two transitional seasons which see Aprilia's return in off-road. The Noale Racing Division also pours its skill into Motocross, Enduro and Supermotard: the revolutionary Aprilia two cylinder engine takes **Jerome Giraud** to the historic world champion title in the S2 category. The Manufacturer championship title arrives from the 125 MotoGP championship.

## 2006 - 2009

Thanks to becoming part of the **Piaggio Group** and the reorganisation of the Racing Division, Aprilia has its record season in **2006**, winning **six world championships**: the young Spaniard **Jorge Lorenzo** (in the 250 class) and **Alvaro Bautista** (in 125) win the **Ridertitle** and ride their bikes to a double wreath in the **Manufacturer** standings.

Two World Supermoto titles are added (S2) to the **MotoGP four-of-a-kind**: Frenchman Van Den Bosch is World Champion and Aprilia wins the Manufacturer championship.

And the next season (**2007**) is a repeat with **five championships**: the Manufacturer titles in 125 and 250 are joined by **Lorenzo's** wreaths in 250 and Hungarian **Gabor Talmacsi's** in 125. The S2 Manufacturer title arrives from World Supermoto.

Two more titles from MotoGP in **2008**: the Manufacturer wreaths in 125 and 250 bear witness to Aprilia's domination in the youngest classes of the world championship.

But a revolution is just around the corner and in **2009** Aprilia's most ambitious project yet begins. Simultaneously with the launch of the **RSV4** on the market, a revolutionary supersport bike, characterised by an extremely advanced 1000 cc, 4 cylinder 60° V engine, Aprilia Racing plans its return to the **World Superbike championship**. The rider Aprilia chooses for the project is **Max Biaggi** whose return to Noale comes twelve years after his last title in the 250 class, with Shinja Nakano riding alongside him. The first year shows continuous growth for the bike and the first victory comes on the track at **Brno**. Eight more podiums are added to that victory to confirm the quality of the project and the skills of the rider. 3 world titles arrive from MotoGP: the 125 rider title with Spaniard Julian Simon and the manufacturer title both in 125 and 250. In 2009 the first results for the two cylinder RXV 4.5 also arrive, a bike which Aprilia uses in the great raids of the Rally world: in the Pharaoh's Rally Paolo Ceci takes the victory in the 450 class and Aprilia ends with a solid fourth place, racing against bikes with much larger engines. It is the prologue for the Aprilia RXV 4.5's introduction to the **Dakar 2010**.

# 2010

In the most famous and gruelling of the off-road races, Aprilia RXV takes an incredible third place with Chilean **Francisco Lopez** (winner of three rounds) and dominates in the 450 SP class with Paolo Ceci.

But in **2010** the masterpiece is achieved in WSBK: the **Aprilia Alitalia RSV4** and **Max Biaggi**, beginning the season with every intention of continuing the growth trend from the previous year, quickly find themselves battling at the top. Double victories come at Portimao and Monza. Placements on the podium also arrive for **Leon Camier**, the young Brit riding alongside Biaggi, who contributes to the Aprilia leadership in the Manufacturer rankings.

The American triumph on the Miller Raceway track launches Biaggi to the front of the standings. This is a position that in no way intimidates the already four-time World Champion and the double victories are repeated at Misano and Brno. Only the Brit, Haslam, tries to hold off Max and his red, white and green Aprilia – which takes the big **Alitalia "A"** to the top of a motorcycle championship – but the match ends at Imola.

**Max Biaggi is World SBK Champion.** He is the first Italian to win the most prestigious wreath in Superbike history and he also delivers the world Manufacturer title to Aprilia.

# 2011

Aprilia strengthens its record as the **most victorious Italian and European manufacturer** out of all those active in **MotoGP** with **294 Grand Prix races won** (151 in 125 and 143 in 250) and **38 championship titles** (19 manufacturer titles and 19 rider titles). Aprilia takes the 2011 Manufacturer title in the 125 class with four races still left to go in the championship and, in the last race of the season on the Valencia circuit, the young Spanish Aprilia rider Nico Terol is crowned 2011 World Champion in the 125 class.

The 2011 **World Superbike** season ended with the **3rd place in the riders standing** for **Max Biaggi**, who gained two race wins and 12 podiums overall. Thanks to these results, combined with 4 podiums by teammate Leon Camier, Aprilia Alitalia Racing Team has taken 3rd place on the manufacturers standing.

Aprilia Racing won the 2011 **Supermoto S1 World Championship**. Both Rider and Manufacturer titles arrived in the last race: local star Adrien Chareyre, from Fast Wheels Team, on Aprilia 4.5, won the world titles at stake in the decisive French GP.

# 2012

The **2012 SBK** season was the setting for a triumphant story: Max Biaggi was off to a grand start, winning the opening round in Australia. Max led in the standings for almost the entire championship, forced to follow from second place only after the Moscow round. But already in the next round he had returned to the lead, winning at the Nürburgring on an historic day for **Aprilia, placing three RSV4 bikes on the podium in Race 1** (team mate Eugene Laverty and Chaz Davies on the ParkinGo Aprilia joined Max) and two in Race 2 with Davies winning and Laverty in second with Max riding an exciting comeback.

For the final round at Magny-Cours Biaggi arrived at the top of the Rider standings with a 30.5 point advantage over Tom Sykes (Kawasaki), 38.5 points ahead of Marco Melandri (BMW) and a solid 68.5 lead over Carlos Checa (Ducati). In the Manufacturer standings Aprilia arrived at the last track with a strong 28.5 advantage over BMW, 47.5 ahead of Ducati, 66 in front of Kawasaki, 152 over Honda and 292 more than Suzuki.

Poor weather and tenth place on the starting grid were no small complication for Max's last assault. In Race 1 Max had a sliding crash and retired from the race after a few laps. Sykes (who crossed the line third) and Melandri (second) drew dangerously close in the standings. The world championship came on the last turn of the last race: Max was fifth, a placing which allowed him to maintain a minimum advantage over Sykes, and he was Superbike World Champion for the second time. Aprilia is World Manufacturer SBK champion.

# 2013

After dominating the standings for the entire season, starting from the extraordinary Phillip Island round where they took five of the six spots on the podium up for grabs, **Aprilia is crowned 2013 World Superbike Manufacturer World Champion.**

With the title Aprilia holds the Italian colours high in the 2013 world motorsports season..

With 10 wins (9 for Laverty, 1 for Guintoli) and 26 total podiums, the Italian manufacturer chucked up 550 points against Kawasaki's 501, 443 for BMW, 243 for Suzuki, 236 for Honda, 185 for Ducati and 8 for Yamaha. This is peremptory confirmation of the Italian 4 cylinder Aprilia RSV4's superiority.

The competitiveness of the RSV4 is confirmed by the "satellite" team results, taking three podiums (two for Giugliano, one for Fabrizio) and one pole position.

# 2014

**The 2014 World Superbike Championship** ended with an **Aprilia triumph** that earned both the Rider title, with French rider **Sylvain Guintoli**, and the **Manufacturer title**, thanks to the Aprilia RSV4.

The 2014 SBK season was highly entertaining and marked by a brilliant comeback by Guintoli and Aprilia on Kawasaki standard-bearer Tom Sykes who, at mid-season, seemed to be immovable from the top spot. But with **a series of impressive wins** the Aprilia riders, Sylvain Guintoli and Marco Melandri, first overtook Kawasaki for the Manufacturer title and then they arrived at the last, decisive round in Qatar with the Frenchman just 12 points behind the leader.

On the Losail track Sylvain Guintoli completed a comeback that will go down in Superbike history and with **two brilliant and indisputable wins** in the two night races on the desert circuit he overtook Tom Sykes, earning the World Champion crown for the first time in his career.

**Aprilia doubled the celebration by becoming the Manufacturer World Champion for the third consecutive year**, reaffirming the undisputed technical superiority of the RSV4, the Italian bike that has rooted the best competition in the world since its rookie year in World SBK (2009), winning 7 World titles (three Rider and four Manufacturer). This world championship combination (Rider and Manufacturer) is the third one for the Aprilia RSV4 after sweeping the competition in 2010 and 2012 with Max Biaggi.

After the American round at Laguna Seca the advantage Sykes (Kawasaki) had built up over Guintoli was 44 points, a huge gap with just three rounds left in the season. Since then the RSV4 and its riders were on the comeback trail, proving to be unbeatable. At Jerez and Magny-Cours Aprilia dominated the races winning three times with Melandri (and Guintoli second each time) and once with Guintoli (and Melandri second). These were extremely significant points that allowed Aprilia to catch up and overtake Kawasaki in the Manufacturer World Championship and Guintoli to turn up at the Qatar round trailing Sykes by just 12 points.





# 2015

The 2015 season marked **Aprilia's return to the MotoGP class** a year ahead of the initially announced schedule. In fact, the intent of the Piaggio Group's strategy to commit the Aprilia brand in the top class was to favour a rapid growth of competitiveness, focusing all Aprilia Racing's technical and organisational efforts on developing prototypes for the top category. For this reason Aprilia Racing will rolled out on the track with the support of an agreement reached with Gresini Racing. After a season of "race testing", riders **Alvaro Bautista** (Spain) and **Stefan Bradl** (Germany) were able to consistently fine-tune the Aprilia RS-GP machines and even finish in the top ten on a few occasions.

These are comforting results, especially when you consider that the first modern Aprilia MotoGP is actually a laboratory bike, largely derived from the RSV4 WSBK dominator and which served to acquire the expertise and skills needed to design the new prototype which will race in 2016.

Parallel to the efforts in MotoGP, the RSV4 confirmed its status as a **winning bike in World Superbike**. Raced by riders Leon Haslam (UK) and Spanish rookie Jordi Torres, the V4 from Veneto won 3 races and took 10 podium finishes to confirm its competitiveness. Another extraordinary podium finish (the eleventh in 2015) came from Max Biaggi who, at 44 years of age and three years after retiring from racing, during his second wild card appearance (after competing in the Misano round) took a magnificent second place finish on the Sepang track in Malaysia.

The last race of the Superstock 1000 FIM Cup gave Aprilia and Lorenzo Savadori a well-deserved 2015 championship victory, earned after 4 first place finishes and three podiums out of the eight rounds of the season. Aprilia also dominated the brands, earning the Manufacturer title with 176 points: 34 ahead of BMW, 39 over Ducati, 64 in front of Yamaha and 118 more than Kawasaki.

# 2016

The championship season saw the track début of the **Aprilia RS-GP**, the first MotoGP bike designed and built entirely by the Italian Racing Department, beginning with the exclusive "narrow" V4 engine which has by now become Aprilia's calling card. Confirmed riders, **Álvaro Bautista** and **Stefan Bradl** demonstrated **consistent progress** with a total of **26 finishes in the points** for the 18 races on the MotoGP calendar, results that would take the Aprilia team to seventh place at the end of the season.

In **World Superbike**, the RSV4 machines were managed by a satellite team (the riders were **Alex De Angelis** and **Lorenzo Savadori**, making his WSBK début). The RSV4 thereby continued demonstrating its value in the factory derivative championship. In MotoAmerica, **Claudio Corti** and **Team HSBK** (competing in Superstock 1000) brought home several podium finishes, even ahead of the more powerful Superbikes. In the **Superstock 1000 FIM Cup**, **Kevin Calia** finished the season in third place, boasting seven finishes in the points (with two podiums) in the eight races held.