

Legendary powerboat racer calls it a day

ROY Smith from Guernsey is a legendary powerboat racer who has won his third world title in his home land in his 23-foot Ocke Mannerfelt Powerboat. He has now decided to hang up his racing gloves for the final time. I caught up with his navigator Peter Phillipson to find out how the final grand prix went.



Shelley Jory
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CONGRATULATIONS to you and Roy on winning the 2 litre world championships 2008. It is certainly a fitting end to Roy's racing career which I understand has spanned over 25 years and ended with his third world championship title and your first world title. How do you feel?

"I'm delighted to have had the honour of racing with Roy in a very tough race, waiting for three days to get the right weather window added to the excitement and with this being Roy's last race I was determined not to get anything wrong!"

How did the first race go for you?

"The start of the first race got off to a bit of a shaky start, with the foreign competitors forgetting which side of the start boat they needed to be. We came out of the start and on to the first lap in second place with the Italian cat driven by Diego Tester just ahead of us.

"Unfortunately our engine trim picked this time to break, not great timing when you have to battle with a one to two metre swell. But Roy undeterred by this setback kept battling through and after three laps we managed to catch Diego, and although we managed to hold our own for the rest of the laps, sadly the Italian team finished just four seconds ahead of us. One-nil to Italy.

As I well know any mechanical problem in a grand prix week-end needs to be repaired overnight, but because of the unusual weather and the rules of a World Championships you actually had two races in one day. How did you manage to get the trim sorted in the few hours before the second race?

"During the three-hour gap to the next race Team Jersey made up of Toby Clayson and Roy's son Liam got to work fixing the boat. Liam fitted the new solenoid lent to

us by Lance from LS Marine to fix the trim fault. Toby got to work on the throttle that was not retarding properly, while Roy and I had a cup of tea and passed bits and pieces to the lads – a real team effort."

With so much at stake it had to have been nerve racking with only a few hours until the flag dropped on the final race of the 2 litre World Championships?

"We knew we had to either win the race or at least finish ahead of the Italian Diego with at least a boat between us, but thankfully the start got off in a more orderly fashion and by the end of the first lap we were laying in sixth place.

"The front two boats were stretching a big lead, and we were finding it hard to get passed the cats lying in third, fourth and fifth places. They just kept squeezing us out and shutting the door at every opportunity. (For the layman that means taking the line of the opposing boat and putting them in dirty water)

"I don't know whether Roy was getting fed up of getting wet or he could see his chance of winning slipping away, but he suddenly upped the pace and pushed us passed the cats. With 20 miles remaining Roy and I knew that the only way to clinch this world title was to catch Excaliber that was three quarters of a mile ahead. I didn't think we would be able to do, it especially when we came up against a huge wall of wash kicked up by the Condor ferries (our sponsors!).

"Roy drove the rest of the race by the skin of his teeth I have never seen anything like it before, we managed to overtake the boat in front on the second to last turn and finish the race second behind fellow Brits Ian Sterling and Alex Watson. Diego had only managed fourth, making us 2008 world champions. It was a day I will never forget!"



Action from 2 litre worlds. Inset - Peter Phillipson and Roy Smith after winning the race