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# JOHN MITCHELL

# #1



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# JOHN MITCHELL

#1

After seven seasons playing the perpetual bridesmaid, Scotland's John Mitchell upped the game to dominate the 2006 British Quadcross Championship on his ATV World Yamaha YFZ450. How did he do it? Quad asked him that and a whole lot more...



## JOHN MITCHELL FACTS AND STATS

**Full name:** John Neil Mitchell

**Place of birth:** Isle of Lewis

**Date of birth:** January 17 1981

**Occupation:** Gas Engineer

**Marital status:** Engaged to be married next April to Ann-Marie

**Started Riding:** Age 7 Honda ATC70 trike

**First Quad:** Suzuki LT250

**Started racing:**

1995 to 1998. Youth MX Scottish schoolboy championships. First quad race 1998 at a Scottish championship round on Honda TRX250, finished 2nd. Had 5th overall at first NETT, then a 1st. Paul Anderson put me in touch with ATV World and I rode my first season in the British championship in 1999.

**Quad racing career:**

1999 - 2nd. British Championship. ATV World Yamaha Banshee

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2001 - 2nd. British Championship. ATV World Yamaha Banshee

2002 - 2nd. British Championship. ATV World Yamaha Banshee

2003 - 3rd Laeger Yamaha 450, 3rd Weston riding Grizzly 660

2004 - 2nd British Quad Championship. ATV World Yamaha YFZ450, 1st Pont de Vaux, Scottish champion, Nett champion, Europa Cup, Germany

2005 - 2nd British Quad Championship. ATV World Yamaha YFZ450, 1st Pont de Vaux, 3rd Paris Indoor supercross.

2006 - 1st British Quad Championship. ATV World Yamaha YFZ450, 5th Pont de Vaux

**Quad heroes:** Doug Eichner, Paul Anderson, Paul Winrow.

All for racing achievements and commitment towards racing.

**Other heroes:** William Wallace. Scottish freedom fighter.

**Other interests:** Mountain biking, working on/repairing quads and cars, weekends away to chill out in VW camper.

**Favourite Bands:** Metallica, AC/DC, Red Hot Chilli Peppers, Maiden, Audioslave, Evanescence, to name a few.

**Favourite Film:** Braveheart.

**Favourite TV programme:** Still Game, Chewin' the Fat.

**Favourite book or writer:** James Patterson.

**Favourite magazines:** QUAD, Dirt Wheels, Quad Passion, Volksworld

**Favourite food:** Pasta. Curry. Ann-Marie's home cooking.

**Favourite restaurant:** Any decent Indian.

**Favourite drink:** Extra Cold Guinness.

**Favourite track:** Any physically demanding track like Drumclog, Matchams, Hawkstone.

**Current car:** Nissan Skyline GTR, 1969 Turbocharged VW Beetle, VW camper

**Dream car:** My Beetle when it gets finished the way I want it.

**Current quad/s:** 2 x YFZ450's, Kodiak 450, Foreman 480.

**Current sponsors:** ATV World, Yamaha UK, Elka, Scorpion, Duncan, Four, Vitargo, Lazer, Berik, Laeger, ZipTeam, GYTR, Vortex, Goldspeed, Douglas Wheel, Blur, Renthal, G-UK, AC Racing, Spider, DP Brakes, Cycle county, Motion pro, Putoline, ITP, Pro-Tech, Lewis and Harris Sports council, Donald Campbell Motors, Graham minibus hire.

**Ambitions:** To remain at the top for as long as possible. To help raise the profile of quad racing in the UK. To do well wherever we go. To see the world and to be my own boss!!

**QUAD - First of all - Congratulations Champ! You have dominated the championship this year. What was it that made the difference?**

**JM** - Basically, a great quad, good sponsors and a well managed team run by ATV World. Keeping fit and pre-season testing and preparation certainly helped, but Ann-Marie thinks getting engaged is the main reason! Also having a supportive family and a good group of friends who have been great in helping me train - Thanks to Garry and Smithy there.

**QUAD - Did you have to alter anything on the machine or your personal set-up during the season?**

**JM** - The ATV World YFZ450 was amazing all year. Other than general maintenance, suspension and tyre setup were the only alterations. We did start using Elka's new steering damper towards the end of the season. We finished in every single race of the championship.

**QUAD - Living way up in the Western Isles, you are miles away from even the nearest event. How do you travel to the meetings?**

**JM** - For the meetings in the South we usually fly to Stansted or Birmingham as this saves time off work and you arrive at the track feeling fresh. After winning the British, I landed back at home at mid day on the Monday and went straight to work, so it didn't really set in until that evening! We drove to the closest meeting at Drumclog, Ayrshire, but that was still about a 600 mile round trip.

**QUAD - Has Paul Winrow had his day, or will he still be a threat next season?**

**JM** - No, I don't think Paul has had his day. He will definitely be one to watch next year.

**QUAD - You and Paul have clashed on the track and at times over the rulebook. Besides the commercial considerations of looking after your sponsor's interests, how do you get on?**

**JM** - Paul and I have always got on well and show each other respect on the track.

**QUAD - Who else is there that you consider to be a serious threat and what about any youngsters coming up?**

**JM** - I think any of the top five can be a serious threat on any given day, plus perhaps one or two outsiders. The youngsters are the future of our sport and with the right encouragement they can be a real threat too.

**QUAD - What changes would you like to see in the championship?**

**JM** - I really like the new, longer, two-race format and would like to see it continue. I feel this will move the Championship forward as it will improve the quality of riders. I especially thought that Tony Nash did an excellent job of choosing the tracks for this year. It would be nice to get the same media coverage as the solo boys, but we are getting there. Sky Sports are doing an excellent

job. Quad only meetings certainly work in the US and I think it could definitely work over here.

**QUAD - If you were allowed only one mod to a standard machine, what would it be and why?**

**JM** - A twist grip, because my thumb gets sore with a thumb throttle!

**QUAD - Paul Winrow had a season on the USA championship trail a few years back. Is that something you would like to do?**

**JM** - I wouldn't like to live there, as I'm more of a home boy, but it is a possibility, if the opportunity arises. I had good race experience there myself in 2005. It is a lot more competitive.

**QUAD - If you were riding a tricked-out Banshee in the British Championship, would you still be winning on it?**

**JM** - That's a tricky one. Probably not now, as I have adopted a different riding style to suit the 4-stroke, but I have loved riding the Banshee at Pont de Vaux every year.

**QUAD - Can you give us an outline of your training and diet programme?**

**JM** - I get out practising at home as often as possible. There is no substitute for quad fitness. Off season, in the dark nights, I use the gym, but would much prefer exercising outside - Mountain biking for example. I eat sensibly and do not eat any rubbish. Plenty of fruit and water. On the days prior to a big meeting, I load up on carbohydrates and drink plenty of fluids. I always use Vitargo energy drink when training.

**QUAD - Would you like to do more endurance events?**

**JM** - I really enjoy these events. It is difficult enough however doing the British Quadcross Championship, because of work, but if I had the time I would for sure.

**QUAD - What do you do to relax away from quad racing?**

**JM** - Top of the list is to go for a weekend away in the old camper with Ann-Marie. I also go out play riding out on the moors with my friends on agricultural quads. There could be 25 of us on any day. I enjoy just working on and maintaining my quads and cars in the garage. Recently though, we've been busy renovating a house, trying to get it ready in time for the wedding next April.

**QUAD - If there was a Quadcross des Nations, pick the top three and explain why.**

**JM** - I guess the USA at the moment, due to the fact they have the most full time professionals. Then I think it would be the UK as we have fast, consistent riders. Then France, as they have good fast riders as well.

**QUAD - What are your top tips for better results?**

**JM** - Keep level headed. Keep fit. Eat well. Drink well. Sleep well before a race and you won't go far wrong.

