



Interview with Steve David

Part 2

by Craig Fjarlie



Karl Pearson photo

Last month, in Part 1, Steve David talked about his early years in inboard classes, his entry into the unlimited ranks, boats he drove before hooking up with the Madison team, and his term as President of the American Power Boat Association. This month, in Part 2, he reminisces about the years with Madison and offers comments about the state of boat racing – the unlimited class as well as the larger picture of APBA racing. The first portion of the conversation was recorded at Seafair on August 3, 2012. A follow-up was recorded at San Diego on September 13, 2013, and a final comment on

September 15, 2013, as soon as his retirement became official. Craig Fjarlie asked the questions.

You had a really scary spin-out at the start-finish line in Madison in 2005, with the old boat.

Yeah, 2005, when we hit a submerged log and sheered the rudder. Spun violently to the left and thank heavens Muscatel was a little late for the start so when I spun he actually passed me. His roostertail hit our deck and brought me back down. And then I just missed the support craft that was in the center of the course.

Yeah, that was a freak occurrence. You weren't really hurt.

No. Well, I did get that immediate slam to the right, but I had a good head basket. We went off in Detroit and actually, we were leading the final in Detroit and the U-2 with J. Michael (Kelly) went over. J.W. (Myers) sided me and what they said is that I came over, J.W. came over to avoid me, and then J. Michael went over. And then I took the hit. I'll never forget Nate Brown because he was the referee. I'd pound him but he's already pretty short!

How much input did you have with the new boat?

I knew Mike (Hanson) was building it and I entirely left it in their hands.

Dale Van Wieringen had something ...

Dale really built the shell and Mike and the team finished it. So, certainly Dale and Mike



Ron Harsin photo

Steve David in the old boat (#8806) at Nashville in 2005.

put their heads together in advance. And I knew they were the best that were out there really, so, I mean, Mike showed it to me but I just knew it was gonna be light. And it happened.

What's different about driving it?

Oh, the new designs are so nimble on their feet. The old boat was a battle ship. Go through rough stuff good, but it didn't really float real well. This one, from 120 miles an hour up, it's floating, you know? So I had to get used to how the canards were built and that took a good two seasons.

Very reactive, the operation?

Yeah, yeah, very reactive.

So there's a lot more thought that goes into driving it.

Absolutely, yeah. The other boat was very forgiving. Good boat, I mean, fast boat. Wasn't as fast as the rest, but very forgiving. These will bite you real fast. When they get bent out of shape, it just gets worse. So you always have to be conscious of what the boat's doing.



Craig Fjarlie photo

Steve David at Madison in 2006



Craig Fjarlie photo



Michael Prophet photo

At left, Steve David with the 2007 Seafair Trophy. Above, David and the new Oh Boy! Oberto (#0706) winning at Seattle.

Do you think there are any significant differences between the Qatar boat and the Oberto?

I don't think so, I think they're really quite similar.

You started winning; drivers' championships, five of them now, the three U-1 championships.

Yeah, interestingly our budget is still significantly lower than most people think. I mean, it's into the lower six figures. I think people think we have a million bucks. We don't, nowhere near. It's what Mike and Larry and the team and the Madison folks can do with the money. They can take a penny and stretch it into a hundred miles of copper wire, you know? So they really know their stuff. What it has been is trying to get the right gear combinations and get the propeller inventory so that we can always run head-to-head with *Qatar*.

One thing we haven't talked about yet is offshore, when you raced that.

Oh, yeah, offshore was a ball. Reggie Fountain, who has been an acquaintance for a long, long time asked me to join his team when I was out of unlimiteds, which I did. We ran both SBI (Super Boat International – Ed.) and APB A. In SBI it was called Manufacturers 2 and in APBA it was Factory 2 class. These were vee bottoms, 35 to 38 (feet in length – Ed.) and a 40, and we had a ball. I throttled with Benny Robertson, Mike Seebold, and Fountain. We won some races and just had a ton of fun.

You continued doing this while you were driving unlimiteds?

While I was driving unlimited, yeah. Thankfully I didn't have any conflicts. It's just my wife finally said, "Baby, it's one or the other." And Sabrina won that one out and I stuck with unlimiteds. And Reggie was super, he said, "Any time you want to run one of my boats, you just give me a call."

You haven't been back in an inboard.

I haven't been back and I wouldn't drive unless I was under the lid in any class any more. I think I'm alive because I've been under a canopy.

What about the Gary Garbrecht era? He made some changes, not everybody liked what he was doing, the flag starts although that didn't originate with him. He finally gave up on that and went back to the clock. Then, of course, it all came apart and Sam Cole came in. What was it like running under Garbrecht?



Above left is the late Gary Garbrecht in 2002. He passed away in 2005. Above right, Sam Cole this year at Qatar. ~ Karl Pearson photos

Gary was an excellent business manager and what I think he was trying to do was manage both the business side and the competition side and I think that's where they had the difficulty. He was an outstanding business manager, probably should've let the competition run competitively. It was managed competition, if you will. There was a fuel flow restriction if you won, you couldn't pass anybody until you were

all the way through the first turn, so it took a lot of the racing out of it. His intentions were sound, his intentions were . . .

He put people in certain lanes . . .

Exactly, exactly.

. . . depending on what he wanted.

Yeah, trying to, you know, you start managing racing, it's not racing. And, uh, I think he started to notice that. The problem was we'd already dropped down to six races. And then Bernie dying really put the exclamation point on it, so we had to do something different.

And then Budweiser got out so they lost the back-up sponsor for everything when they couldn't get anybody else.

Exactly.

It did change the sport.

Oh, absolutely. And you know, to the sport's credit, I mean, I don't know how many times this coffin's been nailed shut but somebody always unscrews a few that steers us back alive again and here we are now. I would say we're healthy, we're certainly not Olympic quality yet in terms of funding but we're healthy, we've got money, we got a lot of boats. My concern is the depth of financial stability of the teams. A lot of the teams, you know, in terms of engines and gearboxes, it's about one and done. So we still need to broaden the depth of the competition.

The following portion of the conversation was recorded at San Diego, September 13, 2013.

We talked at Seafair last year and you went out and won the race. You did an interesting start, leap-frogging everybody, got around and held them off.

Yeah, we've done that a couple times, Tri-Cities and Seattle. I guess the bad thing of doing that is the other guys now know how to do it. (Laughter.)

We're starting to see that.

That's just the nature of racing.

Now, in Qatar, things didn't go so well for you. Perhaps you thought you had a handle on winning those, but it didn't work out.

Yeah, you know, the January one they made the call on the 5 saying he had a 1 lap penalty. Then we backed down, and they reversed it. We had to chase him, couldn't do it. And then in February, they called us for not having a five boat overlap. We clearly thought we did. So, nonetheless you gotta live with what the officials do.

Sacramento, that was really rough water but it all came together for you.

Boat was awesome, the boat was set up perfect. I thought, let the guys play on the inside 'cause it was gonna be very difficult from lane 1. If I could nail the start and get a good windup, it would work, and it did. We just carried so much speed through that first turn that they didn't have a chance to catch us.



Karl Pearson photo



Above left, Oh Boy! Oberto at the 2013 race in Qatar. At right, Steve David running at Sacramento. ~ Chris Denslow photo

A lot of guys were late for the start.

Yes.

In fact, you were a second late, but the others were two seconds late.

Exactly, and we...

You had a jump on 'em at the start and away you went.

Yeah, yeah. Any more, as fast as they are, if you've got five, six, seven boat lengths at the start, you've got it covered.

Yeah.

With momentum.

Right, you gotta have the momentum. Now, in Madison, everybody stood on the beach.



Steve David talks to a fan at Madison at right. Above, Jack Schafer in the U-36 Miss U.S. IV ~ Karl Pearson photos

You know, it's funny 'cause on the one hand we didn't get to race. On the other hand, a lot of fans got to get really close to the equipment and drivers like they never have. And so, you might not consider the race a success, but I would really consider it a success for the sport in terms of bridging communication.

Yeah, that was good. And then having them start the *Miss U.S. IV* and stuff.

Absolutely.

Well, Detroit. People who were there said from a standpoint of competition it was a really good race, but it was a disappointment for you personally.

Yeah, um...

Again, official calls.

The officials just sucked at Detroit, frankly. They should've used a condom for what they gave us. I will never forget that. It was absolutely unprofessional on their behalf. Now, that said, I think had Brian Hajny, the chief referee, I think he would've taken a look at other videos and I think he might've overturned (the call). What I appreciate about Brian at Coeur



Karl Pearson photo

d'Alene, while I didn't like giving my first away, I like the fact that Brian looked at everything after he made a call and said, "I made a mistake and I'm gonna reverse this call." And I appreciate that, because he is the very first referee in my 40-some years of boat racing that ever said, "I made a mistake," and I appreciate that very much. The arrogance of the officials at Detroit was completely unacceptable, and one of the very reasons I'm not gonna be around next year, 'cause I'm not gonna subject myself to that level of arrogance.

Tri-Cities, it did come together for you.

It sure did, you know . . .

You had a good race there.

It worked.

The boat was fast, handled the water well.

Handled the water, they gave me a super set-up for the final. You know, you have to, for the final you can kind of figure what you want to do in advance but you never know what's going to come to you, so you can't gear up for a lane three or lane four race, unless it's a habit. So, we just had a really good set-up there and we were able to get the start we wanted. 95 could've been an issue but he had a tall gear so he couldn't accelerate fast enough after the one minute buoy. That allowed me to move over.

Then Seafair helped get you higher up in the point standings when the 5 didn't start that one heat.

Exactly.

Although that changed at Coeur d'Alene...

Yeah, right.

... for a similar reason. That one, *Graham Trucking* got the win.

Yeah, we were in good shape and then the 37 came inside and kept pushing us out as we came around the score-up buoy. So, I had to get around the 37. And then the 5, we needed a lap and I could've gotten him. You know, he had a very good start; we got pushed out and didn't have the speed to catch him.

Same kind of thing at Coeur d'Alene, beside the fact that you broke a shaft pulling away from the dock. That tightened up the point race.

That hurt; lost our good propeller, tightened the point race. And then in the final, when we tried to accelerate comin' out of the turn, the 95 and the 5 had enough overlap to move over on us. In that rough water, it wasn't going to happen.



Craig Fjarlie photo



Karl Pearson photo



Karl Pearson photo

Coeur d'Alene was really rough. Was it raceable water?

You know, it's raceable, it's only that I think a lot of the boats were damaged that don't know they're damaged yet. And that was as bad as Lake St. Clair was.

It was unpredictable.

It was. It was one of those courses if you could get out front, you control the course, you're gonna win. Nobody was going to get around you. We did that, uh, we were able to actually drive around the 37 and the 95 when we won that heat on Saturday.

So here we are, do you have any feelings about San Diego?

Yeah, there's definitely a sense of melancholy. I've met a lot of really nice, genuine people. That's what I'm going to miss. The good news is I'll carry those out with me.

Are you going to be around?

Not next year. Next year I'm definitely going to take off. I do not want to interfere with whoever they hire. I want it to be their boat, their time, and I don't want whoever it is to have to worry about me looking over their shoulder or anybody saying, "Where's Steve?" I want it to be his time.



Karl Pearson photo

Looking back at everything you've done, unlimiteds, APBA President, offshore, inboards, how do you feel about the future of boat racing in general and unlimiteds in particular?

Oh, man, if there's a disappointment, the disappointment is with us within the sport. We're still divided, still a house divided. We just can't get our act together. And we have one of the coolest things on water. We can't get the media. If you look at the number of APBA-sanctioned races, there was a time we had 350. Maybe now we're less than 125. That's not a one-year trend.

Yeah, it's been a long trend.

Yup. This is where it started, trying to go overseas. The fact is, the volunteers can't afford to go overseas.

Too many crew guys have day jobs and they can't take that much time off work.

And it's just masking the issue that H1 needs to fix. They need a real business model that will work, and they're not doing it. They can talk about Qatar, that's just masking what really has to be done. The sport itself could be phenomenal. There's hope, but I think it's going to take different people or a different business model to turn that hope into reality.

We were hearing there might be a meeting this weekend about some of those issues.

Tomorrow I think there's one, I don't know the agenda. You know, I mean, what H1 needs I would not call a brain trust. We had Scott Carson, the President of Boeing, he didn't stay six months. To me, that says something.

Do you have any interest in trying to run H1?

No, not with the present business model. You would have to stand up to some of those owners and basically tell them to shut up or go home, 'cause right now you've still got the tail wagging the dog.

It's been that way for a long time.

A long, long time.

It was that way back in the 1950s.

Always has been, which is why the model we have evolved (into) something (we have) today. I mean, when the biggest press coverage is that somebody is retiring, that's not news. The biggest press coverage should be someone won the race. The biggest press coverage should be about race wins, not about somebody who's leaving the sport.

When you look back, is it a disappointment that you didn't win the Gold Cup?

Well, the Gold Cup to me is an individual award. The national championship is a team award. I would much prefer to give my team something to celebrate. I would like to have won the Gold Cup, but the way we have the team right now, the national championship is more important.

But it would've been nice to have your name on the Gold Cup.

It sure would, yeah, but you know, I'm on the Seafair trophy four times.

There was a time, back in the '50s, when Mel Crook in *Yachting* did his All American Racing Team.

Yeah, yeah.

In the unlimited class he usually picked the boat that won the Gold Cup, even if it wasn't the same boat that won the national championship.

Right, right.

Later the emphasis changed. Bernie Little thought winning the Gold Cup was nice, but he wanted the national championship more.

I think when it was the APBA Challenge Cup and it went to the city that won, you had a really cool thing.

It was a hook for the fans that they had an interest in, and that's gone.

And I'd like to see that come back.

They used to race for yacht clubs but they can't afford to do that. It's too much, they don't have the organization. But what if they raced for DRRA or Madison Regatta, and let it be chosen based on that? They could still keep it professional with prize money. Is that feasible? Some kind of hook to keep the fans interested, like a football team or a baseball team.

The sport's never had a plan. We'll get together for five minutes and come up with ideas. That's what we do. We have to have an issue analysis. And then, once we get to that, a situation analysis and you build that based on the strengths and weaknesses. For example, Coeur d'Alene. Great race, very successful. But we have a limited number of assets, very limited assets. If you destroy all the boats there, and have 'em come to a race two weeks later... So that needs to go into this planning and realize when you have limited assets you allocate business in the best manner you can. We've never done that. The reality is, there are nine boats here and seven of them are basically set. We need to acknowledge that.

Limping along, treading water.

On life support for the next city. If they had a business person to run it, I think they may see that. We got race sites. Instead of saying, "We're gonna be NASCAR," no you're not. Never will be. Don't be what you can't be. Be the



best that you can. We're a sport that's got maybe 10,000 die-hards, maybe 30,000 that'll be there if there's not something else going on. So, that's your market, whatever it is. It could be a little lower than that. So how do you approach a sponsor and say, "I'd like you to put up \$750,000." Let's say you're the businessman that owns the company. You say, "Yeah, I love sports. Tell me how I'm gonna get my money back?"

What's the return on investment (ROI)?

Yeah, I think Oberto comes as close as anybody. Oberto is much like any successful company in terms of demanding an ROI on their spending. What separates Oberto from the Procter and Gambles, Unilever, etc., is the passion for the sport the Oberto family has. I do fear that when Art passes and Larry faces the board as an individual, it will be difficult to sustain their involvement to the extent that presently exists.

They do some pretty skillful marketing.

And the reality is, if it weren't for Art and Larry they wouldn't be in the sport. They have always been unique in their marketing, from "Have Fun" to the newest kitty to a lion. They do indeed represent the spirit of the Oberto leadership and the savvy of the professional executives.

Yeah, their own personal interest.

And we're doing it for less than a quarter of... You see, Bernie, they didn't really care. The Oberto sponsorship is probably less than 10 per cent of what the Bud sponsorship was during Bernie's days. That said, we had national TV then, more races, and a much larger audience. While not to scale today, the current viewership, followership, etc., doesn't justify a Bud level sponsorship. Unless you have unique relationships like Bernie had with Auggie Busch, or Oberto with Madison, our sport can't justify significant investment from ROI-minded companies.

Bernie had friends in the right places.

You look at the companies that actually do the numbers: Unilever, gone; Procter and Gamble, gone. I don't know if the Chairman ever called those companies and said, "We're going to miss you but please tell me why you're leaving and what we can do better." The Air Guard is not gone because of the sequester. They're gone because of a person, and all that's fixable. And then you gotta ask, what is it that gets it better? If it's worth perfecting, then do it. But if it's not as good as it can be, let's make it better. I suggest the fans. I've always loved the fans because they tell us how bad our sport is, but it's never the fans' fault. Bless their souls! You gotta take care of that. You gotta think of them in everything that you do. And they are stakeholders but on H1's website you see 'em slammed.

Yeah, if the fans say something they don't like, the fans get shot.

On-site fans keep the sites alive and excite sponsor visitors. Eyes on the net and TV, ears to the radio, all of these are important to different shareholders. H1 has not been, to my way of thinking, fully cognizant of the multiple platforms and the necessity to be open to all of them. Any negative posting is met with a harsh response by H1. Instead we need to accept that less-than enthusiastic fans are part of the fan base and let it pass by. They are racing fans, just not fans of the structure itself. Simply acknowledge people are entitled to their opinions and focus on putting on the best show possible to convert the fan to outstanding cheerleader for the sport. And you set the rules for them.



Karl Pearson photo

Above is Larry and Art Oberto here at Seattle's Seafair. Art gives our photographer a grin and a big thumbs up.

We want ideas, we want the way to go about it. Don't just say, "You need more races." Tell us how, who, why, where, and when. And then you tell us.

One of the problems with more races is the availability of water to run on.

Exactly.

It's harder than it used to be. There aren't many places where you can put in a two-and-a-half mile course that doesn't have competing interests.

We need big water. Lucas was able to build that stadium for tunnel boats in Missouri because they need, whatever, 4-or 500-feet wide. We need bigger than that. Fan forum would be a great idea, involving corporate America, and inviting some of the better-known companies in and saying, "How do we make this worthwhile for you?"

On another subject, a while back you were working on a Ph.D. Did that come through for you?

No, when the company grew to the size it was I didn't have the time.

(At this point, someone came up and interrupted the interview. The conversation was concluded with a promise to get together right after the final heat.)

The following remarks were recorded September 15, 2013.

You maybe weren't the winner today, but you were out front when it ended.

Yeah, it was a thirtieth of a second. So it was H1's fault 'cause they should have a twentieth of a second clock! (Laughter.) Jimmy's sponson was on, but I was over. So, fair enough.

At first it was hard to tell if you had maybe drawn each other over.

In the old days when it was just fast speed, they didn't call it. It was only when they got the thirtieth of a second camera, it would show me legal and then the red light. If they put it on speed . . . that's why they said good start.

That's as close as it can get, a coat of paint.

Exactly.

That last time you climbed out of the cockpit, any thoughts?

I'm happy I'm in one piece. You know, I'm truly blessed. I got my daughter and I got my wife, the team's in good shape and we obviously have the fastest boat out there. I'm gonna hand it off and it's gonna be one heck of an operation.

OK. Thanks again and congratulations on a great career.

At right is Bob Hughes and Steve David smiling for our photographer at San Diego this year. This would be Steve David's last appearance as an unlimited hydroplane driver.

~ Karl Pearson photo

Steve always had a big smile and a kind word for race fans, he will be missed. Hopefully we will see him in years to come (Editor).



Time Capsule, 50 Years Ago: 1963

by Kirk Pagel

June 23 rd	Alabama Governors Cup, Guntersville AL
July 7 th	APBA Gold Cup, Detroit MI
July 28 th	Diamond Cup, Coeur D'Alene ID
August 11 th	Scafair Trophy, Seattle WA
August 31 st	Governors Cup, Madison IN
Sept. 14 th	President's Cup, Washington D.C.
Sept. 29 th	Harrah's Tahoe Trophy, Stateline NV

In 1963, the Unlimited class hydroplanes began their race season in **Guntersville Alabama**, on June 23rd. The series resumed in **Detroit Michigan**, then on to **Coeur D'Alene Idaho**, **Seattle Washington**, **Madison Indiana**, **Washington, D.C.** and finished on September 29th at **Stateline Nevada**.

The National Champion *and* Gold Cup winner was the U-40 *Miss Bardahl* (#6240). In the background on Seattle's logboom is the *Virginia V*, a passenger ferry from early in the 20th century, on Washington's inland waters. ~ Mike Frost photo



There were two new hulls in 1963, U-75 *Miss Exide* (#6375) and U-13 *Tempo* (#6313). *Tempo* was unusual in that it had a four seat cockpit. Owner Bernie Little made the most of this feature by offering rides to celebrities and race site dignitaries. ~ Kirk Pagel photo





The U-75 *Miss Exide* (top Left) made it to two races before disintegrating. The first *Miss Exide* was quickly replaced by the former U-101.5 *Miss Wahoo* (#5677), renamed *Miss Exide* (2) (Top right) and carried the U-101.5 number for the remainder of the season. 101.5 was the FM frequency for a radio station owned by *Wahoo* owner Bill Boeing Jr. ~ U-75 *Miss Exide* at Detroit from Steven C. Betts - U-101.5 *Miss Exide* at Seattle from Richard Hall



The 1963 race season might best be remembered for all the recycled hulls with new names. The G-13 *Tempo VII* returned as U-8 *St. Regis* (#5513) ~ File 10 photo. The U-54 *Gale IV* (#5454) returned as U-02 *U-Owe-Too*. ~ Richard Hall photo



KOL-Roy returned as U-88 *Fascination* (#601300). ~ Enid Brown photo - The U-22² *Breathless II* (#5722) came back as the U-80 *Blue Chip*. ~ Sandy Ross Collection photo



The U-8 *Hawaii Kai III* (#5608) returned as the U-20 *Miss U.S. 5*. After a 7th place finish at Guntersville and a DNF at the Detroit Gold Cup, owner George Simon began work on a new *Miss U.S. 5* (#6402) which resembled the *Hawaii Kai III*. The U-20 was repainted *Coral Rose* and *Tropical Mist* and returned to the Kaiser family for pleasure use at their Orcas Island, WA vacation property. It died a slow death there, rotting outside in the Pacific Northwest weather, and was eventually given a Viking funeral, burning it to the water line and eventually sinking in the Straits of Juan De Fuca off Orcas Island. ~ Top left at Guntersville. File 10 photo - *Miss Spokane* (#5825) returned as *Miss Eagle Electric*, as Dave Heerensperger's entry to the sport., holding onto its U-25 number. *Miss Spokane* heads out of the Lagoon at Seattle above right. ~ Kirk Pagel photo

The U-79² *Nitrogen Too* (#6079) returned after the first U-6 *Miss Madison* (former *Nitrogen*, #5979) was destroyed at Detroit, as the U-6 *Miss Madison* (2). ~ H&RM Collection photo



Miss Lumberville (#6133) came back as U-9 *Coe-Z-Miss*, then later as U-9 *Miss Michigan* (#6133). Moving forward in its racing career, this boat became Savair's *Mist* and was eventually donated to the Hydro Museum, by the Wolfbauer family to star in the movie



Madison, then was painted as U-8 *Oh Boy Oberto*, for Museum display duty. On previous page the U-9 Miss Michigan (2) seen in the pits at Madison. ~H&RM Collection photo - *Oh Boy! Oberto* seen on tilt at Seattle in 2003 for a test run on Lake Washington. ~H&RM Collection photo

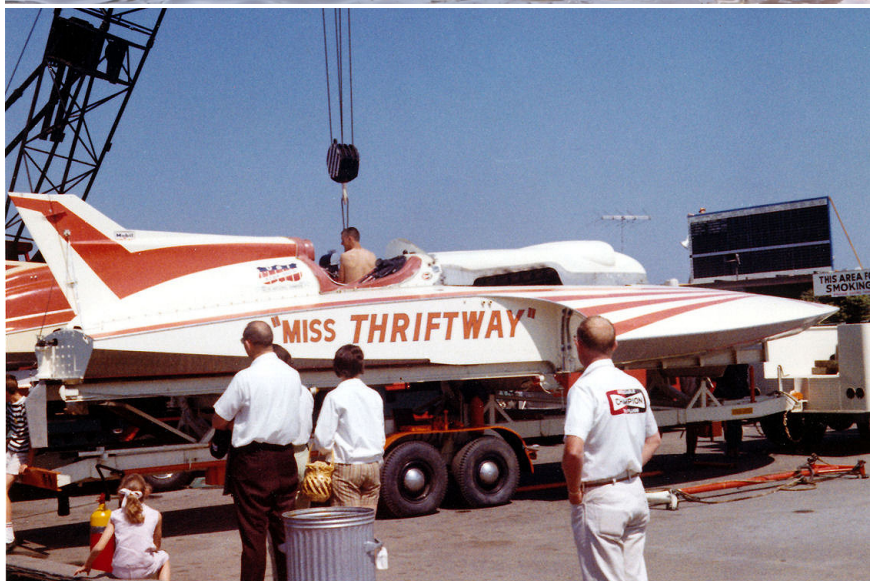
One team changed numbers another changed names. The U-77 *Such Crust IV* (3) changed to the U-70, and the U-99 *Miss Detroit* returned as the U-99 *Mariner Too*. At right Mariner Too at Seattle. ~Sandy Ross Collection photo



Of particular note, U-55 *Gale V* (#5855) placed second in the National Highpoints competition with no race wins but with 5 second place finishes, a DNF at Detroit and a DNS in Seattle. ~Sandy Ross Collection photo



And making her swansong in competitive racing, the *Miss Century 21* came back as U-60 *Miss Thriftway* (#5960). Willard Rhodes' third *Miss Thriftway* ran in only three races, Detroit, Coeur D' Alene, and Seattle before retiring from the sport. At right, people look on at the boat in the pits at Seattle. ~Enid Brown photo



Book Review:

At The Ragged Edge

by Andy Muntz

Hydroplane Racing and the Sport's Most Famous Competitors.

Author: Andrew Muntz, Produced by Inside Lane, copyright 2013 ISBN-13: 978-1-48194-905-7 / ISBN-10: 1-48194-905-5 .

Published by Andrew Muntz; Imprint of Record: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

442 pages; 118 b&w photos.

Paperback. Price \$24.95 + tax

Copies may be ordered through Amazon.com

This book is dedicated in part; To all the young boys and girls who created little wooden hydroplanes, tied them to a length of string and towed them behind their bicycles.

By the end of the Prolog the reader learns where the name of this book originated. "In the unlimiteds," Muncey once explained, "you're flying right at the ragged edge all the time."

After a smattering of early Gold Cup boats and competitors, much of the first half of this volume deals with the life and times of Garfield Arthur (*Gar*) Wood. And what a fascinating life he led. His early association with Chris Smith (*Chris Craft*) certainly got Gar pointed in the direction of an unmatched Gold Cup and Harmsworth Trophy champion. Inventor, wealthy industrialist and seemingly fearless Gar Wood set the standard for competition with those two storied trophies.

The second half of the book covers the Detroit golden years with Horace Dodge, the Schoenith family and bandleader Guy Lombardo. Bill Cantrell, Lou Fageol, and Stan Sayres and of course *Slo-Mo-Shun IV* and *Slo-mo-shun V* all have stories.

Then at chapter 16, William Edward Muncey is introduced. His life is full of little details the average reader simply will not know, yet Muntz uncovers the whole story. As Muncey's story unfolds we meet other players like Mira Slovak, Ole Bardahl and his drivers, including champion Ron Musson.

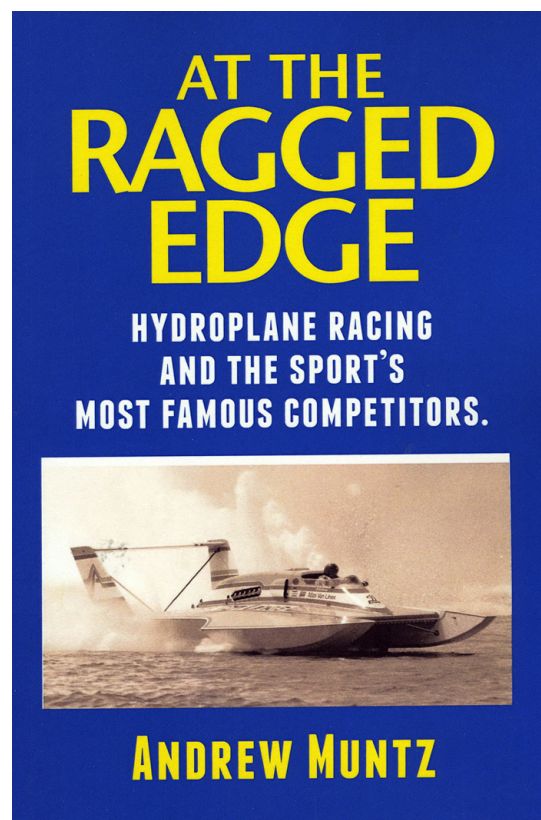
Miss Budweiser and owner Bernie Little are included in the "floating billboards" section. And sadly the details of Black Sunday when Musson, Wilson, Manchester and Brow lost their lives, only to be followed by Thompson a short while later.

The book ends appropriately, with the Acapulco race at Laguna de Coyuca, and Muncey's last race.

Muntz doesn't fill this book with photos, but the photos he published are appropriate and at times rare, especially of the various hydroplanes.

This is author Andrew Muntz's second book. He has also written *Roostertails Unlimited* a self described handbook about the sport. Muntz also writes for *Boat Racing Magazine* and the *Unlimited News Journal*.

Review by: Kirk Pagel. Special Projects Editor for the Unlimited News Journal





HydroFile
Lon Erickson

Madison/Oberto team. ~ U-6 Racing Team facebook page

1. **Graham Trucking**

At the PPE, LLC shop, work continues on the bottom of the U-1 hull to its' running surfaces after last month being stripped of all its graphics and systems.

6. **Oh Boy! Oberto Team**

As of the *UNJ* publication date, no driver announcement has come from the Miss



9. **Jones Racing**

More progress on repairs and updating the transom of the U-9 hull. ~ U-9 photo

11. **Peters & May**

Dave Holley, CEO of Peters & May announced the continued sponsorship of the

U-11 URG team for 2014. This will be the fourth year of sponsorship for Peters & May in the unlimited hydroplane series.

17/95. **Our Gang Racing/Qatar**

The Our Gang Racing team has been busy in the Preston, Wa. shop stripping the hull down



of all systems, going

through the hull, and doing a complete survey of any areas that need attention or updating. Shown here is the hull outside the shop after a thorough pressure washing. ~ Our Gang Racing facebook page photo



22. **Webster Racing**

The team has announced **Dave Lem** will be the new crew chief for the team heading into 2014. Dave brings a vast amount of experience from working with several teams and



winning crew chiefs over his years in the sport, starting in 1994. Webster Racing has more crew announcements coming in the future. ~ Webster Racing facebook photo

37. Schumacher Racing/Beacon Plumbing

The 37 team, lead by **Dave Villwock**, has been busy with repairs and updates to the 37 hull in the shop in Seattle. New driver **Scott Liddycoat** is expected to be in the shop around the first of the year to make adjustments and get fitted to the cockpit of his new ride for 2014. ~ Schumacher Racing facebook page photos



With the recent developments of a group, *The Ultimate Hydroplane Series*, presenting new direction for the sport. Public relations and marketing firm, *Nauticpromo*, continues to report some of the ideas and concepts being put forth to the team owners. Some ideas include new data acquisition equipment from Cosworth technology which would include real time data, gps, and improved accuracy. These features would eliminate the trolling starts and put racing on the water as the focus. Other possibilities include a different qualifying and heat structure and different efforts to equalize the cost to the teams to race. The group behind this new direction continues to work and meet with the owners that ultimately are the people most critical to making decisions for the future of unlimited hydroplane racing.



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NEXT MONTH: 2013 Season Review

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Letters may be edited for clarity and space.

Next Meeting of Unlimiteds Unanimous

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