

New young blood for our sport



Shelley Jory-Leigh

British Powerboat Champion
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MAX Coleman is a nine year old boy from Whiteley, Southampton, who attends Whiteley Primary School.

He has many hobbies including body boarding, he is a brown belt in Karate as well as being a Cub Scout, and if all that wasn't enough he is now following in my footsteps and embarking in his debut year as a powerboat racer in UK Formula Future Offshore Race Club – UKFORC.

Max has always lived on the south coast and he quite naturally loves the sea but his first experience of boating got off to a shaky start when at the tender age of two trips out on the family boat were “too bumpy and scary”. How times have changed!

His Dad, Gary, changed career in

2008 and qualified as a power boat instructor launching Coleman Marine Services and this is where Max's love of power boating started. He often took the helm of the RIB, this time very much enjoying the waves and the thrill of going fast.

Whilst working with P1 Superstock, Gary introduced Max to many of the characters involved in the power boating world and the attraction was instant. Many weekends were spent following the race boats out in the Solent to witness the sights and sounds of the powerful machines, taking pictures and using them to cover school books and filling up his holiday scrapbooks.

UKFORC, successfully run by Dennis Swann, accommodates youngsters from the age of nine upwards. It is a fun club offering affordable powerboat racing – whether you are an adrenaline junkie or a family wanting to enjoy some quality time.



Max Coleman and trainer Neil Holmes
Inset: the youngsters racing in UKFORC

UKFORC also boasts one of the greenest fleets in the sport by running environmentally friendly engines in all four of our classes.

The boats used are all production hulls and engines, making it possible to race on a low budget. Winning is all about driver ability.

After getting several companies to sponsor Max, he is now the proud owner of a 12-foot Sorcerer, with a green 25hp Evinrude engine, sprayed up in ‘Max Tech Racing’ colours, but before he could race he had to pass his RYA race training.

His training was done with my

good friend and trainer – seven times world champion, Neil Holmes at his Powerboat Academy in Southampton. The training included theory in the classroom learning about flags, tides, wind, etc, followed by a day putting the theory into practise on the Solent.

Max had to demonstrate that he could competently and safely handle the boat on his own, before Neil granted him his race licence.

At the end of March with race licence in hand, Max went to his first UK Formula Future meeting at Stewartby Lakes, Bedfordshire.

He soon learnt the ropes of scrutineering, driver's briefings and getting to know the other drivers. As the youngest and least experienced of his cohort he was both excited and nervous at what was in store.

Although a little frustrated that he wasn't the quickest, his technique, observations of the rules and safety were first class which earned him his first medal for special achievement.

Mum and dad are very proud parents and cannot believe how it has bought Max out of his often introvert shell. I will tell you more how my little protégé gets on in his debut year.