

Why Team Scream Should be a Household Name

by Austin Ashley

The Avenger monster truck with Jim Koehler behind the wheel has stayed at the top of the monster truck freestyle game for about a decade and a half. You cannot overlook that this is the only driver, truck combination that has competed in every single Monster Jam World Finals to date. Also he is one out of only three drivers to have won more than one freestyle championship at the world finals.

The Avenger and Jim Koehler got their big break in New Orleans in the late 1990s. Driving the 1997 green Chevy monster truck he made it all the way to the final round of racing. He would lose that day but in spectacular fashion as he cartwheeled off of a stack of cars. After that Avenger became a fixture at many Monster Jam events throughout the years and in 2000 he was invited to the Monster Jam World Finals 1. He finished 10th in freestyle at the very first World Finals but he was far from being content with that. The next World Finals he would finish in the 4th position after a freestyle that showed his sheer determination to be spectacular.

It was not just at the World Finals that he was shining though. Throughout the whole season he wowed crowds with huge air and even some crazy flips. After a disappointing appearance at World Finals 3, he wanted to come back and redeem himself. With a relatively new 1957 Chevy Bel-Air body on Jim Koehler came in to Las Vegas, home of the world finals, and was ready to win. He came out attacking the freestyle track and getting big air. He was running on the ragged edge and he blew his tire and broke his shock but he didn't quit and whipped his monster truck into a donut. That night was the night that Jim Koehler was handed what was rightfully his, the freestyle trophy.

Jim Koehler carried this momentum throughout the rest of his career as he started to win at many other shows around the country. Developing was his teammate, Chris Bergeron. The duo called themselves Team Scream. A two truck team soon turned into a four truck team with trucks like Spike, Mega bite, Brutus, Wrecking Crew and, Rage. Expanding the team would not hurt Jim Koehler's performance because he would win the world finals 12 freestyle competition. It was crazy to watch how a four truck independent monster truck team could have all four trucks be so competitive for the win every weekend. Every year it seemed that they all would find a new way to go bigger and bigger.

Avenger and Jim Koehler was not just successful in America. He won the Australian freestyle championship in 2009 and in 2010. He wasn't even in the same truck that he always drives and he still won. Back in the states he would win the Monsters on the Beach title in 2013 where he competed against 8 other trucks over the weekend and scored the most points. In Mt. Pleasant, Michigan Koehler has had some of his best performances of all time. Most recently he would win back-to-back freestyle wins at that show with some of the best trucks in the country competing.

But Team Scream does not just consist of Jim Koehler. Chris Bergeron, Rich Hilgendorf, Steve Koehler, Dave Radzirez, Brad Allen, Jeff Anderson and, Cory Rummell have all had spectacular runs when they have been in the drivers seat as well. The crew has been above all when it comes to these beasts that we call monster trucks. All four of the trucks have been in pieces and the crew still gets them ready for the next weekend. Jim Koehler still competes in the world finals to this day. Chris Bergeron went to multiple world finals behind the wheel of Brutus during his driving career. Steve Koehler also competed in the Young Guns Shootout where the winner gets a spot in the world finals field.

The future for this team has no limits at all. With fairly new rookie Cory Rummell becoming one of the most talented rookies to come about in several years behind Rage and, Dave Radzirez joining the team as a seasoned veteran behind the wheel of Wrecking Crew, the team has adapted to the changes and has still been rocking it out at shows everywhere. Brad Allen in Brutus and Jim Koehler in Avenger competed in the Fox Sports 1 Championship series and came in 7th and 5th out of 16 of the best drivers. Yeah Grave Digger, Max-D and, Bigfoot get the most love and support but if everyone was to judge based off of performance than Team Scream would be a household monster truck name. Team Scream has cemented themselves as the best team in monster trucks ever.