

Sir Robin finds the need for speed



Sir Robin is ready to power from Cowes to Torquay and back



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By [Phil Riley](#)

Sir Robin Knox-Johnston is not one to let the grass grow beneath his feet.

And for his latest adventure, the first sailor to circumnavigate the globe single-handed and non-stop back in 1969 has found a need for speed.

Sir Robin has teamed up with the world's top female powerboat champion, Sarisbury Green's Shelley Jory, to take on the longest and toughest one-day endurance powerboat race in the world – Saturday's Cowes-Torquay-Cowes race.

Now aged 70, the iconic yachtsman had never experienced powerboat racing but jumped at the idea of being Jory's navigator when she first suggested it.

'When Shelley asked whether I would like to navigate for her in the Classic Cowes-Torquay-Cowes powerboat race, it took one second to accept,' said Knox-Johnston.

'This is something I have not done before so naturally I want to find out what it is all about. This will be fun with the spice of competition.'

Jory, 39, is currently competing in the Powerboat P1 World Championships in the first all-female team to race at this level.

'I had this wild idea while preparing for my next P1 race that I really wanted to compete this year in my own country and what better race to do than the CTC,' she said.

The powerboat driver had her boat selected, a Scorpion RIB, and came up with the the 'off the wall' idea of inviting Sir Robin – her co-presenter on BBC Radio Solent's Friday evening programme H20.

'So for my 14th consecutive Cowes powerboat race I have a very keen novice on board and the best endurance boat on the water to get us to Torquay and back,' said Jory.

She and Sir Robin are racing Team Scorpion in the Motor Cruiser Class G (#R14) in a 10 metre Scorpion Sting, a RIB known for its excellent fuel economy, comfortable ride and ability to maintain a racing speed of around 50mph.

Jory is confident about the team's chances in a fleet of 40-50 boats as this is the same model that completed last year's Round Britain Powerboat Race as Team Scorpion-Dubois.

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