

1.2.2017

Working with Winners - Supporting Vin Burdock in P1 SuperStock Triumph

Robe and Anolis proudly sponsored Quantum Racing's Vin Burdock and John Donnelly in the 2016 P1 SuperStock UK powerboat racing championships which saw the highly talented driver-navigator duo finish runners up in the overall UK Championship ... in only Vin's second P1 season.

Having won the 'Rookie of the Year' award in 2015, and teaming up with John Donnelly as an enterprising 'privateer' team for the 2016 season - meaning Vin owns the boat and is independently responsible for all the associated costs of racing it under the P1 banner - the new partnership promptly set a new national and international P1 SuperStock speed record on Lake Coniston in Cumbria ... before heading into the 2016 season.

To finish second in the championship your second season is a real achievement!

Quantum rocked a series blisteringly fast, beautifully agile, cleverly tactical and hugely exciting performances, winning several races in a hard fought contest that developed through all five race meetings, making the podium in all but one location - due to a technical issue and a protest - and in first position at Scarborough and Cardiff Bay.

As an owner-operator, sponsorship and support becomes even more crucial to having a successful season, and gaining the enthusiastic backing of Robe and Anolis "Was truly amazing and meant everything to us" confirms Vin, who is an engineer, designing and building transmission systems for high end racing cars. He and Robe met initially through one of the Czech manufacturer's R 'n' D programmes.

A major technical challenge through the season is maintaining the boat after each race. Each one has to be approached and judged on its own merits taking in to account elements like wind and wave conditions, tidal currents, 'dirty' water and swell caused by other boats all of which can change in a heartbeat!

"As privateers, we fine-tuned a damage control routine that allows us to push the boat to the max in each race according to its prevailing conditions, then we make a team decision during the race to either push hard or back off slightly to avoid any major destruction ... like ending up with the engine sitting on the sea bed!"

Sometimes there are only milliseconds in which to make that call, and for a privateer scenario, where funding is expedient and has to be allocated responsibly ... it can be a make-or-break decision for the team!

Just like looking after any highly tuned piece of kit, maintaining the boat is key to performance.

Before each race, Vin, John and the team from Powertech Marine - the driving Force behind Quantum Racing and their success in 2016 - check every nut-and-bolt. Salt water corrosion is a major issue so the slightest trace needs immediate rectification. Complete electrical and intercom systems and safety checks are rigorously undertaken, with full fault diagnostics run on the engine.

Powertech strip and prepare the boat for every race meticulously optimising reliability - if you don't finish a race you can't win it! The company are the leading race engineers in the UK for Evinrude and Mercury Racing (high performance marine engines). John Donnelly is a manager of Powertech Marine who also drives and maintained the P1 Panther for Quantum.

At the start of the season John completely stripped and rebuilt the boat. "His care and dedication ensured the boat maintained its competitive edge," states Vin.

Calculating the right fuel balance and the burn rate v. distance, etc. is also vital - too much and the boat is heavy and slow ... too little and you risk running dry at the wrong time!

Physically balancing the boat is another conundrum, done with a lead weight which is positioned differently depending on weather and sea conditions and the rules that state a designated minimum weight of 1650 Kgs / 1.65 tonnes has to be achieved.

High points of the 2016 season for Quantum were Scarborough (also the first race weekend in the series) and Cardiff, both of which resulted in resounding victories for Vin and John.

Robe and Anolis and their guests were also strongly in attendance at both these fixtures.

"To win the first race for your sponsor and to also have them in attendance was truly thrilling," states Vin, adding that the weather and the sea conditions in Scarborough were truly appalling - in fact the worst they encountered the whole year!

The flat waters of Cardiff Bay that weekend was conducive to the speed of the Quantum boat, and John's previous experience of winning the 2015 race there (for another team) was also a great asset ... however these put Quantum under even more pressure.

They used the same winning setup adopted in Coniston to establish the new world and national P1 waterspeed record, a tactic that saw another first place on the podium ... again cheered on by some spirited, vocal and highly visible support from Robe and Anolis.

Asked to choose a favourite course / race venue, Vin reflects before picking Cardiff. "The weather was amazing for the whole weekend, there's a fantastic array of restaurants and bars around the bay, a fun fair and so many excellent vantage points for people to enjoy the race. The boats can easily be accessed in both dry and wet pits, so it's ideal for competitors, sponsors, guests and fans".

He also ranks Bournemouth as "very special" and another great race course for fans to enjoy and get close to the action, with a chicane circumnavigating the pier!

Vin enjoyed the 2016 season immensely and states "It's certainly been a real eye-opener and a great learning curve" so much more so than the first season where he really had no idea of what to expect. Gaining a sponsorship deal with Robe and Anolis has been "incredible" and has really boosted his determination to stay associated with the adrenalin buzz and high energy commitment of this unequivocally competitive sport.

Apart from the race success, he's gained many fans and supporters through the year and is one of the most popular figures on the UK P1 circuit.

After such great results, Vin and Quantum are looking forward to a hectic 2017. With details of the season still emerging, it's expected to kick-off with a totally new international world championship event, Mumbai 2017 - in India - and right now, the boat is undergoing an overhaul and being made ready for its trip.



