

Brits hit Key West



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SHELLEY Jory is one of the UK's leading powerboat racers and the top female in her sport. In 2003 she became the first woman to win the British Three Hour Endurance Race on Lake Windemere and in the same year won an award in Cowes for outstanding commitment to the sport. Her team, Team Raymarine, won the Honda Formula Four Stroke Association series in 2005. It was the first female crew to do so, and having remained on podium places for the past four years, it is the most successful Honda team to date. This year she became the face of Honda Powerboat Racing. Each month Shelley gives All At Sea readers an insight into her amazing life.

MECHANICAL gremlins nearly wiped out most of our teams in the USA.

This year the organising bodies of APBA/SBI and OSS racers put their differences aside and joined forces to run the Key West World Powerboat Championships.

More than 70 boats entered which was an improvement on the poor entries over the past few years.

It is oddly comforting to know that even the Americans are having trouble encouraging people into this amazing hidden sport. In fact I was surprised to find out that our Honda and P1 series have triple the amount of TV coverage to what our friends across the water receive.

Among the 70 odd entered boats, we had one complete British Team – Richard Carr's HoneyParty.com. Our world famous champion Steve Curtis MBE is hired by Reliable Carriers to throttle the big boss Tom Abrams to victory. My old Honda rival James Sheppard racing with Craig Wilson in King of Shaves Fountain Worldwide, was recently crowned P1 World Champion.

Finally my host for the week, Nigel Hook an ex-pat in the Lucas Oil Outerlimits Team who had also put on an amazing show all summer in the P1 Championships and was in fact the defending Key West World Champion.

Now the sexy red Lucas Oil Outerlimits boat that has wowed the crowds all summer in Europe was sold

to the Belgians at the end of the P1 season, so Nigel and his driver/ team mate Joe Scro from Long Island NY had to quickly obtain another Outerlimits for the World Championships.

The Outerlimits factory based in Rhode Island cannot make these boats fast enough for the racing and poker run fraternity of America so the only one available was an ex-poker run demonstrator boat. Nigel, Joe and the Lucas Oil team literally had two days to prepare the boat to race speck with a competitive top speed.

Race one proved that this beautiful looking boat was mechanically tired and not up to race pace, a fourth place finish meant the team were going to be working very hard on the Thursday lay day if Nigel was going to have any chance of regaining his title.

Reliable Carriers with Steve on throttles dominated the race from the start but blew an engine on lap three – game over!

Richard Carr and driver Paul Sinclair in Honey Party.com had an interesting day. Their boat is brand new out of the box with a unique set up of a Skater hull, Arneson drives and a rudder. It is early days for this new beast and it is proving to be a handful to drive. It has an incredible top speed of 120 mph plus but it does not like cornering yet.

After three laps Richard and Paul spun out on a very tight corner of the course throwing the boat violently on

its side and knocking Paul out cold – time to retire to the bar boys!

So this left James Sheppard and Craig Wilson (another ex-pat) in their Fountain to fly the flag for Britain. They cruised home in a strong second place behind the Fountain factory team - Shogren.

As you can imagine not much lying around was done on the lay day, it was hands to the pumps in all the race camps.

The British flag was also flown in Key West by the P1 Powerboat Management team who had made an impressive effort to come to Key West. They hosted an excellent drinks reception and good presentation to entice more of the American powerboat teams to come and play in the glamorous venues of Europe.

So look out my fellow Brits I think more yanks are on their way to kick some butt on the European P1 race circuit.

On race day two Lucas Oil Outerlimits went out all fired up after testing 12 various different props and gear ratios, but to no avail. They finished a heartbreaking third as Nigel saw his title slip away from him.

Steve had an even worse day. Reliable Carriers did a 360 barrel roll on the first corner, landed up the right way and, in true Steve Curtis style, totally unruffled by the accident, he immediately re-started the engines and tried to get back into



the race. But with both rear corners badly damaged and taking on water fast they were going nowhere.

Paul Sinclair was still feeling dazed from the previous race incident so the team manager, the renowned boat builder Mark Pascoe, stepped in to race Honey Party.com but even with some new set up work done between the races Richard and Mark decided that the new boat still had some handling issues. Common sense prevailed and they pulled out of the race instead of ruining what potentially will be a very good race boat. It was just another day at the office on race two for King of Shaves Fountain Worldwide who effortlessly took another second place.

Race three, with Reliable carriers and Honeyparty.com on their trailers as the finale started it was not

looking good.

Nigel and Joe in Lucas Oil Outerlimits put on a brave effort and went to the start line with the knowledge that their tired engines were not going to be competitive. After being completely hosed down on the first lap they pulled out with the engines coughing and spluttering.

So it was all down to James and Craig - King of Shaves Fountain Worldwide to fly the Union Jack, and that they proudly did winning second place overall – first of the best of the rest in my view. They were never going to beat the Shogren which had twin 1500 hp supercharged engines to King of Shaves' twin 680 hp engines!

Who knows why they were in the same class!



A bad day at the office for Steve Curtis

Husband and wife smash speed record

TV4 Fearless the 225 powerboat from the Honda Formula 4-Stroke Race Series celebrated victory with a new speed record of 68.24mph, set at the Powerboat Records Week in Lake Coniston.

Driver Rupert Pugh navigator Sophie Pugh established a new national speed record for the F4SA series.

Coniston Powerboat Records Week is the only event in the Powerboat

Racing Calendar to bring together all classes of boat. Competitors and officials from all over the country assemble annually for what has been a popular event since 1970.

Rupert said: "The record came on day three in rain and gusty winds. It was a real challenge to trim the boat to its ultimate performance, and I am delighted to set a new standard for the F4SA series".



The Lucas Oils boat in action

Photo: Murray Head

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