

If you *can* beat them – join them



Shelley Jory-Leigh

British Powerboat Champion
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NAOMI Williams, wife of world class powerboat racer Gareth Williams, has taken him on at his own game.

Fed up with looking at Gareth's trophies, Naomi has surpassed her husband's achievements by winning the Thundercat European championship and setting the national and world 750s speed record.

Now it's his turn to admire her trophies!

Thundercats are fast, nippy four meter inflatable boats that race at speeds of 50mph close to shore,

making it as thrilling and exciting for spectators as competitors.

This has ensured a healthy and enthusiastic following for this up and coming extreme motor sport.

Naomi's racing career was launched when she found herself cajoled into helping provide safety support at a European powerboat event that her husband was competing in.

Until then she had been more used to modelling wedding dresses for me in Bridal business. But it turned out Naomi had a bit of a talent for thundercat racing and was invited back to compete in the 2009 championships.

She joined driver Mike Littler in Ahmad Tea. The pair had a



successful first year coming fourth in the 2009 National championships. They continued to up the anti this year challenging fellow competitors and taking numerous wins at events across the UK.

One memorable race at the Cowes Classic saw teams battle extreme sea conditions for over 70 miles. Naomi and Mike were quick to

take the lead but lost it when they were thrown hundreds of feet from their boat. Through sheer grit and determination they clawed their way back up the pack and came into take a well deserved first place.

The highlight of Naomi's season came when she teamed up with fellow racer Bligh Julius to compete in the 2010 European Championships, supported by main sponsor Ahmad Tea and Southampton based boat yard Drivers Dry Berthing.

The duo flew to Ireland to race three disciplines over three consecutive days, taking the overall win for both circuit and surf events.

Not satisfied with the title of European champion Naomi joined husband Gareth at Coniston to

prove yet again she could play the boys at their own game by setting the National and World speed record of 56.5mph for the P750S thundercat class.

Naomi is on a mission now and looking forward to defending her European title and proving her abilities on her husband's home turf, Drivers Dry Berthing, who will be hosting a leg of the 2011 Thundercat National championship.

She is also planning to compete for the title of World Champion in 2012!

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