

Charlotte shows power is not all about the boys



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IN A predominately male dominated sport it's nice to see an influx of young women coming through the ranks in the various powerboat

racing disciplines and making an impact on the sport.

I caught up with young Circuit racer Charlotte Gilbert when she came down to Southampton to pick up her new offshore boat as she aims for total domination of the sport over both disciplines.

In just her second year of racing

at the age of 12 Charlotte is a young woman who knows what she wants from life – to become Powerboat Racing World Champion!

I first met Charlotte back in February at the RYA Awards Ceremony in Bournemouth. She was attending to support her older brother Alex Gilbert who was there



Shelley & Charlotte



Charlie in race action

to pick up the award for National J250 Champion and her fellow club members as they received their trophies.

In comparison to Charlotte and her fellow female junior circuit racers I started racing quite late in my life but when I look back at what I've achieved and then speak to Charlotte and note her determination and passion for the sport I can't help but think she's destined to achieve her goal.

"My first big target is to become JT250 World Champion, I'd then like to follow on into a bigger class," she said. "I really respect Colin Jelf and what's he achieved is phenomenal, His son Ben has just started racing in the same class as me and Colin's huge role model for us all.

"I would like to race internationally in the Formula 2 series or even move over to Offshore and come and race against you Shelley in P1 or the F1 Cats."

Charlotte got into powerboat racing a similar way to many other people. She knew someone who raced, went along to support and got hooked.

Charlotte explained how it all came about: "Our next door neighbour was racing and invited the family along to an event to support them. My brother Alex had a go in the junior class and started racing.

"The following year I started racing I was attending events supporting him so decided to give it a go too. I realised how much fun it was and haven't looked back."

Knowing how much time goes into

preparation, training and racing I asked Charlotte what her friends thought of her powerboat racing: "They think I'm a little mad and when they first came to see me race they didn't believe it was me driving the boat, but they're really supportive of me. I've made lots of new friends amongst the racers and met some amazing people. It's a very social sport."

Turning her focus back to the challenge ahead of her in August we will see Charlotte enter her first International competition as the UK plays host to the JT250 European championships at Bodmoor in the Midlands on the 29 and 30 of August.

Charlotte and three other British junior powerboat racers will be there to represent the UK in a bid to promote Junior UK Powerboat racers and hopefully walk away with some silverware.

"We're all really looking forward to it. It's the first time the UK has hosted these championships and we all want to do the sport proud," said Charlotte.

"We have so many people supporting us from our friends and family to the other racers, the four of us would love to show just how successful UK powerboat racing is and walk away with several awards between us."

This young lady shows so much courage and dedication to her sport – I'm sure we'll be seeing a lot more of her in powerboat racing as she goes from strength to strength. Best of luck at the Europeans, Charlotte and Team Great Britain.