

Eyes down for 2010 after a whirlwind year



Shelley Jory-Leigh

British Powerboat Champion
www.shelleyjory.com

LAST year came and went so fast and our attentions have already turned to the season ahead of us and the 2010 championship titles that are up for grabs.

Unfortunately there will be absent faces on start lines next year following the tragic Offshore Circuit Racing accident in the UK in August that saw the death of Alex Edmonds.

Trevor, my husband, and I received more tragic news while on honeymoon, Team Victory 1 in Class 1 were involved in a fatal accident in the final round of the World Championship. Mohammad Al Mehairi from the UAE and Jean-Marc Sanchez of France were both killed during the accident.

Tragedies like these affect the sport and all the people in it whether you know the individuals or not.

Trevor had worked for Victory Team and knew Jean-Marc for many years so it hits home even more. It makes you stop, think and take stock of your life but we all love the sport for the thrill and risk element and all go into it with our eyes wide open.

My thoughts go out to all those that have been affected by the tragedies in the sport.

As most of the UK's racers were building up for Christmas and preparations for 2010. The UK had three representatives racing in the UAE challenging for titles in the F1 and F2 Classes and doing the country proud.

The F1 Powerboat World Championship is similar to Formula 1 car racing and similar rules apply. The 2009 Championship consisted of eight two-day events beginning in April and finishing on December 11 in Sharjah, UAE.

Britain's Andy Elliott returned to the F1 race scene after a year out in 2008 for his 17th year of competition. But it was to be a short season for the eight times Powerboat World Champion when he broke his back at the event in Russia in August. Team Qatar drafted in replacement driver Craig Bailey from Australia for the China Rounds of the championship but Bailey was



Malcolm Goodman in Abu Dhabi Grand Prix action

Photo: Neil Perkins, NDP Publicity Services



Malcolm Goodman. Photo: Neil Perkins, NDP Publicity Services

injured whilst racing in an event at home and was ruled out of the rest of the championship. Andy Elliott suggested a new replacement in the shape of the UK's Malcolm Goodman. The 27-year-old jumped at the offer and with it the

chance of fulfilling a life's dream.

Malcolm's first race was a home event for team Qatar as they competed in Doha, in November. He qualified 17th on the grid with team mate Jay Price in second.

So picture the scene as 24 powerful catamarans lined up along the start pontoon. Inside a cockpit similar to that of a fighter jet sat Malcolm Goodman with one hand grasping the steering wheel while the other stood poised over the start button, the tension was building as he awaited the crucial start to what was probably the biggest race of his life to date.

The green flag went down and 10,000hp of highly tuned power burst into life sending the fleet of 24 hurtling towards the first turn mark in a fountain of white spray at over 90mph. Around 30 minutes later the chequered flag was waved as Italy's Guido Cappellini won the race, and UK's Malcolm Goodman finished his debut race in a phenomenal fifth place.

The next 4 races of the championship saw Malcolm and Team Qatar plagued by engine and electric problems out of his control and whilst they worked long hours to fix them and he fought to qualify for the races he would be forced to do something un-natural to the youngster and retire from the races before the chequered flag was raised.

The final round of the championship in Sharjah saw Malcolm qualify in 15th place for the race and as the green flag went down and he rounded the first turn mark he had flown in to sixth place. But a double barrel roll from team mate Jay Price led to a restart of the race and Malcolm back in his original starting position.

The second start saw him fly into sixth again and he held the position for several laps until engine problems plagued him again and saw him drop back down the fleet.

Malcolm held off strong challenges to take eighth position in the final race of the season and providing him with an end to a season that dreams are made of.

So attentions turn to the season ahead and I can't wait with some exciting news being announced at the London Boat Show before the whirlwind build up to the 2010 green flag.

Good luck and stay safe to all those racing in 2010.

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