

BRINEY RIGBY.

Briney Rigby two weeks after winning the Glenn Banks NSW Formula Future Point-score Trophy in September of 2014 headed to China to compete in the 2nd round (the first round as in Qatar in March) of the F4-S Eurofin Cup at the invitation of Jonas Andersson of Team Sweden.

The offer to drive the Team Sweden Molgaard was made to Briney when she travelled to Brindisi in Italy with her Grandfather and recent Order of Australia Medal recipient for Services to Power Boat Racing Alan Smith and Paul Kirkby who was going over to work his magic for Bimba Sjöholm who Briney looks up to as a role model at a round of the Formula 2 World Championship. Briney met Jonas in Brindisi and as Paul and the great Rhys Coles have crewed for and Rhys has driven previously for Jonas they had mentioned that Briney was doing plenty of practice laps in her Mums F4-S and she was coming to end of a successful Formula Future career and might be interested if a seat in the boat became available. At the end of the weekend Jonas asked Briney if she wanted the seat for the last 3 rounds of the Eurofin Cup as he was promoting Jasper Forss the current driver of the F4 to a seat in the 2nd F1 boat for Team Sweden. After catching her breath she thanked Jonas for the offer and said she would talk it over with her family and get back to him as soon as she could when she got home. After much discussion and valuable advice from respected people and friends from within the sport the decision was made to have a go. But we'd start with China and not put any pressure on Briney and if she got through that event both in ability and mentally, remembering Briney was only 15 at the time then we would go onto the other three rounds. It really was an opportunity of a lifetime and too good to pass up even though Briney hadn't had any racing experience in the F4-S.

Briney turned 16 on the Wednesday the day she landed in China and was the youngest competitor by a couple of years and one of only two ladies racing the other being Marit Stromoy from Team Nautica in F1.

The highlight on the first day in China was seeing Briney's face when they raised an Australian flag above the Team Sweden tent, very very special.

Briney went on to race in 8 races for Team Sweden in 2014 in China, Qatar, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah and won 3 races, finished 2nd in 3 races and 4th in 2 races and finished the season 2nd overall only 20 points behind against her more seasoned male competitors (who are older than her being aged between 18 and 42) despite not competing in the first round and despite never having raced for longer than 5 laps and never having done a dock start. The other teams took notice of this very determined, talented and mature young lady from Australia in her rookie season.

Briney got to stand on the top step of the podium with the Australian flag in both Abu Dhabi and Sharjah and listen to the Australian Anthem being played, they were special and very proud moments for the small contingent of Aussies.

To quote multiple World Power Boat Champion Englishman Jonathan Jones from a 5 page article about Briney in the current issue of Club Marine magazine " Briney is doing a great job and has a strong future in powerboating in my opinion. She just gets on with it with no dramas. She is young, fit and has good upper body strength which is essential in the sport. It is nice to see the family is right behind her and together with her Aussie friends have given her this great opportunity. F4 is a solid training ground for F1 and we have seen several young drivers move into F1 in recent times who are now becoming extremely competitive. I have no doubt that given the opportunity she is a star of the future".

In 2015 Briney will again race for Team Sweden in March at Qatar, August in Portugal, 2 rounds in China in October and Abu Dhabi and Sharjah in December as well as the Australian Formula Power Boat Grand Prix Series as and other National meetings in Australia when she can fit them in including the Bridge to Bridge Power Boat Classic in May. Plus the very real possibility of 7 international meetings as she has an offer to race in the USA in August separate to her Team Sweden commitment.

Keep up to date with Briney on her Briney Rigby Pugsley Racing Facebook page and watch the live timing of the Team Sweden F4 races on the F1H20 series website.

Briney and her team have really appreciated all the support and words of encouragement from the Australian Power boat racing community.