



Hot shots everywhere at the J.P. Morgan Asset Management Round the Island Race

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The last few entries before the closing deadline were always going to be an interesting bunch writes Peta Stuart-Hunt

Ben Ainslie, Shirley Robertson and Paul Goodison – all Olympic Gold medallists, all sailing stars and all in Cowes for the J.P. Morgan Asset Management Round the Island Race starting – and finishing – today, Saturday 19th June.

Ben, Britain's most successful Olympic sailor of all time with three Gold medals to his name, is racing on board J.P. Morgan Asset Management Prince's Trust, a Ker 46, with a group of young ambassadors from the Trust who have been through their 'Get into Maritime' programme and are now working in the industry. Shirley is skippering Team Volvo for Life 1 John Merricks, a TP52. Shirley won consecutive Gold medals in Sydney 2000 and Athens 2004. Paul Goodison is the relatively new kid on the block, and current Olympic, World, European and British Laser champion. Paul is on the VO60, Team Volvo

for Life 2.

Jo Richards, the 1984 Olympic Bronze medallist, sailor and yacht designer, will be racing his own brand new boat, the recently completed Richards 20 named Moonshadow. Last Christmas, Cowes-based Jo drew the design of his new boat on the back of a card and it became his winter build project. Initially designed for sailing on the lakes of Europe Jo always had it in the back of his mind to compete in this year's Round the Island Race on Moonshadow. As far as he is concerned to win this particular race you need to go 'extreme', either by racing a tiny boat such as his or something big and high tech, like ICAP Leopard. Jo reckons that there's no middle ground to securing the overall win. In his opinion victory lies in the lap of the gods when the forecast arrives. A windy race will see the big boats win, primarily because they get around fast enough to have a favoured tide from the Forts and if the winds are light, the smaller boats win on handicap. His crew on Race Day includes owner Stephen Fein and Peter Allam, Jo's Olympic Flying Dutchman crew from 1984.

Jo and his little Moonshadow might just get left in the massive shadow cast by current monohull course record holder, Mike Slade's ICAP Leopard! Let's see how it plays out.

Jim Macgregor has entered his 2009 IRC 1 class-winner Premier Flair again. The Elan 40 is also a member of the GBR Red Team in this year's Rolex Commodore's Cup (15-21 August) taking place in Cowes. Three of his kids are on board, Nicky, Lucy and Kate.

A design called an Akilaria RC2 Class 40 is skippered by Ned Collier Wakefield. Concise 2 has been launched this year and is crewed entirely by young sailors, many of whom have sailed as part of the late Kit Hobday's Bear of Britain campaign. J/24 skipper Ian Southworth is racing the quarter tonner Whiskers (formerly known as 'Snoopy') owned by Ian and Led Pritchard. Bill Blain is racing Batfish IV a J/97 30ft performance cruiser, and it's her first RTI Race. Bill won the RORC's Offshore

Championship with 'Batfish III' in 2009.

Finally, the very last entry to be received and processed this year, number 1,754 was from John Caulcutt who is skippering the Swan 65, Desperado!