



MAY 2025

A look at hydro racing's past.



Randy Hall

Bill Muncey guides the new Atlas Van Lines to the dock at the Tri-Cities 50 years ago.

Many fun things surround the sport of Unlimited hydroplane racing. The spectacular sight of the gigantic boats careening across the water at breathtaking speed is certainly chief among them. But for many hydro fans, there's also a fascination with the sport's vast history. It's premier event, the Gold Cup, first held 121 years ago, is the oldest trophy in American motor sports. So, with that heritage in mind, we stop every year at this time to look back at what was happening within the sport at milestone intervals in the past.

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100 YEARS AGO

The 1925 Season

The nation's attention toward boat racing in 1925 began with a publicity stunt. Gar Wood, by far the most famous boat racer in the world, the winner of five straight Gold Cups and the holder of the prestigious Harmsworth Trophy, increased his fame through events that other serious boat racers might have dismissed as silly, such as racing a train called *The Havana Special* up the East Coast in 1920.

The most widely reported of these stunts came in May 1925 when Wood announced that he'd race the well-known *20th Century Limited*, an express passenger train that was renowned for its speedy journey between Chicago to New York with few stops. He claimed he could drive his speedboats down the Hudson River faster than the train could complete its final leg from Albany to Grand Central Terminal in New York City.

At first, the officials of the New York Central Railroad tried to ignore the challenge, saying there would be no race as far as they were concerned and that the train would maintain its regular schedule. But, in the end, even they would get caught-up in the excitement of the event. The idea of a race boat challenging an express train was simply too captivating to



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

Gar Wood attracted widespread public attention to boat racing in 1925 when his Baby Gar IV and V raced the express train 20th Century Limited from Albany to New York City.

ignore.

On the day of the challenge, Monday, May 25, the *20th Century Limited* pulled out of the Albany station at 5:51 a.m., far earlier than its normal departure time of 6:31 a.m. But, Gar Wood was not fooled. Two of his race boats were waiting on the Hudson River. Gar was at the controls of *Baby Gar V* and his brother George was behind the wheel of *Baby Gar IV*. The train crossed the Hudson River Bridge in Albany a minute after leaving the station and the instant the first section of the train drew even with the two boats down on the river, Gar and George both hit the throttles.

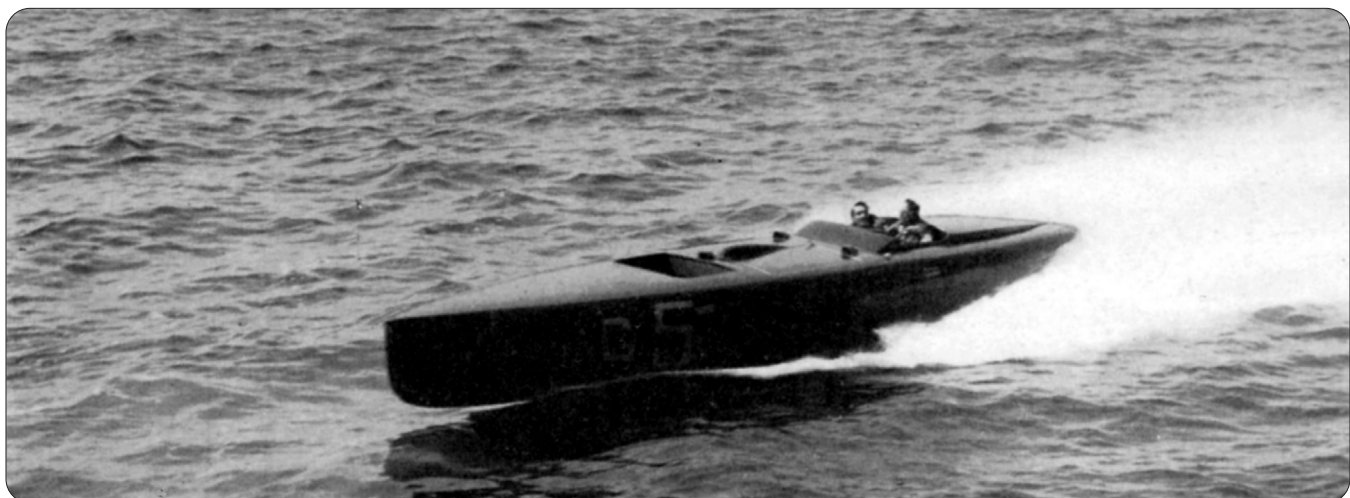
The race was on!

Thousands of spectators lined the banks of the river to watch the spectacle.

Newspaper reporters from throughout the nation covered the race; a half-dozen airplanes followed along watching from above, and radio stations provided regular reports of the progress. "Everywhere there were thousands of persons along the roads we passed," one of the passengers told a reporter for the Associated Press.

School children in Kingston, Poughkeepsie, and Newburgh were late for classes so they could watch as the boats passed by. Gar Wood's wife, Murlen Wood, and a party of friends watched from the front section of the train, where they cheered for the boats and waved flags. But, pretty soon, the two boats disappeared far ahead down the river.

By the time the boats reached the



M. Rosenfeld Collection

Caleb Bragg drove Baby Bootlegger to victory in the 1925 Gold Cup and earned the most points among the competitors that season.



Caleb Bragg

halfway point, the engines in *Baby Gar V* began to run rough, so Gar and George quickly switched places then continued on their way, with *Baby Gar IV* holding a comfortable lead of about seven or eight miles over the train. Down in New York City, a huge crowd gathered near the Columbia Yacht Club in Manhattan and lined Riverside Drive and the banks of the Hudson waiting for Gar Wood to arrive.

Then, about half past eight o'clock, those looking up the river through the morning haze could finally see the form of a boat bouncing across the water and throwing white spray into the air. A few minutes later they began to hear the engine's distant roar, and then they cheered as the *Baby Gar IV* crossed the finish line, completing the journey in two hours, 58 minutes and 20 seconds, or at an average speed of 46.5 mph. Gar Wood had beaten the *20th Century Limited* by 25 minutes.

The race was a huge success. "Never has the public been as interested in a power boat event as they were in this," reported *Yachting* magazine.

As for that summer's organized boat races, the vast majority were semi-feature events that consisted of one-heat, free-for-all competitions, sweepstakes races, and other contests that involved only a couple of Gold Cup-class entries against

a field of limited-class boats. Included was the Dodge Memorial in Miami won by Gar Wood and his *Baby Gar V*; the Pelton Gold Cup in Buffalo, New York, won by William Conners, Jr., in *Miss Palm Beach*; the International Trophy in New York won by Richard Hoyt in *Teaser*; the Detroit Yacht Club Development Trophy won by Delphine Dodge Cromwell (Horace Dodge's sister) in *Nuisance*; and the Detroit Sweepstakes won by Jesse Vincent in *Packard Chriscraft II*.

Scoring the most points among the Gold Cup competitors during the season was Caleb Bragg, the owner and driver of *Baby Bootlegger*, a stunning mahogany craft designed by George Crouch that was considered among the most beautiful speedboats of the era. Bragg, who earned his fortune as the co-inventor of what we now know as the power brake, also had experience racing cars. He was in the field for the first Indianapolis 500 race in 1911, was the fastest qualifier for the 1913 event, and finished 19th in 1914. In boat racing, he was the winner of the previous two Gold Cup races.

As the two-time defending champion, Bragg was the favorite as the boat teams gathered in late August amid the opulent mansions that lined the shore of Manhasset Bay in Long Island Sound, New York, the setting for the novel *The Great Gatsby*, which was released that same year. Bragg's main rivals were expected to be Carl Fisher's *Baby Shadow* with Bragg's business partner Vic Klierath at the wheel and Delphine Dodge's *Nuisance*, which was driven by Col. Jesse Vincent, the chief engineer for the Packard Motor Car Company and the winner of the 1922 Gold Cup.

Yachting Magazine reported that the crowd that went to Manhasset Bay to watch included "the largest fleet of yachts ever assembled for an event upon the water." About 5,000 yachts and other watercraft were anchored five or six deep around the three-mile course and about 15,000 spectators sat on two floating grandstands to watch the regatta, which

featured 127 race-boat participants, not only for the Gold Cup race but for several other semi-feature contests.

Eleven Gold Cup boats qualified for the big race, of which nine started the first heat. *Nuisance* and *Miss Tampa*, with Dick Locke driving, took an early lead in the heat but were soon caught by Klierath and *Baby Shadow*, which led the others through most of the race as Caleb Bragg in *Baby Bootlegger* passed *Miss Tampa* to move into third place. As *Baby Shadow* started its final lap, a puff of smoke enveloped the boat and it slowed to a stop, the victim of a broken piston rod. That's when Vincent and *Nuisance* surged ahead and held that advantage to the finish line. Bragg finished second and Pierre Joyce was third in the Dodge-owned *Impshi*.

In the second heat, Caleb Bragg immediately jumped into the lead and stayed there to the finish line, though pushed hard by Vincent until *Nuisance* broke its propeller shaft during the eighth lap. Only four boats started the third and final heat. Knowing he just needed to finish among the leaders to claim his third-straight Gold Cup, Bragg was content to follow *Miss Tampa*, which had grabbed the lead at the start. His second-place finish was enough to claim the prize.

75 YEARS AGO

The 1950 Season

In early-October 1949, an odd-looking boat shaped something like an elongated flying saucer first appeared on Lake Washington in Seattle. It quickly captured the attention of city residents and newspaper reporters, who saw the thing fly across the water's surface at an incredible speed—making a roaring sound that could be heard miles away and throwing a large plume of white spray high into the air behind it.

Ironically called *Slo-mo-shun IV*, the boat was the first to perfect the idea of a three-point design in which the rear of



TOP: *My Sweetie*, with Bill Cantrell at the wheel, was the defending Gold Cup and national champion going into the 1950 season. **ABOVE:** Lou Fageol is alone in the cockpit of *Slo-mo-shun IV* while on his way to victory in the first heat of the 1950 Silver Cup race in Detroit.

the boat was suspended above the water using the concept of a prop-riding propeller. Owned by Stan Sayres, designed by Ted Jones, and built by Anchor Jensen, the craft soon made headlines around the world when in June 1950 it dashed through a mile course set on Lake Washington at an average speed of 160.323 mph, thus shattering the world's water speed record.

Sayres and his team then set their sights on winning the Gold Cup the following month in Detroit. There they would compete against the elite of boat racing, such as Horace Dodge's *My Sweetie*, the defending national champion and winner of the 1949 Gold Cup. With Bill Cantrell driving, the boat had started the 1950 season by winning the Maple Leaf Trophy.

There were many skeptics when *Slo-mo IV* arrived on the Detroit River. The Seattle boat was undoubtedly fast, they reasoned, but could it get around a turn? Those doubts were dispelled in the first heat when Ted Jones drove *Slo-mo IV* to a Gold Cup record on the first lap and, before it ended, lapped Cantrell and *My Sweetie* from behind while on its way toward setting a new heat speed record.

Lou Fageol replaced an ailing Cantrell in the driver's seat of *My Sweetie* in the second heat and held an early lead over the others until his boat's engine finally ran out of oil and fell silent, thus giving the victory to the Seattle hydro. So, the third heat was an anticlimax. Jones raced to an easy victory and claimed the Gold Cup for the Seattle Yacht Club, which meant the prestigious

event would go to the Pacific Northwest for the first time the following year.

In early September, with Fageol now driving *Slo-mo IV*, the innovative Seattle craft also was victorious in the Harmsworth Trophy against the Canadian challenger *Miss Canada IV*. It was just the third time in the sport's history that a boat had set a world speed record and won both the Gold Cup and the Harmsworth in the same year. Bartley Pearce and Clinton Hoadley Crane had accomplished the feat with *Dixie II* in 1908 and Gar Wood had done it with *Miss America* in 1920.

Later that same weekend, *Slo-mo IV* managed a fifth-place finish in the Silver Cup before the team towed it back home. The winner of that event was Danny Foster in *Such Crust*, who finished ahead of Chuck Thompson in *Miss Pepsi*, a craft that would win the President's Cup later that season.

When the Seattle boat wasn't around, *My Sweetie* managed to collect enough points with a victory in the Detroit Memorial, a second-place finish in the President's Cup, and a victory in the Unlimited Trophy on Lake Mead in Nevada, to successfully defend its national title. *Slo-mo-shun IV* finished second, tied with Guy Lombardo's *Tempo VI*, and Jack Schafer's *Such Crust II* finished fourth with Dan Arena and Danny Foster sharing the driving duties.

50 YEARS AGO

The 1975 Season

The previous season had featured a deck-to-deck battle between Dave Heerensperger's *Pay 'N Pak* and Bernie Little's *Miss Budweiser*. When that campaign ended, George Henley had scored more points in *Pay 'N Pak* and claimed the team's second-straight national championship. For 1975, both teams had new drivers. Henley decided to retire to his business selling jet-drive pleasure boats in Tacoma, Washington,



Jim McCormick confers with crew chief Jim Lucero before a test run on Lake Washington aboard the defending champion *Pay 'N Pak* at the beginning of the 1975 season.

and Dean Chenoweth, who had come out of retirement to finish the 1974 season after Howie Benns broke both legs in a motorcycle accident, went back to his home in Tallahassee, Florida.

To replace Henley in the “Winged Wonder,” Heerensperger chose Jim McCormick, who began the year with many question marks hanging over his head because he was still limping as the result of a severe leg injury he had suffered when tossed from the cockpit of *Red Man* at the beginning of the 1974 campaign.

As for the Beer Boat, Bernie Little hired former *Pay 'N Pak* driver Mickey Remund for the task. The result proved to be a year-long challenge for *Budweiser* crew members, who spent much of the season converting the boat from Chenoweth’s “negative steering” set-up to Remund’s “point-it-and-it-will-go-there” driving technique. That also meant lots of adjustments to the boat’s skid fin. Crew member Burns Smith remembered, “Mickey drove me crazy with changes all year, and we’ve certainly got a hell of a lot of fins.”

A lot of other Ron Jones-designed boats with horizontal wings were also highly favored as the season got underway. Among them was *Miss U.S.* and *Lincoln Thrift*, but especially promising was Leslie Rosenberg’s *Weisfield’s*, which was driven by the venerable Billy Schum-

acher, and seemed to be the fastest in the field at the beginning of the campaign. Schumacher swept all three heats of the season opener in Miami, was edged out by *Miss Budweiser* in Washington, DC, as Bernie Little won his first President’s Cup, and won again in the season’s third event at Owensboro, Kentucky. Meanwhile, *Pay 'N Pak* struggled with Jim McCormick at the controls and *Budweiser* was looking stronger with each race and was cornering superbly under Remund’s guiding hands.

Then, with only six races remaining and with *Pay 'N Pak* a long distance behind *Weisfield’s* in total points, George Henley came out of retirement to pilot

Heerensperger’s boat. Except for the Phoenix race, where *Budweiser* slid around the cramped Firebird Lake faster than anyone else, Henley and *Pay 'N Pak* won five of the remaining six races and locked up the team’s third straight national title in the final heat of the season’s last event.

Schumacher and *Weisfield’s* finished second in the final standings, while third place went to *Lincoln Thrift*. Driver Milner Irvin had shown a steady hand during Bob Fendler’s swan song in the sport. The hull improved throughout the season, came within striking distance of a Gold Cup victory, sported an outlandish vertical stabilizer at season’s end, and its turbocharged Allison was a marvel of dependability.

Not mentioned among the favorites as the season started was Bill Muncey, the sport’s all-time champion, who had suffered through two dismal seasons since dominating the sport aboard *Atlas Van Lines* in 1972. Finally realizing that in order to be more competitive he had to do something more dramatic than modify the engine, team owner Lee Schoenith ordered a new hydroplane from Jon Staudacher, the son of famed hydro builder Les Staudacher, for the 1975 campaign. The new *Atlas Van Lines* featured a horizontal stabilizer and other features of the newest competitors.



Randy Hall

An early-season favorite to win the national title was Billy Schumacher and *Weisfield’s*. The pair won two of the season’s first three races.



George Henley took over the driving duties of *Pay 'N Pak* at mid-season and went on to win five of the last six races to claim the 1975 national title.

Even before the waters of Mission Bay had fully calmed after the season's final race, big changes were already in motion for the 1976 season.

Some people whispered that the new hydroplane had been designed from tracings of *Pay 'N Pak* and *Budweiser*, taken when the two boats had been in Staudacher's shop for repairs. Even Muncy had to admit his new hydro closely resembled the pair, calling the design early D & B: for Dave (Heerensperger) and Bernie (Little). "It's basically a copy of the *Pak* and the *Miss Bud*," he admitted. "It would be fun to have something revolutionary and exciting and capture the imagination of a million people, but we need results now."

The new *Atlas Van Lines* performed well in testing, at least according to the public statements Muncy fed to the reporters. It even did well in its first race—winning its first heat and finishing second a couple of times to claim runner-up honors in Miami. But, the season went downhill from there. Except for a victory in a preliminary heat in Phoenix toward the end of the campaign, the new *Atlas Van Lines* would always follow other boats across the finish line—if it finished.

The boat had a tendency to hook, the horizontal stabilizer proved to be too small to do any good, the engine threw a rod in Detroit and suffered a burned piston in the Gold Cup, it ran out of fuel in Seattle, and even had the indignity of being disqualified in San Diego because it was too slow. At one race, the *Atlas Van Line's* steering wheel even came off in Muncy's hands as he prepared to start a heat.

The poor performance had put the *Atlas* team on the verge of collapse. Muncy's relationship with Schoenith and the crew had taken a beating. After one particularly bad showing, Schoenith, who had suffered a heart attack during the previ-

ous winter, was heard telling Muncy in a heated tone that a different driver might solve the boat's problems. Muncy had lost interest, his crew members were bickering, and Muncy's fellow drivers could see the strain in the way he handled the boat on the course. "He drives as if he just doesn't care," one observed.

The come-from-behind title victory by *Pay 'N Pak* put Heerensperger among history's elite. His winged hydro had won 16 races in only three years, making it the winningest hydroplane the sport had ever seen. What's more, the San Diego victory put him in a tie with Bernie Little with a career total of 24 race wins.

Even before the waters of Mission Bay had fully calmed after the season's final race, big changes were already in motion for the 1976 season. Bernie Little sold his *Miss Budweiser* to a racer from Australia and bought another one of those new Ron Jones boats, a craft that had been built the previous winter for an Ohio industrialist named George Walther, but never used.

In Detroit, O.H. Frisbie, the chairman of *Atlas Van Lines*, was considering the end of his relationship with the race team that his company sponsored. He called a meeting with Schoenith to tell him that something had to change. "There came a time when we couldn't continue with that type of equipment, and I told him so," Frisbie said. "He would have to prove to us before the season started that he had a boat that could be competitive. We wouldn't go into the season hoping to perform some miracle."

Schoenith contemplated his options. He reflected on his failing health, realized he'd have to

spend \$100,000 to \$150,000 plus a new hull to improve his chances, considered the fact that his family business, the Gale Company, was losing money, and concluded that he simply couldn't put anything together. So, after 26 years of racing hydroplanes, and with 27 trophies, two Gold Cups, and four national championships to show for it, the patriarch of Detroit hydroplane racing decided to end his career.

As for Muncey, the 47-year-old wasn't prepared to quit driving. "Why should I retire?" he asked a reporter a couple of years before. "There's a demand for my services. When nobody wants Bill Muncey around anymore, then I'll quit. I'll take my savings and get a paper route."

As Little, Schoenith, and Muncey were contemplating their plans for the future, Dave Heerensperger announced that he had already hired George Henley to handle *Pay 'n Pak* again in 1976 and that they were planning to seek an unprecedented fourth straight national title. But, by the time the crocuses blossomed the following spring, Heerensperger would receive a phone call from Muncey and would shock the sport by making an astonishing deal.

25 YEARS AGO

The 2000 Season

One would be hard pressed to call the 2000 season a success. One team dominated, there were constant complaints about rules, and, according to many critics, the season produced nothing that would attract more fans or generate more interest in the sport. To top it off, the season ended with a shocking death in San Diego.

From the beginning, a controversial fuel-flow rule overshadowed whatever happened on the racecourse. The year before, in an effort to address complaints that the outcome of races had become too predictable, the sport's leaders imple-

mented a rule in which a boat with consecutive race victories could not start a heat from the inside lane, then from an additional lane toward the outside with each consecutive victory after that. Once a win streak was broken, the handicap would no longer be applied for that boat.

It didn't seem to work. *Miss Budweiser* still managed to win eight of the 11 events on the 1999 schedule.

So, it was back to the drawing board. In an effort to improve parity in 2000, if a boat won a race the flow of fuel to the turbine engine would be reduced by 0.1 gallons per minute for each victory, thus causing it to lose power. It was a penalty for winning, in other words. Each time that penalized boat failed to win a race, the fuel-flow restriction would then be reduced by the same amount.

The rules and the controversies they created were a continual topic in newspaper stories about the sport and in the TV coverage. Among participants, the talk always seemed to turn toward fuel restrictions and N2 violations instead of racing and strategy. A sportswriter labeled the sport as "a joke on the water." Yet, in the end, the heavily favored *Miss Budweiser* still managed to win six of the seven races and was the fastest qualifier at all seven events.

On top of the controversies about rules were complaints about fewer race

sites. Four locations that held races in 1999 were no longer involved a year later. Honolulu was gone after hosting races for 10 years; Kelowna, British Columbia, was gone after four events; Norfolk, Virginia, after three; and Barrie, Ontario, was no longer hosting a race after just one attempt.

Also working against the idea of parity was the fact that *Budweiser's* primary competition from the previous few years was no longer operating with the same checkbook. In 1999, the three races that weren't won by *Budweiser* were instead won by Chip Hanauer driving Fred Leland's *Miss PICO*. But, after the 1999 season, PICO was purchased by FIAT, which did not share PICO's enthusiasm for Unlimited racing and canceled its sponsorship. Hanauer, therefore, left the team and was replaced by Greg Hopp.

There were some bright spots during the year. Most notable was the performance of Mike Hanson and the U-9 boat, which was owned by Mike and Lori Jones. The team surprised hydro fans by placing second in Seattle, as well as turning in some good speeds and performance in San Diego. The sport also benefited by the return of Oberto Sausage Company as a sponsor after five seasons away. Teaming up with Miss Madison Inc., *Oh Boy! Oberto* took a couple of thirds with Nate Brown driving.



The Miss Budweiser race team introduced a new boat before the 2000 season. It's shown here after its launch in the spring. The boat currently races as the U-12 *Graham Trucking*.

Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum



TOP: Russ Wicks drove *Miss Freei* to a new world straightaway speed record during a 205.494 mph run on Lake Washington in June 2000. **ABOVE:** *Appian Jeronimo* was driven by George Stratton, who was killed driving the boat before the 2000 San Diego race.

Rules at the time allowed a race team to take more than one boat to a race site and then decide which one they would enter in the race. The points earned by any of the boats would count toward that team's national championship effort. The *Miss Budweiser* team used three different hulls during the 2000 season: a boat commonly called the T-3, which was built in 1989 then extensively rebuilt in 1995; another called T-5 that was originally built in 1996 then extensively rebuilt the following year; and the third called T-6 was a brand-new hull.

The T-3 was chosen to compete in the season opener at Lake Havasu, Arizona, and, with Dave Villwock driving, won all of its heats easily. It was T-6's

turn when the fleet went to Evansville, Indiana. It also won each heat to take the first-place trophy. Then, the T-5 had its opportunity farther up the Ohio River at Madison, Indiana, and once again won all of its heats.

The fuel-flow restrictions didn't apply to the Gold Cup, which was next on the schedule at Detroit. The T-5 again got the nod and Villwock easily outpaced the others with victories in every heat it started, which gave Bernie Little his 10th consecutive Gold Cup victory.

Now operating with a fuel flow that was four tenths of a gallon per minute less than everyone else, the newest T-6 *Budweiser* carried the team banner at the Tri-Cities. This is where the string of race

wins was broken. The boat had collisions with both *Miss Freei* and *Miss Go Bowling* in preliminary heats and didn't make it to the final, where Mark Evans drove *Miss E-Lam Plus* to victory.

Villwock drove the T-5 hull in the final two events. In Seattle, he got a good start in the final heat, grabbed the lead coming out of the first turn, and was never challenged. On San Diego's Mission Bay, the boat had to compete with the same fuel-flow disadvantage that it had at the Tri-Cities, yet that didn't seem to matter. Villwock took the lead in the first lap of the final, and extended its advantage to the end—winning the national title easily.

Budweiser's San Diego victory was overshadowed, however, by the tragic death of George Stratton while driving *Appian Jeronimo* during a test run on the morning of the race. It had been 18 years since a death had occurred in the sport, largely due to the fact that enclosed cockpits were mandated beginning in 1985, but Stratton was killed instantly when his boat blew over and dived back into the water at a steep angle, apparently striking the bottom of Mission Bay in the process.

The sport also made news outside of racing in June when Russ Wicks drove *Miss Freei* onto Lake Washington with the intent of setting a new world straightaway speed record, a mark that stood since *Miss U.S. I* was clocked at 200.419 mph in 1962. Using a course set near Sand Point, the same location where *Slo-mo-shun IV* had set its history-making record 50 years before, Wicks drove the boat from south to north through the one-mile trap at 207.735 mph, turned around, and returned through the course at 203.735 mph—giving him an average of 205.494 mph. The mark still stands as the world speed record for propeller-driven boats. ♦

FROM THE UNJ VAULT:

Robert Dossin and the family race team

PART TWO



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

In last month's issue of the *NewsJournal*, we offered the first part of an interview of Robert Dossin, who discussed the successful boat-racing career of his father and two uncles: brothers Walter, Roy, and Russell Dossin, the proprietors of a company called Dossin's Food Products, which held the franchise to manufacture and distribute Pepsi-Cola throughout Michigan and Northern Ohio.

We learned last month how the Dossin brothers got involved in boat racing in 1946, broke the sport's barrier against sponsorships for race boats, campaigned a wildly successful boat named Miss Peps V in 1947, then in 1948 built an old-style step hull named Miss Pepsi that for two seasons struggled to be relevant.

This month, our story picks up after the 1949 campaign with a new project that hoped to recapture some of the speed that was lacking in that craft. With nine race victories and two national championships, the new boat would become among the most successful Detroit-based hydroplanes to compete during the years that followed World War II.

As the story continues, it might be helpful to know that Russell Dossin had passed away shortly after the 1947 season, Walter Dossin would die in the mid 1950s, and that Roy Dossin, along with his son, Robert, and nephew, Ernie (the son of Russell), would be most actively involved in the family's racing activities during the 1950s.

The following interview of Robert Dossin was conducted by NewsJournal correspondent David Greene during the summer of 1983 and was originally published in the Febru-

ary and March 1984 issues of the Unlimited NewsJournal.

UNJ: After the disappointing race at New Martinsville in 1949, the first *Miss Pepsi* was to be replaced by a new boat to be built by Les Staudacher and designed by John Hacker. Could you give us the background on this?

DOSSIN: We were approached by John Hacker one day. He had the plans with him and laid them out on the conference table for us. My dad had us come in there to take a look at them. At the time John Hacker had also made a model of the boat and he had that with him. It was a beautiful model. We were all kind of amazed to see this model and we were impressed that our boat could look like that. It kind of sold us.

Hacker estimated what the speeds would be on the boat. He said it would beat any other boat in competition. He mentioned a new, radical idea of putting two Allison's nose to nose with opposite rotating engines. Hacker's idea was to have the gearbox in the center and a V-drive going amidships with the boat. That was something that we couldn't understand very well. Here the hull was 34 feet long and the propeller was to come out almost in the middle.

It was the only way it could have been done. It was Hacker's theory that it would make the boat turn on a dime in going around those hairpin turns. The theory worked out pretty good. We completed the boat, and we were amazed that it worked. We never had to do anything to it except for the problem we had with

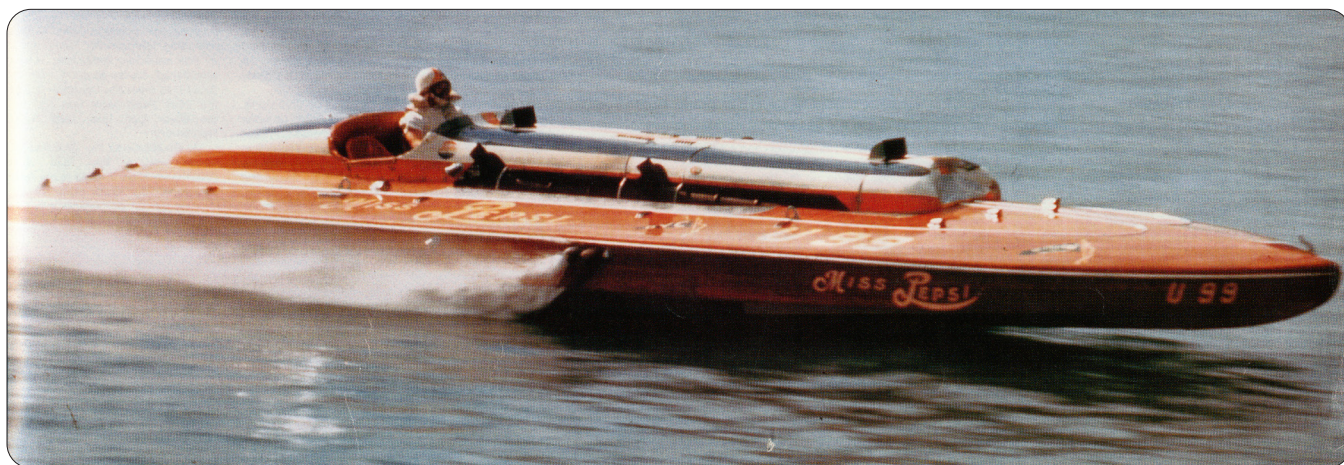
the oil circulation.

Engine consistency was much better in 1949 than in 1948. Could you comment?

We had two fellows working with us: the McKenzie brothers—Bill McKenzie and his brother, Al. They were former mechanics on the *Notre Dame* and worked with us on the engine along with Chuck Thompson. As a result, the engines ran more consistently.

The new *Miss Pepsi* first appeared at the 1950 Gold Cup, but failed to qualify. Would you give us the background on this?

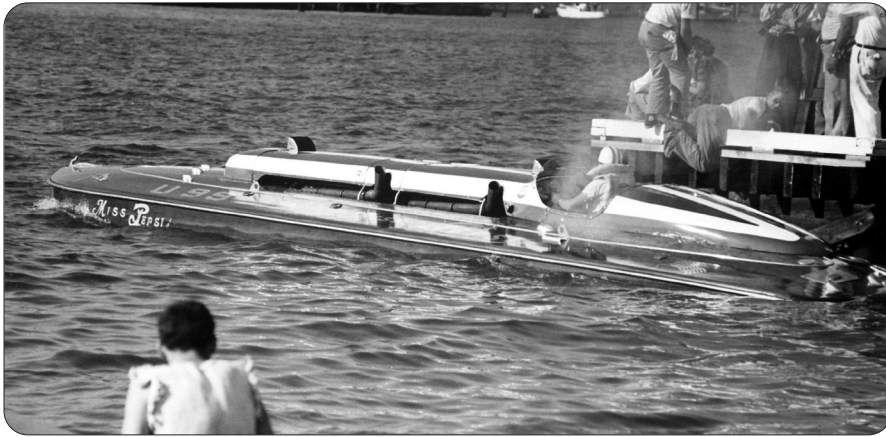
I think we had gearbox problems. The McKenzie brothers were involved here too. They were with General Motors at the time. I think that our gearbox went out in the tryouts. The McKenzies actu-



Jack Higgins

ABOVE: *Miss Pepsi* with Chuck Thompson in the cockpit.

PREVIOUS PAGE: Walter Dossin (left) and his brother Roy (right) celebrate with their driver Chuck Thompson after winning the 1952 Detroit Memorial race.



A cloud of smoke surrounds the cockpit as Chuck Thompson starts the twin Allison engines on *Miss Pepsi* and prepares to drive the boat onto the Detroit River in 1950.

ally rebuilt or built a new gearbox for the boat. The gearbox they built was so heavy and so tough that we never did have any more problems with it.

To give you more background, the new gearbox was twice the size as the original on the boat. It was also three or four times as heavy as the original. Our initial gearbox had an all-aluminum housing and when the boat first ran it just tore that housing all up. The new gearbox was cast iron. All the gears were cut by the McKenzies. From what I understand it was quite an expensive gearbox. We got a bill of around \$10,000 for that gearbox, but it lasted.

The new *Miss Pepsi* was the second-fastest qualifier for the 1950 Harmsworth Trophy yet was not selected. Could you give us the story behind this?

During the 1950 Harmsworth trials the *Miss Pepsi* was really fast. There wasn't any boat that could keep up with her as she was turning laps of 107 miles per hour around a five-nautical-mile course.

We had a problem, and it was that the boat was throwing oil. We couldn't go more than two laps without losing all our oil and you had to do three to qualify for the Harmsworth. We couldn't figure it out. We worked on it day and night trying to figure out what was wrong.

Eventually it came near the time we had to either say we were going to be in

or out. We withdrew the boat from the race. We didn't want to lose a race for the country because of this oil problem. It was a very sad day for us when we had to withdraw from the Harmsworth Trophy.

I think it was the day after the Harmsworth race we found the problem. It was a little oil deflector or reflector in the oil line. It was something that cost us about 15 cents or 20 cents to replace. We replaced it and that was when we started winning all those races.

***Miss Pepsi* was defeated by the *Slo-mo-shun IV* in the initial heat of the Silver Cup, but went on to turn better lap times than the *Slo-mo* in subsequent heats. At this time, how did you compare your boat to the *Slo-mo IV*?**

We were convinced that we could beat the *Slo-mo*. It was exciting to watch

those two since the *Slo-mo* was faster on the straightaway, but *Pepsi* was so good on the turns. Chuck could almost go into a turn at full speed.

Three pointers, you know, skid and skate around the turns. Our boat was a displacement, two-step design, and it would bank around the turns because it had a V-bottom. If *Slo-mo* happened to be in front of *Pepsi* going into a turn, by the time they came out *Pepsi* was in front.

Chuck Thompson lost the 1950 Silver Cup when he admitted cutting a buoy due to the fact of having oil squirting in his face. Could you explain what happened?

That oil problem was not related to our original problem. I think an oil line burst at the Silver Cup. One of the instruments that worked off of the oil line—I think it was the oil-pressure gauge—broke. It had no relation to the operation of the boat, but caused the windshield and then Chuck's goggles to get oil on them.

I remember seeing the race and I never saw Chuck cut the buoy, but somebody reported it to the race committee. We had won the race on points, but when he came in, they asked him about the buoy. Chuck admitted it.

Boy, did we cry on that one. It was a sad day. However, we did get the Meehan Trophy for the fastest lap at 107 miles per hour.



Chuck Thompson takes *Miss Pepsi* across the waves.



Osborne Collection

An excellent view of how Miss Pepsi's step hull skipped across the surface of the water.

“Chuck was very concerned about starts. He was very concerned about getting out in front first. He used to practice starts all the time. That was very important to him. With that trough our boat made, that was very important.”

The new Miss Pepsi won her first race at the 1950 President's Cup by dominating her opposition, including the My Sweetie and Such Crust. How did you account for the boat's remarkable performance especially in relation to the My Sweetie, which the Miss Pepsi was reportedly patterned after.

Our driver, Chuck Thompson, just got more confidence in the boat. He would push it harder.

Could you describe the accident in the final race of the year at New Martinsville and the damage it caused to the boat?

Pepsi was leading a four-boat race and Delphine X was in second place. Pepsi was really pouring it on, as Chuck told me, when they went into the second lap going around the first turn. For some reason or other the riding mechanic threw down the throttle causing the boat to dig. The bow dug in and got caught in the water causing the boat to somersault end over end. This threw both the driver and the mechanic out of the boat. Both of them were unconscious and when they brought them in to take them to the hospital, I thought they were dead. However, Chuck was discharged from the hospital two days later. Our riding mechanic got out a week and a half after that. He was more seriously injured than Chuck.

They pulled the boat out the next day. When we got it back to Detroit, we put in two new engines and repaired the cowling. The superstructure of the hull was not damaged at all.

Even though the Slo-mo had defeated the Pepsi in a heat confrontation at Detroit, the U-99 appeared to have at least three mph on the Se-

attle entry in comparison on a five-nautical-mile course and a 2½-mile course. How did you feel about your chances against the Slo-mo in the upcoming 1951 Gold Cup?

I always thought the shorter the course the better chance Pepsi had against the Slo-mo due to the acceleration of our boat and also the turning ability of our boat. I thought Pepsi would win on Seattle's three-mile course. On anything longer than that, I don't think Pepsi could beat Slo-mo.

The reason for the Slo-mo IV's heat victory in the 1950 Silver Cup was the big five-nautical-mile course. On the three-mile course or less Pepsi had a better chance of winning.

Did the Detroit boats have any unified race strategy against the Slo-mos to win the Gold Cup?

The Detroit boats were not joined in a strategy to beat the Seattle boats. Everybody was out for themselves.

I saw Seattle papers with stories saying Detroit boats had an idea of planning the race—what they were going to do to the Seattle boats to beat them. But it wasn't true. Everybody was out for themselves.

The reason people are in racing is to be a winner. I just can't see—unless two boats are owned by the same owner—that a team strategy could be possible.

In the 1951 Gold Cup, the new Slo-mo V ran ahead of the Pepsi in Heat 1 and ultimately won the race when the U-99 dropped out. What was the problem with the Pepsi and what were your impressions of the Slo-mo V?

Slo-mo was a terrific boat. Was a terrific boat.

If Chuck felt there was a problem with our boat, rather than take a chance, he would pull out. The smooth water conditions out in Seattle were better suited to a three-pointer. Our boat was built for rough water.

After your victory in the 1951 President's Cup, you nailed down your first of two national high-point championships. What did this honor mean to you in relation to winning the Gold Cup or Harmsworth Trophy?

As far as my father was concerned, I don't think U.S. 1 meant as much to him as winning the Gold Cup. He really wanted to win that Cup.

I thought it was quite an honor to be U.S. 1. We had the emblem painted on the boat and the rest of us thought it was pretty good. But my dad was more concerned with winning that Gold Cup and the President's Cup.

He developed an awful lot of friendships in Washington, DC., in the years that we raced there. Every time he went there, he'd feel bad if we couldn't win that race. It was his favorite place to go.

Pepsi again dominated the early Detroit regattas in preparing for the 1952 Gold Cup, but could only muster 116 mph in mile trials in contrast to 178 mph for the Slo-mo IV. Would you comment on the Pepsi's chute speed in relation to the three-pointers?

I never thought the Pepsi had a chance to break anybody's straightaway record because it was not a straightaway boat. It was a competition boat built for turning and acceleration.

In view of your experience in 1951, did you have any new approach in defeating the Slo-mos in 1952?

In the 1951 Gold Cup, Lou Fageol in the Slo-mo V beat our boat to the start. Chuck was very concerned about starts. He was very concerned about getting out in front first. He used to practice starts all the time. That was very important to him. With that trough our boat made, that was very important.

There was a lot of bad feeling among

some of the other owners because they didn't like to race with Pepsi. They didn't like that trough or deep ditch that our boat left for a wake. If Pepsi got out in number one, it was very hard for the three-pointers to get over that trough to pass her.

Pepsi pushed the Slo-mo hard for the first five laps of Heat 1 in the 1952 Gold Cup. Then the V expired and Pepsi went on to record an astounding time of 101 mph for the 10 laps. This was faster than the boat had ever gone before by at least five mph. Were there any changes made to the boat?

We never changed anything on the hull as far as I knew. But we did have Ray Betman take two of our engines and overhaul them. He worked over the superchargers on them pretty good. They were entirely different after he finished them. We had these engines in at the time and it made a difference in boat speed.

Also, the U-99 posted the fastest lap of the day at 103 mph, as opposed to the Slo-mo V's 102 mph. As a result, were you convinced the Pepsi was a faster competition boat?

Yes, I was convinced that Pepsi was a faster competition boat on a three-mile course or a 2½-mile course.

At the end of the first heat of the 1952 Gold Cup, you were in a commanding position in reference to returning the Gold Cup to Detroit. What went wrong in the second heat? Why was Pepsi unable

to compete in the third heat?

I think what happened was that the oil just wasn't getting to the gearbox. This was what the problem was. The gearbox didn't break or anything it just overheated. The oil line to the gearbox just broke.

This was the line that went from the oil tank or the oil pump to the gearbox. The oil temperature gauges showed that the gearbox was overheating. I think Chuck just shut it down. He didn't conk out. The problem was we couldn't repair it for the third heat.

The Miss Pepsi failed to appear for her hometown regatta, the Silver Cup, four weekends after the Seattle Gold Cup. What was the reason for this?

We couldn't get the gearbox repaired in time. They had to rebuild one of the gears because of the heat temperature on it as a result of our problem in the Gold Cup. I remember they took the gears out and x-rayed them. You just don't build those gears overnight.

In your last race at New Martinsville, you had problems for the fourth consecutive year. Why did you go to small places like New Martinsville to race?

The mayor of New Martinsville, Bob Bruce, came up to visit us in Detroit here. He called at my father's home. We had quite a relationship and acquaintance with him.

We also liked going there after that first time. It was a very homey type at-



When competing for the Gold Cup in Seattle, the Miss Pepsi team operated out of the Lake Washington Yacht Basin at Leschi.

Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

mosphere. Our crew members used to have a lot of fun there. It was a nice little place. They had a small yacht club there called the Magnolia Yacht Club. They made my father a Southern colonel. We still have the certificate.

In early 1953 you decided to retire from Unlimited or Gold Cup competition. What were the reasons for your retirement?

Both Walter Dossin and my father had heart problems. They used to get awfully excited at those races. That was a factor. They had also seen tragedy in racing, and they just didn't want it to happen to our driver.

When Miss Pepsi turned over at New Martinsville I was sitting in the bleachers there by the starting gun. My aunt [Walter Dossin's wife] was sitting right in front of me. She passed out. I caught her and I thought Walter was going to pass out, too. That accident was a big shock to us. No doubt that was on their mind. I heard them [Walter and Roy Dossin] talk about it. They felt that if something happened and our driver got killed it would be very hard to live with. Before something happened, the idea was maybe we better get out of this before it ruins our health too.

During your years in the sport, who were some of the individuals that comprised the crew and what were their re-



Miss Pepsi and Chuck Thompson racing on the Detroit River in 1952.

Mei Crook

sponsibilities?

In 1947 we had a crew of about five, including myself, Bud Piper, Ernie Dossin, Bob Allinger, and Danny Foster. In those days, the driver was part of the crew. Bud Piper, who was an auto mechanic, was a life-long friend of mine. There were five of us and we traveled around the country in 1947.

After 1947 I didn't work on the boat, but Ernie did. Ernie was in charge of the crew—not so much as a mechanic, but as a manager. He kept track of the expenses and so forth when traveling and he also took care of the schedule.

When Chuck Thompson was with us, he was the crew chief. Whatever Chuck said had to be done on the engine, that's what we did. On the other hand, Ernie would purchase supplies and what-

ever was needed for repairing the boat. He made the schedules up for repairing the boat and arranged for travel. Ernie also kept track of the financial expense records. So actually, Chuck didn't have to do any of that. He just directed the maintenance of the engines and hull and did the driving.

If we made any changes on the boat, we went to John Hacker or Les Staudacher. Any time we had problems with the bottom, we would take it up to Kawkawlin, Michigan, where the boat was built by Staudacher and have it repaired there. If we needed a fast job, Staudacher would bring a crew down to Detroit and do it here where we kept the boat.

How many engines did you build up for a year's racing and how many did you take to each race?

We never brought any extra engines to a race, just the two engines that were in the boat. If we blew an engine, that was it because on our trailer that we hauled the boat with, there was no room for any extra engines. We had no van or anything like they use today to haul extra engines.

We would build up six engines for a season's racing. We had 20 engines in total. After a while we had to cannibalize some of the parts from the other engines because we couldn't buy parts. It got to the point where we had eight or nine engines that weren't complete since we were using them for parts.

We left our engines more or less



Miss Pepsi at Detroit in 1952.

Pete Schille

stock. Texaco, however, used to make up a special fuel for us. I don't know how much octane it had or what the formula was. Jim Meehan, who was a rep from Texaco, took care of that. He would give us the fuel.

About how much money did it cost to campaign a boat over the circuit in the late '40s or early '50s?

I can't remember exactly. It was at least \$50,000 and there might have been a year or two when it was up around \$100,000, especially when we went to Seattle. A lot of it went to crew expenses and repair work. Generally, about four people went with the boat when we traveled. We paid about \$20,000 for the last *Pepsi*.

Did you ever consider going to the Rolls Merlin engine as opposed to the Allison?

No. We had only two Rolls Merlins and we couldn't get any more. We felt we really didn't need them, either. On the Rolls, the conversion to power boating was quite a bit of work and you had to know what you were doing. I think those engines were designed for high-altitude compared to the Allison. The Allison just seemed to work better before they found out about the Rolls and how to install them.

Did you ever consider building a three-pointer as opposed to a step boat?

No. Never.

After two years on the beach the Dossins were persuaded to come back for the 1955 Silver Cup. How did this come about?

Walter Dossin was deceased at that time and my father was in Florida for a month's vacation. Ernie Dossin, myself, and Don Dossin, who was Walter Dossin's son, decided to bring the *Pepsi* back before my dad got back from Florida.

We called up Chuck Thompson and asked him if it was possible to get the boat prepared in time for the Silver Cup, which was in Detroit. In fact, our intentions were to just race in Detroit. Chuck was for the idea and then we got a couple



Miss Pepsi skitters across the waves in 1956.

Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

crew members together. They worked day and night on that boat getting it prepared. The engines were gone over. They were all redone—overhauled. But they didn't do anything about the interior of the boat—the tanks or anything.

That was where we ran into a problem later on with gasoline leaks in the boat.

At the time my dad got back, we were still working on the boat. We had already spent a certain amount of money on it, and he wasn't too upset about it. So, he said, "All right, let's give it a shot". We went ahead and that's what we did.

Chuck was happy to get back with it. He wanted to come back even if he could just win the Gold Cup with it, which he hadn't done before. That's what Chuck had in mind. He had the *Short Circuit*, which was a short boat, and he didn't think he had much of a chance with it.

We had in mind just to race in Detroit and no other races—just for the fans. We used to get so many letters from fans in Detroit, who asked us to bring the boat back. They missed it and so forth. That was really the reason why we came back—to race in Detroit for the fans.

After battling with *Tempo VII*, the eventual winner, on even terms in the preliminary heats of the Silver Cup, the *Pepsi* apparently got wet down in the first turn of the final heat, relegating her to fourth place. How did this happen?

I remember Chuck getting washed

down. It conked out his engine. He couldn't get it started. Chuck was the kind of guy that didn't have a temper.

I never saw a temper on him. When he talked, he talked slow. He sounded like he came from the farm the way he talked. He was a very intelligent man. He had an electrical contracting business here in Detroit, too—very successful. I didn't hear much comment from him about the incident you refer to. Chuck sort of felt that was the way it goes.

After two years absence, did the other boats seem faster in relation to the *Pepsi*?

Chuck didn't think so. He didn't think there was any improvement.

***Miss Pepsi* nearly won the President's Cup in 1955 for the fourth straight time, but lost due to her disqualification in the final heat. Could you give us the background on this incident?**

Mel Crook, the referee, claimed that *Pepsi* beat the gun. Chuck said that he didn't. I didn't think he beat the gun. There were different opinions on it.

After the 1955 season, did you contemplate retiring again or were you looking forward to the 1956 season?

We were looking forward to the 1956 season since the Gold Cup was coming back to Detroit and Chuck wanted to win it. That is all we planned to do was race for the Gold Cup and then put the boat back in moth balls again. The Gold Cup was the final race in Detroit that year.

Miss Pepsi ran well in the Gold Cup and was the winner for a short time when the Thriftway was disqualified. What is your side of this controversy, which is perhaps the biggest in the entire history of motorboat racing.

The 1956 Gold Cup was the race with *Miss Thriftway*. Bill Muncey was the driver of the *Miss Thriftway*. That was the race in which first *Pepsi* would be in front and then Muncey would be in the lead. They traded first and second places many times during that race.

The *Miss Thriftway* was a very fast boat, but *Pepsi* could catch him on the turns and pass him coming out of the turn and accelerate faster than Bill Muncey. As soon as Bill got some straightaway, however, he would catch up with *Pepsi*. The whole race was like that. After the race was over, they got three or four calls that Bill Muncey had run over a buoy—an orange buoy. We heard it because I was right there by the judge's stand when it happened. So, they didn't award the Cup to Muncey.

I was also in the Burns Street Pits when they took the boats out. The first thing the *Thriftway* crew did was to throw a tarp over the boat. There were a couple of guys there with cameras taking pictures, but they put that cover on pretty fast. I had just come up when they put the cover over. I heard someone say, "He ran over it all right. The evidence is right on the sponson." The bottom of the sponson on the side was all orange. In the meantime, back at the judge's stand, *Thriftway* was disqualified and *Pepsi* was awarded first place.

Afterwards, we all were notified that they had withdrawn the Cup from the Dossins and nobody could have it until they had a meeting after the President's Cup in Washington.

So, we went to Washington and raced in the President's Cup and the same thing happened in that race between *Thriftway* and *Pepsi*. It was a two-boat race—half a lap ahead of everybody. We had a meeting the day after the President's Cup at

the Willard Hotel in Washington. I will tell you who was there. Horace Dodge was there, and he had his attorney from Detroit to represent all the boat owners here. Jack Schafer was there also—there were about five or six boat owners from Detroit there. Willard Rhodes from Seattle was there. Chuck Thompson was there, and I was there.

Mel Crook conducted the meeting. Willard Rhodes looked pretty happy over there, so I was wondering what the heck had happened. The meeting hadn't even started. Our attorney brought in a slide projector and a witness who had taken a picture of the sponson of the *Thriftway* after it had been taken out of the water, but before they got the tarp on it. It showed the guys getting ready to put the tarp on it in the picture. It showed clearly the orange streak on the sponson.

After the evidence was given, Mr. Rhodes got up and Bill Muncey got up and said that they definitely did not run over that buoy. They said the evidence presented could have been anything that was painted orange in the water that the boat could have run over.

They went into another room and discussed it. They came back with the decision and gave the Gold Cup to Willard Rhodes. They said the evidence was not strong enough for *Pepsi* to get the Cup. [Editor's note: This became the recommendation of the hearing committee and was eventually approved by the Inboard Racing Commission a month later. Because Horace Dodge had also filed a lawsuit against the APBA regarding inconsistencies in the officiating of the Gold Cup race, a final decision on the outcome wasn't made by the APBA until November 1956, over two months after the race was held.]

In the final race for the Miss Pepsi, the 1956 President's Cup, comments were made that the Pepsi was not herself on the turns or that the usual smooth-running Miss Pepsi was having trouble rounding the markers. Would you comment on this?

I can remember one of the spectators at that time when Chuck came in. He ran down there and said, "Chuck Thompson, what did you do, throw the race?" It looked like it since he was making those big wide turns.

Chuck was so damn mad when he came in. He got up and his feet were full of grease and oil and gas—all mixed up. Chuck was making real wide turns, and we couldn't figure out why. But still he stayed right with the *Thriftway*. It wasn't until the end of the race that Chuck brought the boat in, and the bilge was filled with gasoline. It was sloshing around in there when he was going around the turns.

Ernie got on top of the boat, and he was the one that yelled back to me that the boat was full of gasoline.

After this race the Pepsi retired. What was the reason for this second retirement?

The reason for our retirement was the disappointment over the Gold Cup and the way things turned out. My dad was definite after the decision in Washington, DC, that we would never race again. He felt that if they made decisions that were so unfair he did not want to continue racing.

It was not that he thought we deserved the Cup—we didn't win it really because Bill Muncey had won it on the racecourse. The result would have been the same. But he felt that he just didn't like the sportsmanship of some of the owners.

Did you ever have any inclination to come back?

Staudacher came to see us one time. This was a couple of years later about 1958. He had the plans for what he was going to do. He wanted to build another *Miss Pepsi*, only it was going to be a certain percentage lighter. Staudacher planned to use aluminum-clad plywood in constructing this new hull. My dad had no interest in it. We had retired. ❖

The Grand Old Lady's Sister

PART THREE



The former *Slo-mo V* saw action as *Miss Seattle* from 1956 to 1962.

Last month, we continued the story of *Slo-mo-shun V*, the lesser-known teammate of the legendary *Slo-mo-shun IV*, which was also affectionately known as the Grand Old Lady. In parts one and two, we've told you about the intrigue that surrounded the boat's construction in 1951, its victory at the first Gold Cup held in Seattle, the efforts to find an effective engine for the boat, its abbreviated involvement in the 1952 and 1953 Gold Cups, and its tour of East Coast events in the fall of 1953.

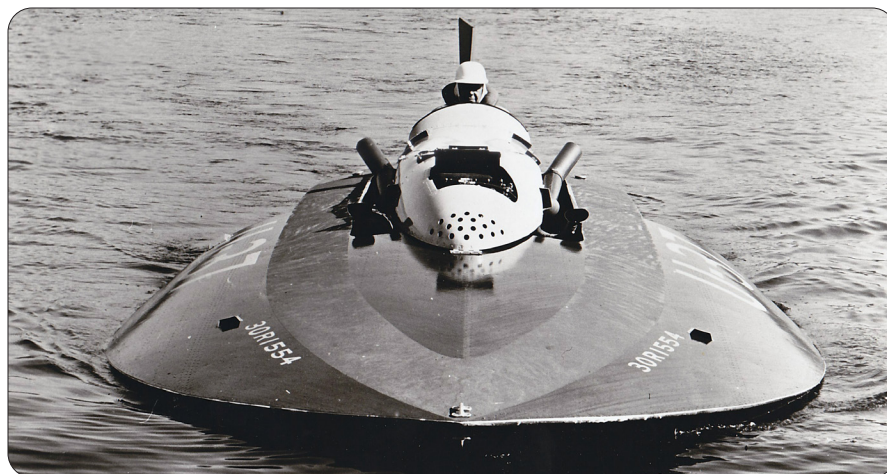
In part three, we'll cover the remainder of the boat's career, from its victory in the 1954 Gold Cup, to its breathtaking accident before the 1955 race, and its career as an also-ran until finally being rescued from a junkyard and restored to be a member of the hydro fleet at the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum in Kent, Washington. The story is based on excerpts from the book *Slo-mo-shun*, which was written by *NewsJournal* editor Andy Muntz.

The book is available on Amazon.

As he did at the beginning of each season, Stan Sayres wrote a memo early in 1954 that outlined the improvements he wanted to make to his boats for the upcoming season. He asked for new seat latches and drive shafts for both boats, he wanted his crew to rebuild both the Allison G6 and the Rolls Merlin engines, and he requested the steering gear and rudders of both boats to be magnaflux tested to see if any cracks had formed.

For the Grand Old Lady, he asked that the stringers be altered to accommodate a Rolls Merlin engine and he wanted the mechanic's seat removed and a single driver's seat installed. He also wanted to give the boat the same power-steering system that *Slo-mo V* used in the three eastern races late in 1953. As for *Slo-mo V*, Sayres wanted the nose piece beefed up, better ventilation for the engine, and the power steering system to be checked. He asked that the shipwrights at Jensen Motor Boat repair hull damage that the boat suffered during its eastern tour and that they find a solution to its "Leaping Lena" tendencies.

Sayres discussed that issue in a memo that he wrote late in 1954 to



A bow-on view of *Slo-mo-shun V* with Lou Fageol in the cockpit.

Bob Carver Photos

outline his feelings about his relationship with Ted Jones. "Those close to the picture know that prior to this year, 'V' was a wild, flighty and even dangerous boat," he wrote. "This condition was due to a radical sponson design that Jones had insisted on (and Jensen had argued against). Unfortunately I let Jones have his way. This Spring, Jensen completely redesigned and rebuilt the sponsons and as a result, 'V' is as smooth and as stable as any three-pointer ever built."

As the Detroit fleet was getting organized for the 1954 season, the *Slo-mo* team began test runs on Lake Washing-

ton in mid-April. One test session in May was especially memorable. Both *Slo-mo* boats were out running near Sand Point at the same time when *Slo-mo IV* went dead with an engine problem. As the crew brought Sayres's tender boat, *Sea-flow II*, alongside the stricken craft, *Slo-mo V* threw a propeller blade that punched a hole three inches in diameter into its hull.

Sayres, who was driving the boat, tried to stuff rags into the hole to hold back the flow pouring inside while he also frantically waved to the crew on *Sea-flow II* to get them to help. So, they left *Slo-mo IV* drifting on the lake, raced over to the sinking *Slo-mo V*, hooked a line to the bow cleat, and towed it as fast as they could through the Montlake Cut to Jensen's on Portage Bay. Somebody had called ahead to Jensen's so they'd have their crane out and ready to hoist the hydro from the water as soon as it arrived.

The boat was repaired and was soon back out on Lake Washington, where the team continued to refine its Rolls Merlin engine and evaluate the impact of the sponsons that Jensen rebuilt to help tame the wild leaping problem.

As the day of the Gold Cup drew nearer, a new strategy among the Motor City competitors became clear. For the past three Seattle Gold Cups, the Detroit fleet would roll into town less than a week before the race. As a result, they were of-



Lou Fageol at home with his racing trophies.

Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

ten unprepared—their boats hampered by mechanical woes. Joe Schoenith did not want that to happen again, so he sent his two new boats, *Gale IV* and *Gale V*, west within days after *Gale V* won the Detroit Memorial race in early July. They arrived in Seattle on Saturday, July 24—two weeks before the race. The team set up camp at Lloyd Jett's Boat House, about three miles south of the racecourse in the Rainier Beach area.

Horace Dodge's boats were also already on their way by that time—headed west aboard railroad cars. His two, *My Sweetie, Dora* and *My Sweetie, John Francis*, arrived in the middle of the following week and went to Bryant's Marina to get ready. Simon's *Miss U.S.* left Detroit the day after the *Gale* boats arrived in Seattle, along with a last-minute entry named *Miss Cadillac*, a hydroplane that the Seattle fans had seen in 1952 and 1953 with the name *Miss Great Lakes II*. Albin Fallon had entered it in the Detroit Memorial, where it finished second, then sold it to Bud Saile, who had driven a boat named *Miss Wayne* the year before. Saile renamed his new craft *Miss Cadillac* after his business: Cadillac Tool and Die Company.

When the two new *Gale* boats did test runs in the southern waters of Lake Washington 11 days before the Gold Cup, it became clear to those watching they would pose Detroit's most serious challenge yet. "They weren't fooling," wrote *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* columnist Royal Brougham. "Observers whistled in surprise at the speed and maneuverability displayed by the two *Gale* hydroplanes the other afternoon. Months ago Eastern reports predicted this would be the most serious invasion since Stan Sayres went back to Detroit and carried away the historic trophy. Looks like they were correct. The *Slo-mos* have a fight on their hands."

So, a week before the race, everything seemed ready for a tremendous battle. The entry list for the 1954 Gold Cup included seven hydroplanes from

the Motor City and another two from California—11 in total, counting the Seattle boats. It would be the biggest field since 1951.

But there remained one important question to answer: Who would drive *Slo-mo-shun V*?

Lou Fageol had announced at the close of the 1953 season that he would have to quit his driving hobby and focus his attention on the family business, the Fageol Motor Company. But his retirement somehow never felt real. He went to Seattle in May to have a discussion with Sayres, but no announcements came from it. And, as the summer went on, Sayres would always answer the persistent question by saying he had the names of several drivers in mind. Then, about a week before the race, with no announcement yet made, Fageol showed up at Sayres's boathouse—but still, nothing was said.

It wasn't until the Monday morning before the Gold Cup, on the day that Sayres liked to qualify his boats, that the assumed matter was confirmed. Fageol was back in the cockpit of *Slo-mo V*. Not only that, but he was also in top form. He stunned everyone with a record-breaking first lap of over 111 mph, a second lap that was a tiny bit slower, and a third

that was over 112 mph—an average of 111.632 mph! "That's something for the boys to shoot at," he said.

Meanwhile, there was little action down at the racecourse. Lee Schoenith took *Gale V* out for some test runs, as did Cantrell for *Gale IV*, but nothing much happened until Wednesday, when four boats qualified. Schoenith took *Gale V* around the course just short of 100 mph while *Miss U.S.*, *Miss Cadillac*, and *My Sweetie, Dora* also got into the field. Another three made it on Thursday, including *Slo-mo IV*. Taggart averaged 103.106 mph in three laps around the buoys, a touch slower than the speed Cantrell qualified *Gale IV*. And that's how it stood when qualifying closed on Friday evening—a field of eight.

Race day arrived on Saturday, August 7 with the silver Navy blimp circling overhead and about 400,000 people packed around the Lake Washington racecourse. Among them was Anna Thompson Dodge, who was there to celebrate her 88th birthday with two of her grandchildren. They watched from the deck of the yacht *La Beverie*. The weather was comfortable—by afternoon it would reach the mid-70s.

Like before, the *Slo-mo* team set up its operation on the dock at Leschi north



Members of the *Slo-mo* crew gather near the cockpit of *Slo-mo-shun V*. They are, from the left, Morry Laing, Joe Schobert (in the driver's seat), Jerry Barker, and Mike Welsch.

Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

Lou Fageol and *Slo-mo-shun V* pause for a portrait during a test session on Lake Washington.

Taggart stayed close behind Fageol. Then he caught up and gave the huge crowd a thrilling show. The two raced side by side for several laps, with *Slo-mo IV* on the inside lane and *Slo-mo V* to the outside.

of the Floating Bridge while the others filled Mt. Baker Park near the start/finish line. Shortly before one o'clock in the afternoon, a crane lifted both *Slo-mo* boats from their cradles and lowered them to the water. Taggart and Fageol climbed aboard their boats, they flipped and tickled the proper switches, gray smoke shot from the exhaust as the two engines roared to life, and they were away.

It was obvious to those paying close attention that the Detroit teams, frustrated and resolute to win the Gold Cup, had hatched a plan to disrupt Fageol's flying start. "Of course, none of the drivers and owners involved in the maneuvering has seen fit to explain or even admit anything for publication," wrote Mel Crook, the referee for the race who also wrote about the event for *Yachting* magazine. "So maybe it was all accidental—without a crystal ball one can't be sure."

At the start of the first heat, the Detroit drivers did whatever they could to leave behind troughs and rollers in the water between the north turn and the official's barge. "Detroiters followed their usual practice of turning into a young ocean all available water short of the starting line," Crook continued. "Rough indeed was the path they left for Lou Fageol who, in *Slo-mo V*, was making his usual fast starts through the arch of the bridge."

Their effort didn't seem to work, though. Fageol still started in decent shape, But Taggart had more difficulty, which led to a merging of circumstances reminiscent of Gar Wood's "Yankee Trick" at the 1931 Harmsworth.

Taggart was leading the field headed to the starting line when, at the last second, he realized he was too early. Hoping to avoid a one-lap penalty for crossing the line before the starting gun sounded, he backed off to a near stop. Lee Schoenith was to his outside in *Gale V* charging at full speed to keep pace, but he couldn't react quickly enough. His lime-green and mahogany craft careened past *Slo-mo IV* and was six boat lengths across the line when the clock hit zero. But Taggart's effort to slow down was also too late. He jumped the gun, too. Simon "all but dragged his feet to remain legal," according to Crook.

Because of all this, *Gale V*, the biggest threat to the Seattle boats, was no longer a factor from the moment the heat started. It also gave Fageol an advantage. As the boats in front of him slowed down, he hit the start at full speed—after the gun fired. He then beat the others to the first turn and was in the lead going down the backstretch. Schoenith, Taggart, and Cantrell in *Gale IV* trailed the leader, though the first two were technically a lap behind. All four of the hydros bounced wildly from sponson to sponson as they battled through two laps, until *Gale IV* went dead with supercharger issues.

Taggart stayed close behind Fageol. Then he caught up and gave the huge crowd a thrilling show. The two raced side by side for several laps, with *Slo-mo IV* on the inside lane and *Slo-mo V* to the outside. The two men in the cockpits knew it wasn't serious, though. Fageol was playing with *Slo-mo IV*, which not only was a lap behind but also not running well. It had a sick engine caused by

the timing being out of whack. The Grand Old Lady finally went silent coming out of the north turn during its sixth time around and came to a stop—its fuel tank empty. *Slo-mo V* won the heat easily with an average speed of over 98 mph. Simon finished second in *Miss U.S.*, a mahogany craft with a white cowling and engine hood and a brown tail sporting the U.S. Equipment company's emblem.

By the time the team towed *Slo-mo IV* back to the dock at Leschi, they concluded that its problem was a broken fuel pump. So, they replaced it before they lifted the boat from the water and onto its cradle.

The start of the second heat featured one of the strangest events in the history of the Gold Cup—an incident that has become a legend in Seattle.

As the boats were preparing to start the second heat, it looked like the Detroit boats were again doing their dirty trick. They were circling around in the north turn, trying to disrupt Fageol's flying start. Then, in an instant, *Gale IV* headed straight for the shoreline, toward a gathering of spectators at the beautiful home of Dr. F.A. Black. With a loud thud, the boat hit the bulkhead, leaped over a flower bed, and came to rest next to Dr. Black's fishpond.

Nobody was injured. Guests scattered in all directions as the boat with Reddy Kilowatt on its tail crashed ashore. As Cantrell climbed out of the cockpit, Dr. Black asked politely, "Were you invited?"

"No," said Cantrell, "It's all a mistake." Then, he walked back to the pits—past the fans who had gathered at the shore

with their blankets and their picnic baskets. "First time I ever walked home from a boat race," he later joked.

On the racecourse, the start of the second heat was perfect. Taggart and *Slo-mo IV* were first across the starting line with Fageol and *Slo-mo V* right behind. Fageol then pushed ahead going into the first turn. He was leading down the backstretch—but only by a sliver. Taggart was right beside him—and this time the show was more sincere. The two teammates stayed together through most of the race. Taggart would nudge *Slo-mo IV* into the lead on the inside lane, then Fageol would pass him on the outside. The two boats, in an echelon formation, also made it impossible for others to pass—such as George Simon in *Miss U.S.*, who followed never more than three seconds behind.

"We were concerned about George Simon," Taggart later explained. "He really put up a terrific scrap. He never let up. I know that! I know one time I

went into a turn; I looked over Lou and under Simon." The two stayed together, holding close to the buoys and forcing *Miss U.S.* to the outside, until the final turn of the last lap. That's when *Slo-mo IV* lost power and allowed *Miss U.S.* to pass and claim second place.

Going into the final heat, the only boat with a chance to catch *Slo-mo V* was *Miss U.S.*, which had 600 points for its two second-place finishes compared with *Slo-mo V*'s 800 points. The strategy, therefore, was simple: finish ahead of or right behind Simon. In the biggest gamble they would take all day, the *Slo-mo* team replaced the electric fuel booster pump in *Slo-mo V* as time was ticking down until the start of the final. But, not to worry—they did the job with eight minutes to spare.

The Detroiters knew the strategy, too. They did their best to box *Slo-mo V* at the start and give a free path to Simon. Marv Henrich in *Wha Hoppen Too* even went so far as to nearly collide with Fageol's boat, a move that earned him a disqualification. But none of it worked. Taggart and *Slo-mo IV* held the lead at the start. Then Fageol caught him, went ahead in the second lap, and took command. Lee Schoenith tried to make a race out of it and came to within three seconds of the leader but could never get past.

"Well, this was wonderful for me because it was my last race," Fageol told a reporter from the Associated Press when it was over. "I really retired last year, so this was one extra. It was my swan song all right, and you couldn't ask for a better one."

After *Slo-mo V*'s second Gold Cup victory there was open discussion about it being used to increase the world straightaway speed record the following spring. "Sayres, of



In an incident that is still remembered as a part of Seattle hydro racing lore, Bill Cantrell drove *Gale IV* into a bulkhead before the start of a heat during the 1954 Gold Cup and landed in the rose garden of a home where a crowd of spectators were watching the races.

Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum



A happy Lou Fageol after his victory in the 1954 Gold Cup.

course, is cagey regarding the speed he has in mind,” Kent Powell reported for the *Seattle Times*. “But we feel that, with ideal water conditions, the record could jump to 200 miles per hour or more.”

The speed run was never scheduled, however, and the boat didn’t see action again until early May 1955, when it appeared on Lake Washington to test new propellers. “As far as I could tell, everything seemed to be in fine shape,” Sayres said after returning from the run. “Of course, I couldn’t go too fast, as there were a lot of pleasure boats on the lake.”

The team also continued to be vexed by the boat’s tendency to get loose as it gained speed. This had been a continual problem with *Slo-mo V*. Everyone who drove it learned that the boat had a top end of about 165 mph. Anything beyond that caused its nose to float into the air—a scary tendency that convinced Taggart he wanted nothing to do with it. To compensate for this limit on the boat’s straightaway speed, the team had been working on ways to get it through the turns faster. According to Ray Fageol, Lou’s son and an accomplished 7-Litre driver himself, one effort was an experiment with the skid fin.

Sayres had suggested improving the skid fin before the 1953 season and now the team was considering a bigger skid fin that would be attached farther to the outside of the sponson. They wondered if it would act as a better pivot for the boat as it rounded the turn and perhaps get it through the turns faster. The team

worked on the idea during the spring, but time ran out and they abandoned the experiment.

Ray Fageol stumbled upon another possible solution while driving his 7-Litre hydro. In trying to remedy the ride of his boat, he took lengths of yarn from his wife’s knitting supplies and attached them at various locations on the hull. He then watched how they reacted when he took the boat out onto the water. He noticed that the boat’s lift point was too far forward. So, he bought some half-round molding from a lumber store and attached it perpendicular across the deck to function as a spoiler—to disrupt the smooth flow of air across the deck and reduce lift. It worked! When Ray Fageol tested it with the yarn again, the lift point was farther to the rear.

So, as the *Slo-mo* team considered

how to solve their boat’s kiting issue, they borrowed the idea from Lou Fageol’s son and attached lengths of three-quarter-inch molding across the deck of *Slo-mo V*. But it was still too light in the nose, according to Fageol as he tested the boat on the Sunday before qualifications for the 1955 Gold Cup began. So, the crew made more adjustments so it would be ready to make a qualifying run.

As the competitors gathered near the racecourse, Fageol had *Slo-mo V* out for test runs in the northern part of Lake Washington to see if the crew’s adjustments had solved the “kiting” issue. Watching from a nearby pleasure boat was a group of people who, at one point, became eager to leave. The operator gunned the boat’s engine and sent it speeding to the west. That left behind a sharp wake that moved across the surface toward the oncoming *Slo-mo V*, which was cruising along at about 155 mph, heading south from Juanita Point. “I didn’t see any boats in the area,” Fageol said later, “so I wasn’t on the alert for the wave.” Then, the hydro hit it. “The shock wave was terrific. I looked up at the bow and all I saw was black.

Those watching from a distance saw *Slo-mo V* leap into the air and then crash down—out of control. Fageol was tossed out of his seat then slammed back into it with such force that he bent its steel sup-



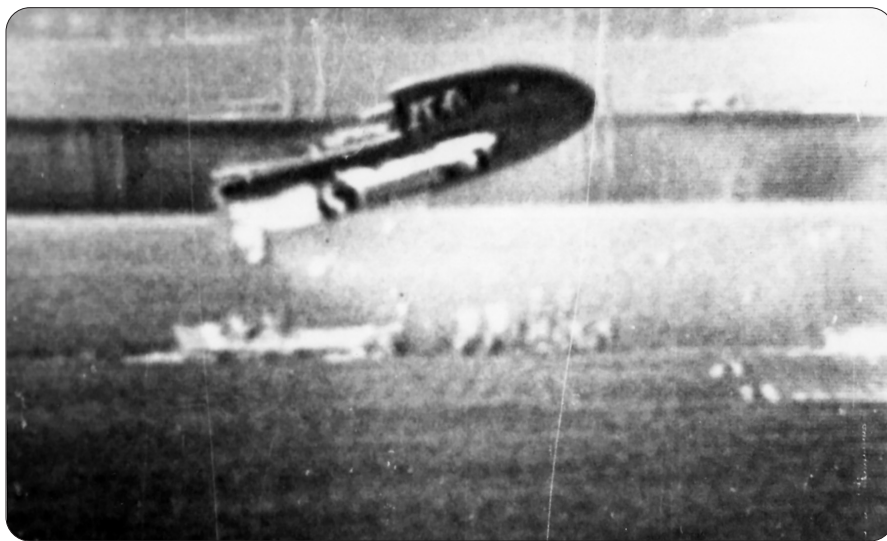
In an attempt to settle the boat’s tendency to kite at high speeds, the crew installed a series of wood strips across the deck to act as spoilers. You can see them in this photo taken before Fageol made his fateful qualifying run before the 1955 Gold Cup.

port bracket. He nursed the hydro back to the boathouse where the crew found no damage, but Fageol had suffered a deep bruise on his thigh.

That still wasn't enough to convince Fageol to resume his retirement. According to one report, a representative from the Boeing Company, a valued customer for Fageol Motors—the makers of wing and fuselage assemblies for Boeing's B-52 bomber—had issued a thinly veiled threat. "We might find it hard to renew the contracts with Twin Coach unless Lou Fageol drives the boat," the man was reported to say. Message received, Twin Coach's directors gave Fageol permission to drive once more.

The water conditions were perfect on the Wednesday morning before the race and, though *Slo-mo V* was sidelined because of Fageol's injury, Taggart and *Slo-mo IV* made the best of it. But, by the time the Grand Old Lady arrived at the racecourse before noon, Danny Foster and *Tempo VII* had made their own news. Shortly after officials opened the course at 11 o'clock, Foster took Guy Lombardo's new hydro onto Lake Washington and made a qualifying run of 116.771 mph.

Taggart then roared onto the course after Foster returned to the shore. Though *Slo-mo IV*'s engine sputtered several times, he turned a first lap at 117.11 mph, another at 115.52, and a



The backward flip of *Slo-mo-shun V* was being televised live to viewers in the Seattle area. In this image from that broadcast, the boat has reached its highest point and Fageol is about to leap from his seat. As the boat continued around, it would eventually land right side up.

KING Broadcasting Co.

third at an astounding 119.575 mph. It was a three-lap average of 117.391 mph, far faster than the previous record.

By Friday, with his leg injury rested, Fageol finally had his chance to qualify the defending Gold Cup champion *Slo-mo-shun V*.

Before he left the boathouse at Hunts Point, Sayres asked that he take it easy, but Fageol had his own way of doing things. "It goes back to Lou's personal lifestyle," Mike Welsch explained. "He was just going to be the best. I was at the boathouse when he left and Stan told him, 'Don't try to beat Joe's record. Just go down and qualify so we can get

the boat in and go racing.' I thought he would take Stan's advice."

Instead, with a huge crowd on the shore and a live television audience watching at home, Fageol took *Slo-mo V* around the first qualifying lap at over 117 mph. He duplicated that speed the second time around then pushed harder on the accelerator. The boat roared through the south turn and up the backstretch at a pace many felt sure would result in an average of over 120 mph.

That's when an amazing thing happened.

As *Slo-mo V* approached the north turn, its bow rose off the water—yet Fageol pushed on. Seconds later, the bow lifted again, and the boat danced from sponson to sponson. Then the bow climbed higher—and higher—and higher, until the entire hydroplane was airborne.

Like an airplane doing a graceful loop at an air show, *Slo-mo V* climbed until it turned upside down and backward a good 20 feet above the water. Then it dropped its nose and completed the maneuver with a perfect landing—right-side-up and still running. The boat putt-putted a few hundred feet and went dead in the water.

"From the shore, there was a gasp



After the flip, the crew takes the sinking hydro on a high-speed tow to Anchor Jensen's boathouse.

Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

of horror from the crowd—one loud whoosh,” said Charles Regal of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. They had never seen a boat do a complete back flip before.

“He’s been sighted in the water,” said a voice on the public-address system as a patrol boat reached Fageol—floating amid the debris of his boat. Operating the patrol boat were two teenage brothers, 14-year-old Eddie O’Byrne and his 16-year-old brother, Mike. They found Fageol face down in the water, so grabbed him by his life jacket, rolled him over, and when they found that he was too heavy to lift into their boat, held him partway out of the water until more help arrived. The boys said he regained consciousness while they were holding him and that he said, “Easy! Easy!”

Then, a Coast Guard crash boat arrived, the men aboard pulled Fageol from the water, and they rushed him to the shore. Fageol was bleeding from his mouth, they said later, and he complained of being cold—and repeatedly asked them to be careful. He was immediately loaded into an ambulance and rushed to Maynard Hospital on First Hill, about three miles from the racecourse. There, he was treated for some broken ribs and a possible puncture to his left lung, but otherwise, except for bruises from head to toe, he was soon resting comfortably.

As for *Slo-mo V*, Taggart was with the crew on *Seaflow II*, watched Fageol come out of the boat, and was one of the first to get onto the deck of *Slo-mo V* as it drifted on the lake. “My concern was that I wanted to check the cockpit,” he said. “If you’re going to get hurt, it’s when you go out of the thing. I could see where he’d been snapped out and hadn’t touched a thing.”

But the boat itself wasn’t as fortunate. The crew towed *Slo-mo V* to Portage Bay and Jensen’s Motor Boat, where they pulled it from the water and assessed the damage. The transom was torn from the hull along with the decking on both sides all the way to the cockpit. And, judging from other damage, the rudder must

have flown off when the boat was in mid-air and then collided with the nose of the boat as it swung around. “I’m not even going to try to get it ready again,” Sayres said.

That evening, as Caryl Fageol stood by her husband’s bedside, she suggested that it was finally time to quit racing. “You’re right,” he responded. “I guess I’ve had it.” Then he explained what happened. “I was going about 160 miles an hour and slowing down to go into the turn. A gust of wind set up a fluttering motion. I rode her through the first flutters, but when I felt it go into the loop, I jumped.” Witnesses nearby said he left the boat in a perfect dive and entered the water headfirst with his arms outstretched ahead of him.

Years later, he’d claim that the rudder assembly pulled out of the transom. He was setting up for the turn when the steering wheel suddenly went loose. “The prop then started walking the transom to the right,” his son Ray explained, “the rear of the boat settled, and up she went. At about the top of the top of the flip, dad decided this was not going to come out too well, so he pushed himself out of the cockpit and dove into the water.”

As for the story about Sayres’s advice to Fageol before he left the boathouse,

when Taggart was asked about it, he would only say, “There was a good bit of discussion. I don’t think it would’ve been a good thing to strike a match around Hunts Point that weekend.”

The 1955 Gold Cup would bring an end to Stan Sayres’s dominance over the Gold Cup. A young driver named Bill Muncey, hired to drive a new Ted Jones craft named *Miss Thriftway*, captured the hearts of Northwest hydro fans when he drove his boat to victory in the event’s final two heats and apparently claimed the trophy for Seattle for a sixth straight year, but it wasn’t to be. When bonus points for the average-speed component of the contest were calculated it turned out that Lee Schoenith and *Gale V* had the faster average time for the event—by a mere 4.53 seconds, enough to give the points he needed to claim the victory. The Grand Old Lady, meanwhile, failed to finish the final heat, the victim of a cracked manifold that threatened to set fire to the deck.

Two months before, a story appeared in the *Seattle Times* that claimed Stan Sayres would retire after the 1955 race, win or lose. He told the reporter that the exorbitant cost of time and money needed to run the two boats had become too much, both for his business



The damaged *Slo-mo-shun V* sat at Anchor Jensen’s boathouse until it was sold in early 1956 to a non-profit group called Roostertails, Inc., which raced the boat as *Miss Seattle*.

Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum



With a new name, a new look, and new owners, the former *Slo-mo V* races against its former teammate at the 1956 Seafair Trophy Race.

and his pocketbook. He continued to race because of popular demand, he admitted.

Then, three days later, the newspaper printed a correction. It was a misunderstanding, Sayres claimed, a “lightly made remark taken seriously by a well-intentioned friend.” Yes, he had spoken of retirement, he said, but only jokingly.

Yet, two months later, on the morning of the Gold Cup, word of his retirement again returned to the headlines. A controversy over the flying start and then the accident to *Slo-mo V* had convinced him to quit the sport ... maybe.

He issued a statement saying he would retire from Unlimited hydroplane racing right after the Gold Cup race. But then contradicted himself in the next paragraph, as if to say he wasn’t serious—only threatening the move to make a point. “The retirement may or may not be permanent,” he said, leaving the possibility of a return wide open. “I will not make a decision right now that will be binding forever.”

But it was clear by his statement that retirement from the sport was definitely on his mind. “More than six years of effort, pressure, expense and neglect of my business interests have taken a heavy toll,” he continued. “It has aggravated some health problems. I am 59 years old and not as resilient as I once was.”

Then came the matter of what to do about the damaged *Slo-mo V*.

There were rumors that the boat had been for sale before the accident. Sayres talked about it as early as December 1953. Howard Keck, the founder and CEO of Superior Oil Company, an oil production business based in Los Angeles, had expressed an interest in building or buying an Unlimited hydroplane. So, Sayres sent him a letter encouraging him to get involved. “At times, I have given some thought to selling ‘V’ but have never offered it for sale nor have I quoted any prices,” he wrote. “For many reasons—I would prefer to get down to just one boat—the development and operation of two, requires a lot of time, effort, crew and expense.”

Nothing came of Sayres’s proposal, and Keck never got involved in the sport, but rumors persisted that *Slo-mo V* was available for purchase—rumors that were quietly spread by Sayres himself. The talk became serious enough by the summer of 1954 that members of the Seattle business community met to discuss the issue. From that meeting came a proposal from Wellwood Beal, the head of sales for the Boeing Company. The aircraft company would help Sayres with his expenses as long as Boeing could approve all major financial decisions and any major changes. Oh, and the deal had to remain secret.

Sayres was reluctant at first, but finally agreed, and the rumors of selling Seattle’s beloved boat stopped. A year later, Beal had the opportunity to exercise his influence when it came time to convince Lou Fageol (and his company’s board of directors) to stay on as the boat’s driver.

Then came the accident. As the wrecked *Slo-mo V* sat in Anchor Jensen’s boat shop several weeks later, Sayres again told a local reporter he was considering a sale of the boat, and that he’d already received several offers. “If the right one comes along, I’ll take it,” he said. “I’ve either got to fix it or sell it. While I’m still up in the air about the V, I’m sure of this: I have no thoughts of disposing of the *Slo-mo IV*. In fact, you can be sure we’ll keep testing and developing her. The fact that I’m retired [he sold his auto dealership business that year] doesn’t mean I’m going to let *IV* set in the boat shed. We’ve had plans for her in the mill a long while and retirement won’t keep me from seeing it through.”

“The pressure was financial,” Mike Welsch recalled. “Stan knew there would be pressure on him to make the circuit and he just couldn’t afford it. He figured it would be good for a tax write-off, so he just sold the boat. He also felt it would help the sport by spreading things out and getting some other people in Seattle

into boat racing.”

The sale of *Slo-mo V* was announced in late January of 1956. The new owner was a group of 20 Seattle investors with experience in various forms of boat racing who had formed a non-profit corporation called Roostertails, Inc. They bought the boat and an Allison engine for between \$5,000 and \$10,000, said Robert Miller, speaking for the group. He said they’d rename it *Miss Seattle* and that it would be “a poor man’s boat,” in that none of the members of the corporation were wealthy. “Everyone is very enthusiastic, however,” he promised, “and because of their experience with outboards, cruisers and other craft, we plan to do as much of the reconstruction of the craft as possible ourselves.”

The group found a place to work at the Bell Street Terminal on the Seattle waterfront and recruited a team to repair the extensive damage the boat had suffered. Burns Smith had always enjoyed hydroplanes, had some experience with outboard racers, and signed on as one of the volunteers. He soon became the crew chief.

Smith had seen the film of *Slo-mo V*’s flip and, by the pictures, figured that the boat had landed with minor damage. But, when he got a closer look, he realized the size of the job they faced.

“When the boat started over, I don’t

know if the rudder was cocked or what, but anyway, about two-thirds of the transom tore out and it took three or four feet of the right engine stringer with it,” Smith said. “Just pulled it right out of the boat. When the boat came back in, it ran into its own rudder, which hadn’t had a chance to sink. There was a big, deep cut in the bow from the rudder. About six feet of the right non-trip side was torn off. And it came down so hard, all the deck frames collapsed from the transom to the aft end of the engine well. Just about every single gusset within the hull broke.”

That following summer, *Miss Seattle* made the field for the 1956 Seafair Trophy Race with a run of over 110 mph with Lin Ivey in the cockpit. That created a competitive dynamic between Sayres’s *Slo-mo IV* and his former boat that the local press especially enjoyed. Georg N. Meyers of the *Seattle Times* put it this way:

“*Miss Seattle*’s owners openly have avowed their goal: To bring the Gold Cup back to Seattle. Stan Sayres is a man who cannot abide the taste of defeat. That’s what gives him style and toughness as a competitor. Sayres ‘lost’ the cup last year. It would be a fine flourish if he could bring the thing back—then retire, again. But the men who bought the *Slo-mo V* from Sayres are convinced he sold

the wrong boat. They figure they have the speediest spray-kicker of the Sayres fleet.”

When the two met on race day, Sunday, August 5, it was apparent that the *Miss Seattle* was no match for the Grand Old Lady. While the two teams shared space on the dock at Leschi, Taggart enjoyed perfect starts in both of his first two heats and went on to comfortable victories, while *Miss Seattle* took a fourth-place finish with Lin Ivey at the helm and a third-place finish with Norm Evens in the cockpit. “I think Joe drove an excellent and very heady race,” Lou Fageol told the audience on KING-TV when the first heat was over.

The two met again in the final. Pushing to keep up with the new gold-colored *Shanty-I* during the first lap, Taggart got too close to its falling roostertail and received a dousing of water. The engine sputtered and the Grand Old Lady slowed to a crawl. By the time Taggart got the boat up and running again, Norm Evans had slipped past in *Miss Seattle*. It took four more laps until the boat’s engine stopped sputtering and he could get past his boat’s former teammate. *Slo-mo IV*, which would be destroyed during a run on the Detroit River later that month, ended the Seafair race with second-place honors and *Miss Seattle* would finish fourth overall.

The racing career of Stan Sayres’s old *Slo-mo shun V* would continue until 1966. Sporting a checkerboard tail, *Miss Seattle* wrapped up the 1956 season in Las Vegas with a second-place finish in the Sahara Cup. It then saw limited action in the years that followed. It appeared only on the West Coast and finally only in Seattle, although it ended its career with the Roostertails, Inc., group by finishing third in a preliminary heat at the 1962 Harrah’s Tahoe Regatta.

The former *Slo-mo V* missed two seasons then reappeared in 1965 owned by Bob Gilliam, one of Seattle’s most persistent low-budget boat owners. Painted red, it did not qualify for the Gold Cup

Tony Bugeja Collection



Among the boat’s names in its latter years was an appearance as *Berryessa Belle* in 1965.



After falling into disrepair and almost rotting away, the boat was restored by a group of volunteers. It appears here soon after the restoration project got underway in 1991.

in Seattle with the name *Berryessa Belle* painted on its sides (but registered as *Fascination I*). It then showed up at the Ponderosa Trophy on Lake Tahoe with Ken Murphy as its owner and officially named *Berryessa Belle*, but moved so slow during its first and only heat that its speed could not be recorded. It did manage two second-place heat finishes in San Diego at the end of the season, though. Finally, renamed *Miss Tri-Cities*, it appeared four times in 1966 and ended its career by not finishing the first heat at the Sacramento Cup.

Its crew then hauled the boat to Bothell, Washington, north of Seattle and parked it in a dilapidated shed on Gilliam's property—a place known by the locals as a boat graveyard. Several once-proud old hydroplanes rested there, many covered by brambles and blackberry vines. One old boat had been there so long a tree had appeared from between its stringers and frames and was growing through its rotted deck.

Fortunately, covered by something that resembled a roof, the old *Slo-mo V* was spared from the worst of those fates. Still, it was in sad shape when Peter Carey and Joe Meek rescued the famous hull in 1979 with the intent of preserv-

ing it. Carey and Meek stored it in a few local boat shops for more than another decade until they eventually gave up on their dream and sold the boat in 1991. The buyers were three men who had the means to finally get the boat restored: Bruce McCaw, the co-founder of McCaw Cellular, one of the pioneer cellular telephone businesses in the United States; Howard Leendertsen, the president of the Hilton Oil Company; and Dr. Ken Muscatel, a forensic psychologist who was the owner of several Unlimited hydroplanes that campaigned on the racing

circuit and the founder of an organization called the Antique Race Boat Foundation.

Forty volunteers spent about 2,000 hours restoring the *Slo-mo V*. "We replaced all the wood sponsons and all the aluminum, and had to replace the deck," explained Roger Newton, a Renton firefighter who headed the project for the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum. For the decking they even used special Philippine ribbon mahogany so the boat would look its best. Then, on Thursday, July 22, 1993, the boat was taken to the shore of Lake Washington, was lowered to the lake's surface, and it once again threw a roostertail into the air. Sitting in the cockpit was Muscatel, who nursed it across the water at no more than 100 mph. "She's quick," he said when he returned it to the Stan Sayres pits.

During the running of the 1993 Seafair Texaco Cup that following weekend, Muscatel took the old mahogany boat with its brilliant yellow cowling out onto Lake Washington again—this time with thousands of cheering spectators watching. As part of the exhibition, he drove the boat under the raised span of the Floating Bridge, turned around near the Leschi dock, then recreated the flying start that Lou Fageol and the boat had made so exciting for the Seattle race fans 40 years before. ♦



The *Slo-mo V* is now part of the fleet maintained by the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum. It's shown here while it was on display at the Stan Sayres pits during the 2023 Gold Cup.

Remembering Todd Yarling

BY JEFF AYLER

Todd Palmer Yarling was born August 19, 1956, in Shelbyville, Indiana, southeast of Indianapolis. Todd's parents were Karl Yarling and Mae Rose Gahimer Yarling.

The Yarling family relocated to southeast Indiana in 1970, selecting the town of Hanover and with Hanover right along the Ohio River brought a significant change in the lives of the entire Yarling family with Karl, Mae Rose, Todd, along with brother, Ky, and sister, Yvonna. That move to Hanover in 1970 brought to the Yarling family their involvement in hydroplane racing.

Todd graduated in 1974 from Southwestern High School in Hanover, and continued his education at Hanover College. Karl Yarling served as safety and rescue and pit chairman for the Madison Regatta, as the entire family participated when it came to hydroplane racing.

Todd was a rescue diver, and that then sparked his interest with more involvement in the hydroplane world, bringing him to driving hydroplanes along with his excellent craftsmanship skills to help his own cause and others along the way and into the future in the marine profession.

Todd obtained his first hydroplane in 1980, named *Nautilus*, which was a 5-liter hull, and yes, the entire family participated in Todd's driving career being on the crew just like the whole entire family did for safety and rescue.

In 1983, Todd was selected as the driver for new owners Jim and Nancy Sedam driving the U-22 *Miss Tosti Asti*. Hanover was the home base for the team, putting the community right in the thick of the action in the Unlimited hydroplane world.

Todd's driving skills aboard the U-22 *Miss Tosti Asti* on the water in 1983 were rewarded with co-rookie of the year of the honors in Unlimited hydroplane

racing along with Earle Hall who piloted U-2 *The Squire Shop*.

The Sedams in 1984 had Michigan craftsman Jon Staudacher build a brand new cabover Unlimited hydroplane with the U-22 starting out as *Chet's Music Shop*. The brand-new U-22 raced under various sponsorship names from 1984 to 1987, but at the end of the 1987 season, the Sedam's elected to leave the sport as an owner.

Todd continued driving regularly from 1988 to 1992, driving for Fred Leland in the U-99.9, Alan Vordermeier in the U-9, Bill Wurster, Jr. in the U-11, Ed Cooper Sr. and Jr. in the U-3, and the UR-5 for Larry and Mike Rutkauskas.

It was a unique and tremendous experience for Todd because those five hulls had different power plants during that era in Unlimited hydroplane racing that showed Todd's quick learning and



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

adaptability to drive any type of powered Unlimited hydroplane. In order was the Lycoming T-55, twin Fords, a Lycoming TF-25 marine turbine, a turbocharged Allison, and twin Chevrolets.

Todd Yarling's Driving Stats

YEAR	BOAT	HULL#	RACE RESULTS						HEAT RESULTS					
			RACES	1st	2nd	3rd	DNQ	START	DNS	FINISH	1st	Pct.	Top 3	Pct.
1983	Miss Tosti Asti	7422	8	0	0	1	0	21	1	20	0	0.000	12	0.600
1984	Chet's Music Shop	8422	4	0	1	0	0	11	0	9	0	0.000	5	0.556
1985	Joe Ricci Spirit of Detroit	8422	6	0	0	1	0	16	0	12	2	0.167	7	0.583
	Eagle Snacks	8422	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0.000	0	0.000
	Joe Ricci Spirit of Detroit	8422	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	0	0.000	1	1.000
	Miss Cellular One	8422	2	0	0	0	0	4	0	3	0	0.000	0	0.000
	Risley's Express	8422	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	0.500	2	1.000
	Cellular One	8422	2	0	0	2	0	7	0	7	0	0.000	5	0.714
	Jackie Cooper Enterprises	8422	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	0.000	2	0.667
	Miss Prideair	8422	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	2	0	0.000	1	0.500
	Pantry Pride	8422	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	1	0.333	2	0.667
	Cellular One	8422	4	0	0	0	0	10	1	7	0	0.000	6	0.857
1986	Miss Mercruiser	86200	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0	0.000
	Risley's Express	8422	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	0.000	2	0.667
	U-22	8422	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	3	0	0.000	3	1.000
	Miss Coors	8422	1	0	1	0	0	3	0	3	0	0.000	2	0.667
	Miss Avia	8422	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0.000	0	0.000
	Pantry Pride	8422	1	0	1	0	0	3	0	3	1	0.333	2	0.667
	Risley's Audio/Video	8422	2	0	0	0	0	5	0	4	0	0.000	3	0.750
	Pocket Savers Plus	8422	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	0.000	2	0.667
	Pietro's Pizza	8422	2	0	0	0	0	5	0	4	0	0.000	2	0.500
	Household Finance	8422	2	0	1	0	0	8	0	7	1	0.143	4	0.571
1988	Miss Stroh's Light	8809	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0.000	0	0.000
1989	U.S. West Cellular	8408	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0.000	0	0.000
	Risley's	8408	2	0	0	1	0	5	1	5	0	0.000	2	0.400
	U.S. West Cellular	8408	4	0	0	0	0	7	4	3	1	0.333	1	0.333
	Edge/Hunan Harbor	8303	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0.000	0	0.000
1991	Rutt Enterprises Racing	8303	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.000	0	0.000
1992	Oh Boy! Oberto	8803	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	3	0	0.000	3	1.000
1996	Chelan's Mill Bay Casino	8803	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0.000	1	1.000
1999	Miss Madison	8806	5	0	0	1	0	18	1	17	3	0.176	11	0.647
TOTALS:			63	0	4	8	1	155	14	129	10	0.078	81	0.628



TOP: Todd Yarling's first Unlimited ride came in 1983 behind the wheel of *Miss Tosti Asti*.
MIDDLE: Among the many hydros that Yarling drove during his career was *U.S. West Cellular*, which he drove in 1988 and 1989. **ABOVE:** Yarling was a stunt driver for the 2001 movie *Madison*. Here, he is standing in for actor William Shockley, who played the role of driver Rick Winston.

Todd's final season driving an Unlimited hydroplane came in 1999, and it was special driving the U-6 *Miss Madison* for the community of Madison, Indiana.

Todd also was involved as a stunt pilot during the filming of the movie *Madison* in 1999, driving the *Miss Budweiser* hydroplane. He wore a mustache at the time, but the actor playing the part of Rick Winston did not. The movie producers wanted Todd to shave his mustache off, but worked around it as Todd decided to keep the mustache during the filming.

Outside of racing, Todd continued his career in the marine industry. He worked for Southern Indiana Marine in Scottsburg and later as a service specialist at Bass Pro/Tracker Marine, retiring in 2023 after many years of dedicated service.

Todd was a family man and married the love of his life, Tanya Sue Whaley, on August 20, 1983. The marriage brought into their lives daughter Tabitha "Tabby" Mary Rose Yarling who survives, and Tasha Julia Yarling, who died at infancy. Tanya passed away on October 19, 2023.

Todd's unexpected passing on March 26, 2025, was sad for the family but those in the hydroplane world, too. The entire family of Todd Yarling, please keep in your thoughts and prayers.

Todd elected no services with cremation, and a celebration of life will be held to remember Todd later this summer during the time of year Todd enjoyed when the weather was warm to race hydroplanes. ❖

Bob Burd, the dean of hydro fans, passes away at nearly 105 years.

BY CRAIG FJARLIE

Bob Burd was a life-long hydroplane fan. As a young person, he watched inboard races on Green Lake. Among the people he met was Orth Mathiot and he was at the first Gold Cup on Lake Washington in 1951, when Mathiot was killed. Later, Bob helped put the deck on the 1958 *Miss Bardahl*. He was a founding member of Unlimiteds Unanimous, and worked on various Seafair committees, including pit tours and security.

Bob worked as a boilermaker as his regular job. When he retired in 1983, he began working with Chuck Hickling on both of his *Tempus* boats. Bob did engine work and re-built a trailer for the second *Tempus*, which was a tunnel hull. He later worked on Jerry Kenney's *Frank Kenney Toyota Volvo*, which used a Roll-Royce Griffon engine. The boat carried the names *Pietro's Pizza* and *Miss North-*

west. Bob helped build *Jackpot Food Mart* for Bob Fendler in 1990. He worked with Mitch and Mark Evans on that project. Bob worked with the Evans brothers on *American Spirit* in 1991, and Mark gave him the nickname "Uncle Bob," which stayed with him the rest of his life.

In 1994 and '95, Bob worked for Ron Jones, Jr., on the U-50, which carried a number of names including *Miss D.O.C. Acuvue*, *Chaplin's Bellevue VW*, and *Miss Outrigger Hotels*. Bob worked for Jim Harvey beginning in 1997 and stayed with him until 2005. Harvey had two different boats during that time, with names such as *Freddie's Club* and *Trendwest*.

Bob was an early supporter of the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum and helped with restoration projects. During the latter years of his life, Bob traveled to races in Tri-Cities, and to Mahogany & Merlot, the vintage event held in Chelan,

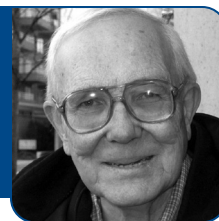


Phil Lampman

Washington. He would ride on his motorized scooter and greet friends in the pits. His daughter, Carolyn Graham, accompanied him.

Bob passed away on March 30, a week shy of turning 105 years old. A public memorial for him is planned for 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 3 at the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum. Race in peace, Uncle Bob, your life-long involvement with hydroplane racing will continue to be an inspiration to us all. ❖

\$ENIOR \$AYS Feeding Your Hydro Habit by Bob Senior



A guide to help hydro fans spend their hobby money.

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE HYDROPLANE AND RACEBOAT MUSEUM?

Membership dollars are the lifeblood of non-profit organizations, and the Hydroplane Museum is no exception.

The museum is currently offering some delightful membership premiums: hydro-shaped thumb drives, loaded with appropriate racing video. Check it out at www.thunderboats.org.

PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING THE SEAFAIR BOAT CLUB. You can volunteer for the Seafair Race Team and also enjoy

social activities with like-minded people. For more information, please contact Steve Levy at stevenl20@aol.com.

JIM RILEY, BOAT RACING'S CHAPLAIN. Pastor Riley has traveled the Unlimited circuit since 1999, where he conducts Sunday chapel services and provides council in times of trauma. His travel expenses are often supported by owners, race teams, sponsors, and racing fans, and you can help, too. Please consider sending Pastor Riley a check, pay-

able to BoatChap c/o Jim Riley, 408 East Schubert, Fredericksburg, TX 78624

FACEBOOK PAGE FOR HYDROPLANE SOUVENIR COLLECTORS. Phooey on eBay! Steve Kristiansen's Facebook page is THE place to go. It's a great place to buy and sell hydro souvenirs. Do a Facebook Search for Hydroplane and Racing Boat Pins and Collectibles. This page has well over 2,000 members. Check it out and join the fun.

CIRCUS CIRCUS BOOSTER CLUB. Your \$100 dues will help restore the 1979

U-31 *Miss Circus Circus*. In a drawing, one member will win a ride in a museum vintage hydroplane. Here is the address to join: <https://hydromuseumstore.org>, or you can phone 206-764-9453.

A RACE TO FREEDOM. THE MIRA SLOVAK STORY. David Williams's excellent book is now back in stock at the Hydroplane Museum. The book sells for \$34.95, plus tax and shipping. Visit the museum store online at the above address.

FIFTY 5 YEARS. A PERSONAL HISTORY OF UNLIMITED HYDROPLANE RACING. Five years ago, 1,000 copies of Bill Osborne's sensational book sold out. He has reprinted it, adding new chapters on Jim-

my Shane, J. Michael Kelly, the Tate family, and Bill Cahill. He also added many new personality profiles. The 360-page book contains over 500 color photos. The book sells for \$78.00, postage-paid. Checks or money orders only, payable to Bill Osborne, 106 River View Drive, Lyle, WA 98635.

SEAFAIR HYDROPLANE COMMEMORATIVE BUTTON SERIES. This is a series of three-inch buttons showing action photos of your favorite Unlimited hydroplanes. It started in 1973 with the *Slo-mo-shun IV*, and includes *Shanty*, *Maverick*, *Thriftway*, *Bardahl*, *Miss Madison*, *Miss U.S.*, and many other popular favor-

ites. For more information, contact Steve Levy (again) at stevenl20@aol.com.

AND, MAY I TOOT MY OWN HORN? I have a large supply of extra Seafair race programs, Seafair pins, and metal Seafair executive pins for sale at reasonable prices. Let me help you fill holes in your collection. For a price list, please contact me via email at bob.senior37@hotmail.com.

That will be all until next time. ❖

AROUND THE CIRCUIT

Race Team and Race Site News by Chris Tracy



Spring testing for Unlimited hydroplanes is almost here! It will be held on May 17 in the Tri-Cities, Wash. Water Follies event director, Mark Williams, reports that the park opens at 7 a.m., and boats may go on the water at 8 a.m. As many as six Unlimited boats are expected, plus a few GP boats. Parking, a fundraiser for Scout Troop 2000, will be \$5. Again, this year, after testing, there will be a beer garden and live music. The live music starts at 6:15 p.m.

I've been contacted by a few fans who have commented that Tri-City hotel prices are higher than expected for spring testing. I've been told there is another sporting event in town that weekend and some hotels have increased their rates—some dramatically. Some of the better hotel rates have been available via the Visit Tri-Cities Washington website, including stays at the Clover Island Inn and the various Red Lion Hotel properties. Click on the Where To Stay tab: <https://www.visittri-cities.com/>

Tri-Cities will also host the APBA Gold Cup race this summer, July 25–27. A big thank you to Apollo Mechanical Contractors that paid the additional fees to host the Gold Cup in Tri-Cities.

In other race sponsorship news, Marshall County (Alabama) Tourism and Sports has announced that Pinnacle Peak Consulting will be the title sponsor for the 2025 Guntersville Lake HydroFest, slated for June 6–8. The press release notes that "Pinnacle Peak Consulting is a benefits insurance general agency and a third-party administrator, based in Washington. The company creates self-insured medical insurance plans that

are level funded, said owner Darrell Strong."

General admission and special viewing tickets for the races in Guntersville, Madison, Tri-Cities and Seattle are now on sale. The San Diego race is in September and tickets will be available later in the year.

Boat News and Rumors

BWR Racing

The UNJ hears that work continues on both BWR Racing-owned boats, U-91 *Goodman Real Estate* and U-27 *Miss Apollo*. We have been told that modifications are being made to the Apollo boat, such as the motor mounts, so equipment can be exchanged and used easily with both the 91 and 27. Rumor has it that Bruce Ratchford is open to racing his third boat, the 2007 Madison boat (Hull #0706), if a sponsor can be secured. Several people have wondered if BWR Racing has a large enough crew to field three boats. An unconfirmed rumor indicates that former Bucket List crew chief, Taylor Evans, has joined BWR Racing, so maybe they do have a large enough crew for three boats—with Mike Hanson, Dave Villwock and Taylor Evans all on board—kind of like a leader for each hull.

Bucket List Racing

There has been lots of speculation about the U-40 Bucket List team and boat. Owner Kelly Stocklin had announced earlier that the boat would not race in 2025. Some wondered if Stocklin was trying to negotiate something with H1 Unlimited. Oth-

ers wondered if Stocklin was having difficulty fielding a crew. An unconfirmed rumor says the boat is for sale.

U-12 Graham Trucking

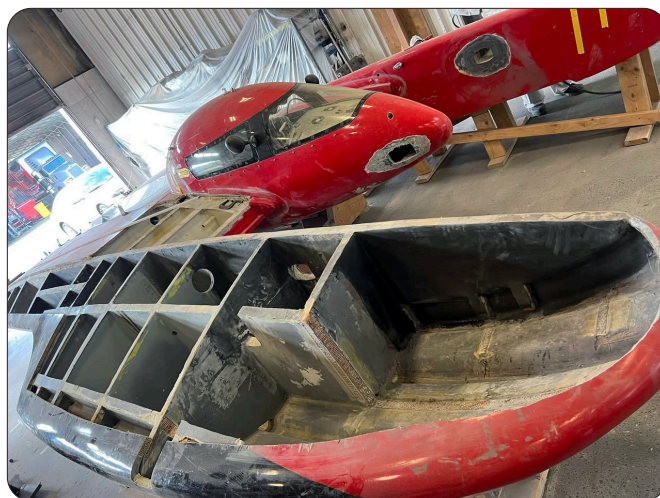
Extensive hull work continues on the U-12 *Graham Trucking* (photos below and right), including a new spar. With so much hull work being done, it is unlikely that the U-12 will make it to testing this year.

Miss Madison

Veteran GP class driver, Brandon Kennedy, was announced as the driver for the T-3/Miss Madison hull, and Trey Holt was named crew chief. The boat is being prepped for racing at both the Kennedy's Delaware shop and also at the Madison, Indiana, shop. Another widespread, but unconfirmed, rumor is that Darrell Strong is helping to search for sponsorship for the Madison team. ❖



Jeff Bernard



Jeff Bernard



Jeff Bernard

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Send comments to: ajmuntz@icloud.com

PLEASE JOIN US AT THE NEXT MEETING OF UNLIMITEDS UNANIMOUS

2 p.m. on Sunday, May 18, 2025
Kingsgate Public Library, 12315 NE 143rd, Kirkland, WA 98034