

# RACING LOGBOOK POWER

**Cappellini leads Formula I series; Channel record cut; Malaga WOC unsafe?; Mihaldinecz celebrates; Scottish RIB Race; by Ray Bulman**

## CAPPELLINI SET FOR FOURTH TITLE

Guido Cappellini of Italy, who set an unprecedented record last year by winning the World Formula I championship for the third consecutive time, is already well on his way to winning a fourth title judging by his performance in the three opening rounds of the new series.

Winning at St Petersburg, Russia, on June 9 gave him a 26-point lead over his long-time rival, German veteran Michael Werner. Practice for the Russian GP in St Petersburg favoured those more used to rough racing conditions. High winds and steep waves on the Neva river were conditions not normally experienced in Formula I.

Jonathan Jones had much to smile about. He qualified in second place just ahead of Cappellini and felt his prospects for the race were good but didn't reckon on engine failure. The third grid placing proved no handicap for Cappellini. He blasted to the lead almost immediately followed by Finnish driver Pertti Leppala, with Jonathan Jones third. Despite one restart and a determined effort that saw the British challenger struggling to maintain his third position against Italian Massimo Roggiero, there was no way he could break the domination of the flying Cappellini and Leppala, secure in second place.

With the end in sight, Jonathan Jones looked set to collect a consolation prize of 12 valuable points for finishing third when his boat suddenly ground to a halt with mechanical trouble, leaving Michael Werner to sweep by and increase his points margin still further.

Although Cappellini was delighted with the result he remains cautious about his current lead in the series. 'Last year Michael Werner won the three opening rounds and I won the championship. Now the reverse could happen.'

### WORLD FORMULA I SERIES

#### Round 1 (Sardinia)

1. G Cappellini (It) 20pts
2. J Jones (GB) 15
3. P Leppala (Fin) 12

#### Round 2 (Hungary)

1. G Cappellini (It) 20pts
2. M Werner (Ger) 15
3. F Bocca (It) 12

#### Round 3 (Russia)

1. G Cappellini (It) 20pts
2. P Leppala (Fin) 15
3. M Werner (Ger) 12

#### Positions after three rounds:

1. G Cappellini 60pts
2. M Werner 34
3. P Leppala 27

## CHANNEL RECORD

The time for crossing the Channel between Poole and Cherbourg was slashed almost 100 per cent on June 7 when powerboat engineer Mark Pascoe crewed by RYA Powerboat Manager, Peter Dredge, completed the 72.22 miles (116.22km) in 52.23 minutes averaging an impressive 83mph (133.5kph). Driving a Techno 40 RIB designed and built in Italy by powerboat racing doyen, Fabio Buzzi, and powered by a pair of standard Seatek diesels totalling 1500hp, the calm conditions gave the winning crew the opportunity of driving full throttle from start to finish. Even so, a brand new 11m (36ft) American Velocity mono-



CARLO BORLENGHI/ICROS

**Brazil comes in six minutes after  
Victory 4 to take third place in  
the second round of the WOC**

hull driven by Tony Dowly was only ten minutes astern, finishing in 62mins 26secs.

Third place went Extreme Marine – a racing Touring Class cruiser – driven by Nigel Cutler with a time of 67mins 41secs while fourth fastest time of 71mins 35secs was set by a Royal Marine crewed RIB. Only one of the ten entries failed to complete the crossing with the slowest only slightly longer than the 102 minutes set two years ago by Clive Bartlett of BMC PR – the marine public relations agency – in an out-board powered Boston Whaler. What was a creditable performance for little more than a domestic runabout, has now been well and truly broken but only by a far more powerful offshore powerboat dressed in sheep's clothing.

## MALAGA WOC

The second round of the World Offshore Championship (WOC) in Malaga, Spain, on May 19 saw last year's runner-up, Luca Ferrari, driving the Lamborghini powered Tenca, *Jolly Motor-Ferretti*, lead almost from start to finish.

It was a result which now places him at the top of the WOC championship contest

with a score of 42 points, eight points ahead of his closest rival, Saeed Al Tayer of the Dubai based Victory Team 1 who blew an engine and had retired by the third lap.

The event was disappointing in many ways. The course comprised ten relatively short laps along the shoreline, reflecting WOC's fast decline as a serious offshore contest. Perhaps it was just as well that the sea conditions were too rough to hold the pre-race 'pole' speed trials which will now be carried forward to the third round, the Italian Grand Prix, off Rome. The lack of rescue and patrol craft would have been a serious problem had a major accident occurred, and was due in many respects to the indifference some organisers are placing on race support. Crews competing away from familiar venues where rescue cover is taken for granted often find themselves at serious risk. Complaints are regularly made to the relative national authorities and UIM but this doesn't seem to prevent the same race location and organiser being allowed to host equally important fixtures the following season.

In Abu Dhabi, during the final round of the Middle Eastern Class II championship two weeks earlier, a crew suffering a serious accident had to be rescued by the crew of another competing craft representing neighbouring Dubai, where helicopter-borne paramedics are common-place. An added problem was the lack of ambulances at pickup points on the shore, with the comatose driver having to be rushed to hospital in a private car!

The incident has since cost Abu Dhabi its chance of staging this year's World Class II championship in November which now looks almost certain to be picked up by its neighbour. Although the weather calmed for the race itself, Malaga followed the pattern of the first round in Cuba by becoming one of attrition. With only ten crews competing in the championship, retirements through mechanical breakdown or hull stress becomes a serious threat to the viability of the event. It must be particularly worrying for WOC promoter Mauro