

# Shelley cheats death at 70mph

## POWERBOATS

**F E A R L E S S**  
Southampton powerboat racer Shelley Jory cheated death at the weekend.

Competing in the V24 powerboat series off the Isle of Wight, the 33-year-old and co-driver Gavin Brown, from Locks Heath, suffered a spectacular crash at 70mph near Cowes.

Their £30,000 V8 boat Winging It Offshore boat failed to stay above water.

It was only the quick-thinking of Jory and Brown which saved them.

Using their safety harnesses and regulators, the pair managed to swim free of their boat and reach the surface.

"It was nearly a fatal accident," said Shelley, who owns the Brides of Southampton shop on Portswood Road.

"The boat barrell-rolled forward and the engine came over the top of us.

"We had to use our safety systems, but we got the procedures spot on.

"We are the first competitors in England to have used the system, so we've been called the crash test dummies!

"It was a very frightening experience and I'm very lucky to be here walking and talking."

Shelley continued: "When the boat went up in the air we just presumed we would land as normal.

"When you land you get hit by the whitewater, but this time we didn't see any of that.

"To use a term we use in the sport, we 'entered the green room' - the boat went under the water and everything was very



**CHEATING DEATH:** Shelley Jory.

dary, very green. You know you're not coming back up when that happens.

"My door had been blown off and so the water came straight in, there were no air pockets.

"I took a couple of breaths on the regulator and swam to the surface. I instinctively looked to make sure Gavin was okay and he was instinctively looking for me."

The crash continued an eventful season for Shelley, who back in June managed to win a podium place off Gravesend despite nursing a broken ankle and her boat failing to start on the line!

Shelley, who had driven her boat through the night to be in

Kent for the start, had been lapped by her competitors by the time she managed to start.

The only woman racer in the series, Shelley told the Echo: "The engine had malfunctioned and was taking on water. The race started without us, and I didn't think we were going to make it and started undoing my harness but Gavin said 'no, got straight to the engine' and began sorting the problem.

"I just drove like a lunatic and caught them up, then I got past the first three of the boats and came second.

"If we'd had another lap we would have been running level with the leaders."