

HONDA F4 STROKE

LUCKY HONDA LADIES





The all girl crew of Shelly Jory and Libby Kier reign supreme champions of this year's 225hp Honda Formula 4 Stroke Championship.



“ We had originally given up any hopes of the title and were aiming for 2nd place. Then we won the first heat here and ‘Fat Boys’ didn’t finish. There is so much pressure on us now and I woke up feeling sick this morning. ”

Shelly Jory

Since the Honda F4 Stroke season kicked off in Largs, Scotland in May this year, the nomadic Honda teams have travelled many hundreds of miles in their quest for glory, including twice overseas - the Isle of Man, more famed for motor cycle racing than power-boats, and Guernsey for the final showdown. Each of the five rounds have consisted of two heats which effectively means each crew have raced against each other ten times throughout the season.

Until the penultimate meeting of the year in Liverpool, all the serious money was on Rob Lister and Will Nocker aboard ‘Fat Boys Racing’ as they had always been the dominant force in the 225hp division. However, it’s not over until the fat lady sings, as they say, and in ‘Fat Boys’ case the fat lady was beginning to hit a few bum notes when Lister and Nocker experienced mechanical set backs in the waters of the Mersey which significantly affected their challenge for the title. It was even worse for them in Guernsey when a collision and only a

5th place finish sealed their fate once and for all, leaving the way clear for Shelly Jory and Libby Kier who had arrived on the Channel Island looking to secure 2nd place for their sponsor ‘Raymarine’. But when they clinched victory in the penultimate race of the series and ‘Fat Boys’ failed to finish, there emerged a remote possibility the ‘all girl’ crew could produce the shock result of Honda’s season. They had to win the final heat, and Lister and Nocker had to finish down the pecking order for ‘Raymarine’ to secure the 2005 Honda 225hp title. It’s true, lightening does strike twice - another all-girl crew won their championship once before in Guernsey - Tracey Clarke and Donna James claimed the 2 Litre Championship in 1989.

Although the 150hp division did not produce such a nail-biting finale, they did provide some dramatic action throughout the season and whilst ‘Team New Zealand’ monopolised the limelight in Guernsey, it was ‘Claygate Bathrooms’ who grabbed the silverware.



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Rob Lister



LIVERPOOL

REPORT: CHARLOTTE ROUGH

Not all that many years ago Liverpool was a popular venue for offshore racing and the West Wallasey Powerboat Club was an extremely welcoming watering hole for southern based teams before they embarked on a weekend of action in the murky waters of the Mersey. West Wallasey Club is now just a blurred memory as development has transformed the area into a

region that we assume is more desirable.

The Honda Series brought offshore racing back to Liverpool once more and with only two heats of the championship remaining after Liverpool, the race for points had become very serious.

Each Honda event is made up of two races on Saturday and Sunday, weather permitting. Rob Lister and Will Nocker arrived on the Mersey leading the 225hp division in ‘Fat Boy Racing’, but in Saturday’s opening salvo they had to concede to Jack Glendinning and Simon Bucknall’s

‘Warmup’ who enjoyed their second consecutive win. ‘Fat Boy’ and ‘Warmup’ battled hard in the early stages with Lister taking the lead, but clever tactics by Glendinning proved invaluable as ‘Warmup’ led for the last eight laps. “We had a chaotic race,” said Glendinning, “We were in second place at the start chasing leaders ‘Raymarine’ when they made a mistake. We followed and when we realised our error we were near the back, and to add to our woes the intercom retired and Simon had to give me hand signals. Then the trim switch stopped working, but despite



In the Mersey - Martin Marsh and Mel Streek after 'Claygate.co. uk' (left) flipped over

our various handicaps we battled on and we're delighted with the win."

'Fat Boy' skipper Lister commented, "That was my toughest race yet. The waters of the Mersey are rough and the strong currents made it even harder as we were overtaken by 'Warmup' and 'Accucard'. We managed to regain our runner-up place on lap ten but could not catch the leader. Second place is fine and consolidates our position at the top of the table."

Reigning 225hp champions James Shepherd and Peter Kingsbury in 'Accucard' filled third place while Mel

Streek and Martin Marsh flipped over in 'Claygate.co.uk' after a collision with 'Negotiator', but after being checked over by medics, both were deemed OK.

In an equally exciting 150hp race, Clive Coote and Chris Hughes in 'X Pole' took the chequered flag in emphatic style despite hooking on the start lap. Coote fought his way through the pack alongside his rookie 20 year old navigator Chris Hughes. "We were pleased with that result," said Hughes, "We had an eventful first lap as, after hooking, we narrowly missed hitting a turn buoy, but it

was an aggressive race so I could not have asked for more."

Neil Crabb and Nigel Ledger in 'Premier Cru' had their best race so far as, after leading for most of the race, they eventually settled for second place ahead of 'Claygate Bathrooms'.

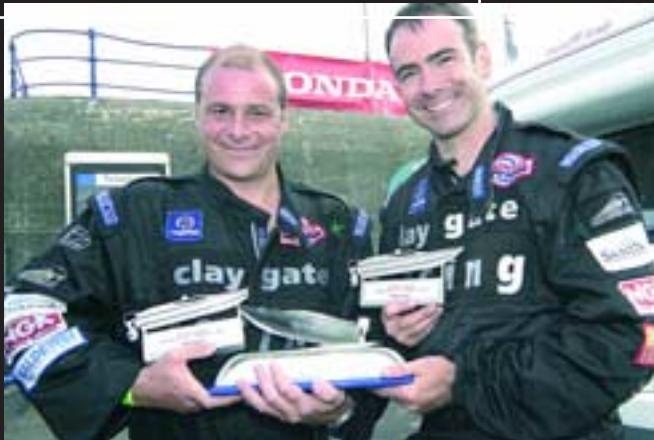
Sunday's race secured Gavin Parsonage and Natham Libby their first win of 2005 aboard their 225hp rig 'Negotiator'. The Cornish based duo took the lead at the green flag but were overtaken on the first turn mark by Shelley and Libby. A close tussle ensued between the two front runners and Parsonage reclaimed the lead on the final turn of the final lap. "We were thrilled, if a little surprised," commented Gavin, "We were involved in a minor collision with 'Claygate co.uk' yesterday and noticed this morning that we had a last minute repair to carry out so we weren't expecting a result today. When 'Raymarine' got past us we thought that was it, but kept plugging away, and when Shelly lost time passing backmarkers we took our chance and took the lead."

The girls were not too disappointed as they kept losing their power steering throughout the race. Championship leaders 'Fat Boy Racing' were disappointed with their seventh place claiming they were down on power, but as Nocker said, "It will make the final races interesting."

Clive Coote and Chris Hughes made it two out of two in Liverpool as 'X -Pole' secured another win in the 150hp class. Coote reported, "To win both races in this year's penultimate grand prix sets us up for the finals in Guernsey. We took the lead from 'Delmar' who turned at the wrong buoy on lap two. It has been quite a weekend for Chris, two wins in his first powerboat race."

The weekend was quite different for Tony Crossly and Mark Glanville in 'Delmar Flooring'. The Exmouth based team were leading until they missed the buoy and then they ran out of fuel 100 metres from the finish handing Mark Allen and Louise Marshall aboard 'R2 Composites' second place ahead of 'Extreme Chaos'

HONDA F4 STROKE



**2005 Honda 150hp
Championship winners
Nick Clemson and Paul
Trowbridge in 'Claygate
Bathrooms'**



**Kev Cozens of
the 225hp 'RU
Composites'
unceremoni-
ously dumped
overboard**

**2005 Honda 225hp
Championship winners
Shelly Jory and Libby Kier
in 'Raymarine'**



GUERNSEY

REPORT: DAVID SEWELL

St Peter Port, Guernsey has a long and illustrious history in offshore powerboat racing. For at least two decades, the island's 'Powerboat Week' was the flagship event in the international calendar. Although today the 'muscle boats' of yesteryear are missing, the action is equally as exciting and this Channel Island was the ideal venue to wind up the 2005 Honda Formula Four Stroke Championship.

I arrived in St Peter Port aboard the sponsor's fast catamaran 'Condor Vitesse' from Weymouth. The channel crossing of 82 miles only took two hours fifteen minutes and, despite carrying two or three hundred passengers and countless cars and trucks, Condor Vitesse was still faster than several of the 150hp raceboats taking part in the Condor Ferries G.P.

The scene was set for an exciting climax to the season and an added bonus was the guest appearance of the 2005 New Zealand Honda Champions, Greg and Danny Brinck. Honda NZ run a series using a different monohull but the same 150hp

engine, but in Guernsey the father and son team had been loaned 'HM Plant-Honda Racing' a rig that had been used by VIP's and journalists all season and had a record of finishing last in all its races.

It's easy to guess the outcome of the 150hp races....New Zealand - 2, GB - 0. Greg made mince meat of his rivals and not only did the Brincks beat the opposition, they finished a country mile ahead. Greg commented after the race, "We couldn't ask for anything more. We are so pleased to be here in the UK and especially somewhere as beautiful as Guernsey. We have been training hard which has been difficult as it's winter over there and cold. I think that helped us as the waters we race in are much rougher than the calm waters of Guernsey. Our boat in New Zealand is lighter and much flightier than these UK rigs and it's also a lot quicker. In these conditions I'm sure we would have won the 225hp races as well with our 150hp boat".

Having said that Nick Clemson and Paul Trowbridge in 'Claygate Bathrooms' were not worried if the Kiwis had lapped them as they filled second place which was enough to clinch the 2005 title in the 150hp division. Although the 150hp class usual-

ly provides close racing, the course in Guernsey appeared to spread the fleet out, but as usual a moment of drama occurred around the half way stage when Debbie Lister, 'Fat Boy Racing's Rob Lister's other half, was spat out of 'R2 Composites' in this, her first race. She pointed out "Everyone told me to hang on tight as navigators often get thrown out but until then I was not sure what they were talking about. We hit a high wave and I was in the water. It was quite refreshing and it has not put me off tomorrow's race".

Rob Lister and Will Nocker of 'Fat Boy Racing' fame knew what was required of them. After a mediocre performance in Liverpool they needed to collect a couple of decent finishes in Guernsey to secure the title. Easier said than done as in the first race red flags were raised before the first lap had been completed when Kev Cozens and Jay De Kler were unceremoniously dumped overboard when 'R2 Composites' flipped over. At the time of the stoppage Shelley Jory and Libby Kier were leading in 'Raymarine' with 'Fat Boy Racing' somewhere in the top five. 'Raymarine' took the lead following the restart but 'Fat Boy Racing's action was to be short-lived when



'Evans Heritage Developments' hit Lister's rig in the stern. The impact knocked the timing belt off and the engine stopped.

An enthralling battle ensued behind 'Raymarine.' Former 150hp and 225hp Champion James Shepherd with Andrew Preston in 'HM Plant' filled second place but it was anyone's guess as to who would clinch 3rd place as Jack Glendinning's 'Warm Up' diced neck and neck with Rupert Pugh and Lee Derbyshire's 'Heights of Abraham'. 'Warm Up' seemed to be struggling at times until suddenly Glendinning woke up and swept past Pugh to secure the final podium place in the latter stages.

Engine and laminate engineers were kept hard at work over Saturday evening repairing 'Fat Boy's damage and replacing its engine. The damp 'R2 Composites' also underwent an engine transplant in preparation for Sunday's finale.

Shelley Jory was to miss Sunday's race for a business appointment on the mainland but was given permission to stay as the championship was within her grasp. 'Raymarine' was now three points ahead of the team that had dominated in the earlier part of the season. Both teams were showing signs of nerves, and Jory

confessed, " We had originally given up any hopes of the title and were aiming for 2nd place. Then we won the first heat here and Fat Boys didn't finish. There is so much pressure on us now and I woke up feeling sick this morning".

The 150hp race opened Sunday's activities with New Zealand leading the way. As 'Claygate Bathrooms' were already crowned champions, Clemson and Trowbridge were happy to cruise around the circuit as their 13th place finish showed, with Trowbridge taking over the wheel for a change. Brothers Clive and Tim Coote in 'X-Pole' finished the race in 4th place which awarded them 2nd place in the championship while Peter Kingsbury and Dominic Anderson's 8th place in 'Alsford Timber' clinched their 3rd place in the series. 'Delmar Flooring' were battling to secure joint 3rd place but their fuel tank split after hitting the wash of the Condor Ferry and they were forced to retire. Nick Warren and Helen Whitley-Niland filled second place on the podium after passing Vernon Hunt's 'Extreme Chaos' on the final lap.

Tensions were running high as the 225hp boats lined up. Lister and Nocker supporters, watching from high above the circuit on Castle

Cornet, almost looked the other way as the fleet bore down on them only to see 'Raymarine' leading the way. Rob Lister's driving was beginning to show signs of panic as the boat nearly flipped over, but despite all his efforts 'Fat Boy' was going backwards. A collision with 'Warm-Up' on lap two didn't help either. Lister said later, "We are gutted. Nothing has gone right this weekend and after hitting 'Warm Up' we couldn't get it together. In the end we just wanted to finish. Fifth place is enough to give us 2nd overall behind Shelley and Libby but to say we are disappointed is an understatement".

For the girls, it was elation as Shelley says, "We got a good start, took the lead at the first turn and then had to hold onto it. We saw the chequered flag and we were elated. It's been an incredible season and we've got the result we were looking for". 'Warm Up' finished 2nd to finish joint 2nd in the championship while 'Heights of Abraham' completed the podium places and clinched them 4th overall.

The champions will receive a diver's watch each from luxury Swiss watchmaker Ebel at the Honda prize giving in London early next year.

OFFSHORE SUPER SERIES

Rounds 4 & 5

ARTICLE: STEVE MICHEL

PHOTOS: JUERG SCHREITER

The Offshore Super Series have completed rounds four and five of the championships with events staged in St. Clair Michigan and Orange Beach, Alabama. However the meeting due to be hosted by Destin, Florida over the weekend of 16/18th September had been cancelled due to the many problems created by Hurricane Katrina and Rita.

THE JERSEY BOYS AT ST. CLAIR RIVER

The 11th St Clair River Classic was enjoyed by huge crowds and was hosted by the Blue Water Offshore Racing Association and the first race featured fourteen boats from OPA, affectionately known as the 'The Jersey Boyz' who put on a



great show.

Sunday morning witnessed the debut of a new class - OSS Extreme, which basically means unlimited horsepower. These craft can top speeds of 180mph and at St Clair, three boats participated with victory going to 'Bacardi Silver' with John Tomlinson and David Scott, ahead of Herb Stotter and Rich Wyatt aboard 'DF Young', an outfit resembling a Stealth Bomber, while 'Pair A Dice' filled third place..

Tom Abram's had taken delivery of a new 'Reliable Carriers' a cat from Randy Scism's MTI factory. With Steve Curtis, reigning UIM World Class I throttleman on board, Abram's new steed was holding first place in front of his home crowd when disaster struck and 'Reliable Carriers' flipped over. Both crew escaped unhurt leaving the way clear for Tomlinson and Scott, now aboard their Super Cat 'Bacardi Silver', to record their second win of the weekend. Ironically, 'Reliable Carriers' barrel-roll was on the same turn that caught out the OSS Cat Lite 'Popeyes Famous Chicken and Biscuits' crewed by Stan Ware and David Wade. Mike Defrees and Jeff Harris started the Super Cat race as underdogs in 'Team CRC' but were soon storming through the pack to clinch second place ahead of Jim Dyke and Dominic Visconti.

Roman and Ron Roman aboard 'Motley Crew' inherited the lead in OSS Cat Lite when 'Popeye' went over and the Roman's never looked back, while Steve Page and Joey Gratten's 'Page Motorsports' filled second place ahead of Paul Whittier and John Talley's 'Ettore Squeegees'.

Ken Bowen and Scot Conrad's 'Adrenaline Spiderman' was obliged to carry an extra 700 pounds in Super Vee after it was discovered

