

“Everything has to be 110%”

Shelley Jory never stops talking.

It must be part of being a Hondamentalist because most of our featured people are the same.

Today, the queen of the seas, the wave-hopping power boat racer and self-confessed boat fanatic has her work cut out.

She’s busy selling wedding dresses. It’s true.

Shelley runs a wedding dress business in Southampton, the maritime city and home to Honda’s Formula Four Stroke team.

What on earth have white frilly dresses got to do with screaming around at 70 mph on the high seas, we wonder?

“So what’s all this with the wedding dresses?” we ask.

“It’s management. It’s teamwork. It’s perfectionism. And, at this time of year, it’s mayhem.

Although I’ve lived in Southampton all my life, there was no real boating tradition in the family. I had a boyfriend who was a boat builder and who wanted to race his boat - so I became his team manager, you know organising everything – the logistics sponsorship, diary and so on. And I just fell into it that way. After a while I became the navigator, the co driver, and that was it really. I was in.

I did all the courses and worked hard at the navigation side. **This was when you had to read charts and use compasses; there was no such thing as GPS, we had to do it the hard way.**

“So what’s all this with the wedding dresses?, we ask”



“Hold on, while I get to the top of the hill.”

Keith Knowles is climbing a big hill in Northern Ireland when we call. In the background there are the revving noises of distant ATVs.

“Hold on while I get to the top of the hill,” he says, and eventually, when he gets to the top and surveys the racing track below, we talk.

Keith began KIK ATV 25 years ago, in the Ribblesdale valley, a busy farming area. He had been working as a technician preparing and modifying ATV imports in a large workshop until he was laid off.

“Bit of a risk then - so, why did you start it?” we enquire.

“Cause I were stupid, weren’t I?” he says in a rich Lancastrian brogue.

Today, he is at the British Championships as team manager to William Waggot (currently 5th in the championship) and Chris North (currently 10th). They are riding Honda TRX 450 Rs. They travel the UK in a 10 tonne truck complete with a living area, a workshop and space for the two racing ATVs and two spares.

“The thing about Honda’s is the engineering. They were the first ATVs. They began as tricycles; we’ve got two of them back at the shop. Two 200 “Big Reds”. They must be from about 1982, they’re great. Honda were the first and they’re the best.”

And just before you treat this as apparently throw away remark, you need to know that there is absolutely nothing that Keith doesn’t know about ATVs.

“After a race, or a practise we have to go over every nut, bolt, component, chassis part – the thing is, with a Honda, is that it’s all thought through – everything is easy to get at.”

Racing ATVs is very, very physical for both the rider and the machine. They are designed



to withstand any change in direction, incline, bump, camber, outcrop, and surface – anything at all. They go where even a tank can’t – that’s why the SAS use Hondas to cover all kinds of terrain.

“After I set up the business, things just snowballed. Hondas are so easy to sell. They are a quality product and the engineering is far better than anything else . . .”

This conversation takes place on a late Friday afternoon. Just as most of us are tidying our desks, thinking about the weekend and preparing to relax, this man is standing on the top of a windy hill chatting away about engineering and nuts and bolts.

Thank you Keith.
Pure **Hondamentalism**.