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Team Raymarine

# Nature strikes back

The disastrous weather that dominated the P1 and Honda F4S opening rounds continued to play havoc with the 2-Litre boys, with Force 5-6 winds and 2m seas making the going hard in Guernsey over the May Bank Holiday weekend. Val Bryant in his Argentinean catamaran *Hot Boat* had a narrow escape when he turned it over in the first race – thankfully the crew were ok. Saturday saw Pete Little and Dave Arthur in traditional style take the victory in their Britta-sponsored cat, with Roy Smith and Toby Clayson in their B23 Bat Boat *Condor Ferries* taking the win on Sunday. Ian Sterling and Alex Watson, also in a Bat Boat, put up a very good fight in treacherous conditions getting a 3rd and 2nd. Considering this was only Ian's second event in this new boat, he has mastered it well.

The forces of nature finally gave up trying to ruin the powerboat racing season, and the second rounds of P1

and the Honda Formula Four Stroke saw some welcome flat seas. Naples was the venue for P1 Round 2, and the new kids on the block, *Fountain Worldwide King of Shaves*, dominated the Evolution class, winning both days. My old rival from Honda, James Shepperd, drove magnificently in his normal close but determined racing style, while Craig Wilson, the president of Fountain Worldwide, was the throttleman. The defending champions *OSG Racing* turned over on Race 1, but after a good team effort was up and running by Race 2 and finished in a very respectable 6th place.

In the Supersport Class, *Racing Project Roscioli Hotels Roma* also stormed away with two wins. The new *Chaudron 41* – team owner and throttleman Angelo Tedeschi, driver Fabio Magnani and navigator Ugo Pellegrino – enjoyed the flatter seas and had the boat trimmed and running to perfection.



Despite capsizing, OSG Racing were back racing the next day

## The price of sponsorship

Sponsorship is a big issue for racers. During the 1980s there were many companies willing to pay to have their name on the side of a boat, but nowadays, due to changes in the law on taxation, things have changed. I have been fortunate with my sponsors Raymarine, who have supported me throughout most of my racing career, but others are not so lucky. One very successful race team had sponsorship from a large company that took up the deal solely to entertain clients over the race weekend but, due to a new ruling in motor sports, this is now classed as 'bribery', and as a result the sponsor pulled on their funding.

Powerboat racing needs to raise its profile if we are to continue as a sport and get the right financial backing we need to run our teams. After all it's hardly a cheap sport, and it can be hard to finance yourself. I think P1 and Honda have got it right with their TV coverage and spectator-friendly venues, although I do appreciate it is making it more like circuit racing than offshore powerboat racing. There has to be a compromise.

## Totally Hondamental!



On a personal note, I have been filming and having thousands of photographs taken for the new National Honda advertising campaign, *Hondamentalism*, which has been absolutely amazing. I have had the time of my life filming the Honda Ident TV advert, which is currently being shown on all the Formula One Grand Prix

Programmes on ITV 1. The filming was all done at Drivers Dry Berthing boatyard in Southampton, which one Thursday turned into a Hollywood film set. Sixty crew turned up, and anyone of any importance seemed to have an assistant who had an assistant who had a PA who had a runner. I even had my own stand-in body double. The Honda press advert (pictured) also took a long day of shooting. The ad is currently appearing in the *Sunday Observer*, the *Sunday Times* and *Top Gear*.

It has been a wild three months, and I have met some wonderful people during all the filming and photo shoots. I now fully class myself as *Hondamentalist* and proud of it.

## It's a Man's world



The Honda Formula Four Stroke Isle of Man Grand Prix was threatened by high winds and sea crashing over the sea wall as the teams arrived on Friday, but on Saturday large crowds gathered on Douglas Promenade to witness some good racing in the 150hp and 225hp series. Neil Crabb and Lee Darbyshire in *Premier Cru* were in startling form, holding off a formidable challenge from the championship's two new hotshots,

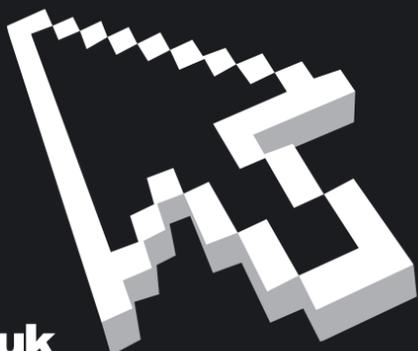
Jak Cockman and Andy Phipps in *Cider Daze 150*. In an equally thrilling 225hp race, Gavin Parsonage and Nathan Libby in *Negotiator* stormed home in first place ahead of myself and Libby. We were pleased with 2nd spot on the podium, though we know there's room for improvement.

Very close racing on the Sunday made a great spectator day for the crowds. *Airwaves Claygate* and *Premier Cru*

battled from start to finish in the 150hp class, with *Airwaves Claygate* taking the chequered flag this time. In the 225hp class, *Negotiator* increased their impressive lead in the championships with another win, while the battle for 2nd and 3rd is a tough one with *Honda Salcombe* and *Team Raymarine* fighting all 13 laps. In the race for the finish line, *Honda Salcombe* just pinched 2nd place from us girls.

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