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Offshore / inshore thrills

The powerboat scene continues to receive new impetus with a fresh crop of races starting this year. The 'Hotboat' series promises to offer a 'unique challenge' with the combination of offshore power boating along with the frantic closeness of circuit racing. The teams, split into two classes, will weave their way around a course of 4.5 nautical miles per lap, with seven turns in each lap. The 600 class will feature boats with a minimum length of 24ft and a minimum weight of 1500kg, mono or multi-hull. The engine rules and regulations are very confusing, however, and even after speaking with other racers I can't even begin to explain them to you! The 1000 class is a bit more simple, open to boats with a minimum length of 26ft and



a maximum 1,100hp, inboard or outboard. But this class also works on a power-to-weight ratio of 1hp per 4.5 kilos boat weight – which seems ridiculous to me because

an existing Pro-Vee boat would have to add approximately 2 tonne of weight to enter the class! It is promised however that this series will be a great spectator sport, with

the course designed to take racing close to the shore. Let's hope they get the entries and the boat specifications sorted out. Watch this space.

New deal Hustler



Hustler powerboats have a new dealership in the UK. Voom Voom, based in Southampton and owned by P1 racer & Thundercat promoter Vee Ganjaivian, is the new UK importer. The range of boats extends from 21 to 50ft, all with standard production hulls and fully customisable options. Especially interesting will be the new 26ft Sport fitted with a 315 Yanmar diesel and a Bravo X1 drive, capable of 50mph and a running cost of only £30 per hour. Vee and his co-pilot Charlie Williams-Hawkes will be running a Hustler 388 Slingshot powered by twin diesels in the 2007 P1 World Championships. With Hustlers' US racing heritage steeped in success, I will be watching closely when the P1 championships start in Malta on 5 May.

The hard work continues...

I often get asked why I still train, as I have been racing for a number of years and have achieved numerous titles and records – but I believe you can never stop learning. I know world champion power boat racers who still train and aren't frightened to admit it – after all even David Beckham has a trainer! So, although the weather is cold and miserable, Libby and I are out on the water with powerboat trainer Neil Holmes, who is putting us and the boat through the paces and revving us up for the hard race season ahead. Also, as the season approaches, I have increased my physical training. Four mornings a week sees me at the Esporta Hampshire health club, being put through my paces by personal trainer James Seilo. We work hard on strengthening my core stability and upper body and of course my stamina and the results are noticeable on and off the water!



RYA powers ahead

On the 5 February I was very honoured to co-present the RYA Powerboat Racing Gold Awards at the Royal Bath Hotel in Bournemouth. In the past, the awards have been somewhat tedious and lacking in atmosphere, but this year was a great improvement and credit must go to the RYA powerboat division. The grandeur of the Royal Bath made for a very enjoyable evening – it's just a shame that there are only enough spaces for the winners to attend because I think a lot more competitors would like to join the fun. The highlight of the evening for me was being able to present Raymarine with the Official Sponsor of the Year Award for their support over the past four years. The company stepped in to help me in 2003 after I had a horrendous crash in my V24 powerboat at Cowes and have continued to support me with my Honda Formula 4 Stroke 225hp powerboat Team Raymarine ever since. We have a great on going partnership.



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