

Time to wrap up season in silk, lace and confetti



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WHILE for the most of us the powerboat racing season is over a couple of classes are still winding up their National Championships and a few of the Brits have headed to warmer climates to take part in world championships and international competitions.

Meanwhile still in the UK the speed freaks will be preparing their boats to head to the historic Coniston Records week aiming to break the existing National and World Records.

Reigning World Champion Colin Jelf is once again attempting to retain his F2 World Championship Crown for the fourth consecutive year. In 2008 Colin was crowned F2 World Champion for the third successive year making UIM history, as the only driver ever to win the F2 World title three times.

The first event of the five part championship got underway in Bahrain in October and Colin and fellow F2 racer Older Brother Owen Jelf were both there to defend the title.

After setting the quickest time in the first qualifying on Friday afternoon. Colin

entered the second qualifying session on Saturday knowing that he was in the box seat for pole position for the grand prix. He also set the fastest lap of the weekend which would end up being nearly two seconds quicker than anyone else.

So as the 45-minute session began confidence was high with Owen placed provisionally fourth on the grid. After a first attempt seeing Colin set a lap time of 49.75. Colin then decided to attempt another flying lap but disaster struck.

As he approached the last turn Paul Shepard of South Africa was approaching the same turn on a wider line but suddenly turned across in front of Colin. This resulted in Colin barrel rolling over Shepard's boat, luckily landing the right way up.

Colin and the boat were fine and thanks to hard work from the team the boat was patched up and back on the water by the end of the session. However during this time Colin's strongest rival Alex Carella of Italy had claimed pole with Colin finishing up in second and Owen dropped into fourth.

Further misfortune hampered the reigning world champion. As the lights went out for the start of the race neither of the two brothers fired up. Starting late as their boats passed

timing for the first time they were both sitting at the back of the fleet and nearly half a lap behind the leading boat.

Colin reported trouble accelerating out of turns and several laps later was in a unique position of being caught by the leaders.

An incident among the fleet that saw two of the turn buoys destroyed hampered Colin's chances of making up positions as the race continued under yellow flag.

Owen Jelf finished tenth and Colin 13th, results that disappointed the brothers. But it will not phase them and they will both come out in true championship fighting spirit at the next round in Egypt at the resort of Port Ghalib. Good Luck to the Jelf Racing Team!

So whilst Colin and Owen battle it out in hot sunny climates, back in the UK a group of the UKs competitors headed to Coniston for Records week, over the first week of November. It is the only event in the powerboat racing calendar to bring together all classes of boat.

Entry is open to all, from tiny hydroplanes, through inshore circuit racers to the largest offshore boats. It is the finale to the racing season. Competitors and officials from all over the country assemble annually for what has been a popular event since its inception

in 1970.

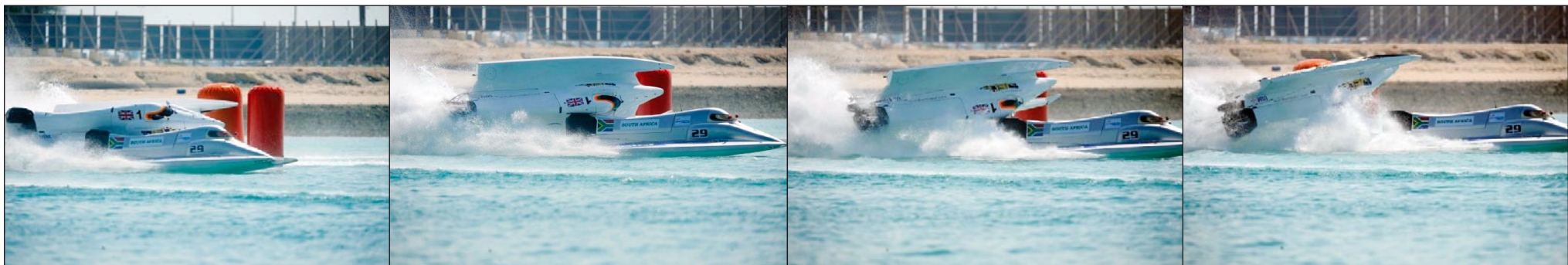
For almost a hundred years Powerboat record attempts have been made on several of the English lakes including Ullswater, Windermere and Coniston Water.

The most famous drivers have been Sir Henry Segrave, Sir Malcolm Campbell and Donald Campbell. Coniston, the spiritual home of Record breaking, since the Campbells, is most welcoming.

Drivers, support crews, officials, families and spectators are most welcome to enjoy the beautiful Coniston area, surrounded by its spectacular mountain scenery.

Well that's almost it from me this month but before I disappear into a flurry of confetti, silk and lace – makes a change from race overalls and oil – I would like to pass on my congratulations to Team Girlracer, Camilla Pascoe and Carolina Sandbrook who have in their first year of racing claimed the national title in the E900 Thunderbolt class.

Unfortunately Carolina is unable to continue in this fantastic partnership next year so Millie is now looking for a new female co-pilot to step on board with her and is already setting her sights on the 2010 title and future powerboat racing stardom.




The crash involving Colin Jelf and Paul Shepard

Photos: Jelf Racing Team – Matt Watts

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