

APRIL 2014



Unlimited NewsJournal Interview by Craig Fjarlie **Skip Schott; Part One**

Warren “Skip” Schott works as a crewmember on the vintage green dragon *Miss Bardahl*. Earlier in his life, he was on the crew of *Miss Spokane*, *Miss Eagle Electric*, and in 1965, *Miss Bardahl*. Schott was born in December, 1942 in Cleveland, Ohio. “The reason I was born in Cleveland is my dad’s family was from Cleveland. He was in the Navy off the east coast in a wooden-hulled mine detection boat. My mother was pregnant with me and went to Cleveland. I just happened to be born there. I was there two weeks, that was it.” Skip and his mother moved back to Spokane. “My mother and I lived with my grandmother during World War II. After World War II my dad came back. They bought a little house in suburban Spokane.” Skip’s father started building a house about a block away. “He spent about five years building it pay check-to-pay check. We moved in the winter of 1949. I lived there until



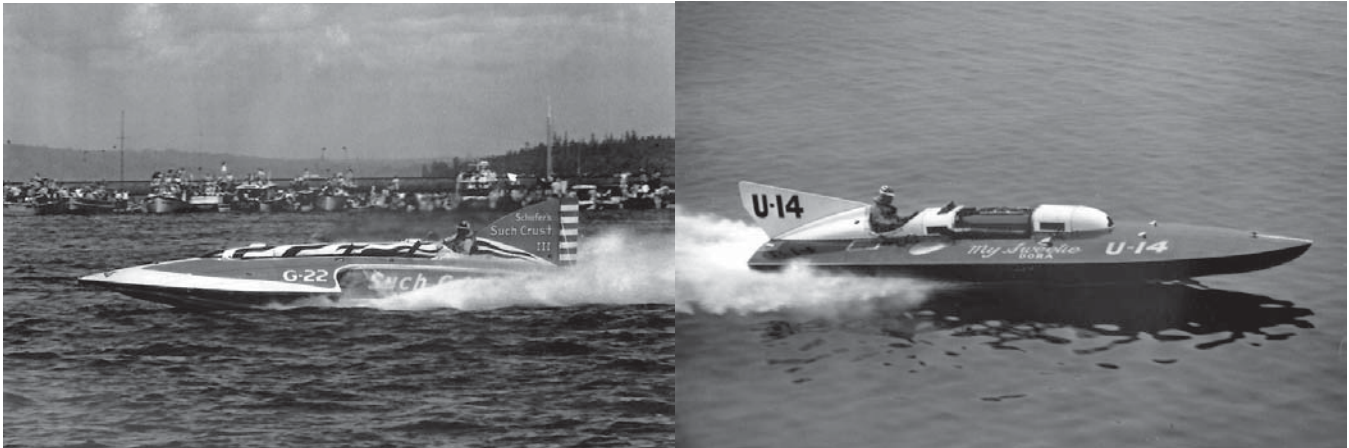
I came to Seattle in the fall of '64, when I went to work for Bardahl.” In the following interview, conducted by Craig Fjarlie in November, 2008, Schott tells how he became interested in boat racing and spent several years as a crew member on some of unlimited racing’s most popular boats. How did you become interested in boat racing?

My dad and a family friend who lived in the University District in Seattle – he also had a home over in Spokane – came over for the first Seafair race. They were sittin’ on the beach when *Quicksilver* went in. He brought all the newspapers back and this sounded really interesting. So every summer after that, as a kid, we came to Seattle for Seafair. We missed one, and I think it was '54 or '55. My dad had back surgery and was recovering from that and we couldn’t come over, but we listened to it on the radio. It was a big highlight in our life to come over to Seafair. We did the “on the beach” thing. As a little kid I had a box



1951 G-15 *Quicksilver* before the crash that killed Orth Mathoit and Thompson Whitaker. ~ H&RM Collection

camera and stuck it through the wire in the pits. I've got pictures of the early *Such Crust* and *Dora My Sweetie* and some of the early boats that came out from Detroit.



Above left 1955 G-22 **Such Crust IV** before sinking at Seattle. ~ Sandy Ross Collection photo - Right, the 1955 U-14 *My Sweetie Dora*, her only year at Seattle. ~ H&RM Collection photo

Did you ever get in the pits and see the boats up close or meet any of the people? The Detroit people always used to stay at, I think it was the Hilltop Motel, which is kind of in the vicinity of where the Bellevue airport was. It's gone now. There was a hill there and the Detroit boats would stay there. We would come from Spokane and there'd be several Detroit boats there.

What was your initial involvement with *Miss Spokane*?

In I think '57, must've been the winter of '57, we knew that *Miss Spokane* was in the mill, in existence. A non-profit had been formed and they bought the boat from Bill Boeing. As a kid, and my dad, we were real interested in this. Then we found out that one of my mother's friends, who was in a women's club with her, her husband was in the Washington Air National Guard and was one of the mechanics on the boat.

Do you remember his name?

Jack Finlayson. And Jack became a good friend. We made arrangements to go see the boat one night that Jack was working there. Well, it turned out that where they were working on the boat was about a mile from our house, at Felts Field, a small airport just barely in the city limits of Spokane. We went down to see the boat. Right away, I need to work on this boat, I need to hang around. Well, they realized my dad had some skills but a 15-year old kid didn't. I tried to convince whoever I could. I asked Jack to talk to George Alexieve, the crew chief. You know, I'll push a broom, I'll do anything. So the word came back Jack didn't care if I came but the rest of the guys thought, you know, it was a pretty rough crowd and the language might be . . .

Some of that hasn't changed too much.

Right. They thought the language would be too rough. So I was pretty disappointed. But about that time, my dad was helping out and they saw that he had some skills that were needed. So he kinda said, "I'll help out if I can bring my kid." It turns out that Dixon Smith's dad had the same deal with everybody he worked for. Burns (Smith) worked on *Miss Seattle*. He did a lot of the rebuild work on that. His deal was, I'll work on the boat but I can bring my kids. That was always the deal. It turned out Dixon and I had the same kind of deal with our dads, and didn't find out 'til later that this was part of the deal. That's why you get to hang around.

It was probably the early summer of '58 I went to Montana with my grandmother to help on a ranch to put up hay. My grandmother cooked on a ranch in Plains, Montana, in the summer, for some friends of hers. I went to make big bucks buckin' hay. While we were there the radio reception was really bad, really, really bad, but I could twist the radio and pick up an Idaho station once in a while.

I just happened to be playing with the radio one evening and I heard that *Miss Spokane* had flipped on Newman Lake. Well, it didn't really flip, it kinda rolled over.



A smiling Dallas Sartz. ~ H&RM Collection photo

That was Dallas Sartz driving?

Dallas Sartz, yeah, who later after I joined the Washington National Guard was my commanding officer. (Laughter.) So about that time I thought, you know, the boat was broken and I needed to get back to help. Buckin' hay was not something that I needed to be doing the rest of that summer. So I finished helping put up the hay and caught a ride back to Spokane. By this time the boat was a third of the way from being fixed. It busted the deck and tore the tail off. And they lost the seat out of the boat; I don't think it was secured in real well.

Do you know what caused the flip?

The word of the people who were there was a ski boat, or so something, had made a wake and he kinda turned into this roller.

Probably not being real familiar with driving a

hydroplane at this point . . .

This was maybe his fourth time in the boat.

He probably didn't realize what could happen in that fast of a ride.

He'd flown in the Air Force, but, you know, that was the day when everybody that was a hydroplane driver, if they were an Air Force pilot, naturally they were gonna be a good hydroplane driver. And they didn't know about plumbers and milkmen. It was Ted Jones' idea.

Yeah, it was Ted Jones' theory. So the boat, it just kinda rolled over and flopped. But it busted the deck up and tore off the tail and lost the seat. And there was some preliminary structural damage. So I get back to town and my dad is working



Above left is Dallas Sartz. At right is the new U-25 *Miss Spokane* at Hayden Lake May 10th prior to the roll-over. ~ H&RM Collection photo

evenings on the boat. I go down with him and do my broom pushing and hold the end of the tape, do whatever they're letting me do. And my dad says, "Well, the cabinet maker should be here pretty soon." Didn't mean anything to me. Pretty soon this big, husky guy with a crew cut shows up and he's the cabinet maker. Right away, as a kid, I figure out this guy knows wood. He's making chips fly. He brought his own table saw, hand tools. He's fittin' deck battens. Other people are standing around watching. Well, it's Kent Simonson. That was my introduction to Kent who within the next couple of years became a dear, life-long friend. Dear friend.

He was boat manager, eventually.

He was. There was another guy, they had lots of chiefs then. They had an engine chief, they had a crew chief, they had a hull chief. They had a lot of people. Most of them were Air National Guard people. An interesting mix, because Dallas Sartz was the driver and an officer and they were all enlisted men. He was the wing commander at the time so they all worked for Dallas.

Did he bring them in?

You know, I don't know how it all happened. It had to have something to do with the Guard. A lot of the guys that worked on the boat, Jack Finlayson, Johnny Morris, John Colman, they had all worked on P-51s, same engines. They knew how to take valve covers off and adjust the valves, you know. I don't know how Dallas got selected as driver.

Had he driven any other classes of boats or anything? Had he raced at all?

I don't think . . . going 100 miles an hour in a boat, nothing. There was always talk that, gee, somebody ought to have Dallas drive a limited so he could practice. That's what Bill Muncey did, he drove everything.

Right, oh yeah.

But then there was, well, he could get hurt and then he couldn't drive, so he never did. He may've taken a limited out a couple times, but he never actually raced one. So anyway, they're puttin' the boat back together and there was a guy who was hull chief. Leonard somebody, I think, and he was also a cabinet maker, a competitor of Kent. Another one man shop. Well, Kent could run circles around this guy as far as workin' with wood. And, this guy, he was kind of gone and Kent became the hull chief. And my dad, having built a house and been a mechanic in the Navy, he really could've done the engine work but the Guard guys had that locked up. They were the engine guys. So my dad and Kent did most of the hull work.

What was the make-up of the crew then?

There were three or four Guard guys and my dad and Kent. I just kept hangin' around, I wouldn't go away. And a good friend of mine, Chuck Pierce – his father was our family doctor for years and years – he and I started hanging around more and at one point Kent kinda labeled us the roustabouts. When we were finally racing the boat, and Kent became crew chief, Chuck and I got to split a per diem. Sometimes we were given a truck with a camper and a credit card and we got one man's per diem for two kids . . .

You were rich!

Yeah, we made money on it, you know. (Laughter.) But to finish the story, they lost the seat. So my dad said, "I'll build a seat." They said, well, Jones or the *Hawaii Ka'i* or somebody had the fiberglass form for the seat and they could get that relatively easy and it'd come over on the Greyhound. And so they got that. And my dad said, "I've got two or three mahogany-colored, tanned elk hides. We'll make it out of elk." And so they found a guy named Bill Allsworth who had a trim and upholstery shop in Spokane. So he and my dad and I spent many days going back and forth building this seat. And Dallas came out to the house and we had a bunch of photographs that we had taken of various boats, of seats. "You want a seat like this, or a seat like this?" We'd get the seat kind of built and Dallas would come out and sit in it, "Well, it's not quite tight enough, I need a little more here." Bill Allsworth would tear it apart and add some more padding. So my dad ended up manufacturing this seat with elk hide on it. It was in the boat for a long time.

You went to the Apple Cup, the boat's first race.

We weren't there for qualifying. My dad was working and he could only get one day off. They qualified, you know, they ran all . . .



The new U-25 Miss Spokane and Dallas Sartz running at Lake Chelan
~ Bob Greenhow photo

They'd start on Wednesday or something.

Yeah, and they had gone early, too. And we got down there probably Thursday night or Friday. And we didn't have any pit passes. We weren't actually part of the crew, although we were working on the boat. I remember my dad had a little toolbox and he had made a second seat cushion for the seat. And he had this seat cushion. I remember going with my dad and we went to the pit gate and he BS'd his way in. "Part of the boat, we're on the crew." So then we saw someone, "Oh, yeah, glad you're here." My dad got a pit pass. There was maybe one extra pit pass for five people and we'd keep rotating the pass around so you wouldn't get thrown out. It was a big event. I think we took third. We took a lot of thirds with that boat. It was 225 points, I remember that. So, I think the next race was probably the Coeur d'Alene race. Yeah, it was the first time for the Diamond Cup

Yeah, and then the next race was Seafair, and that's when he cut in front of Cantrell and Cantrell trimmed the tail fin off.

Took the tail fin off, yes.

I can't remember if Dallas started driving the next year.

In '59, Sartz drove the Apple Cup. It was very rough, they cancelled the final heat. Pay 'n Save won. Then Norm Evans took over at Coeur d'Alene.

Norm got the ride, which we were all very pleased.

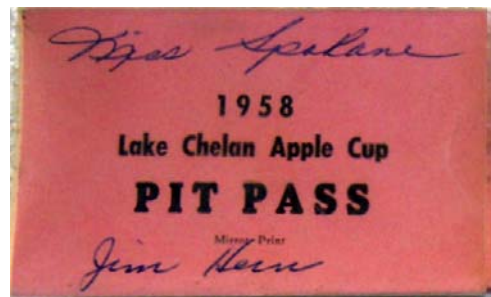
He spun out in the final heat. Overdriving it maybe?

Mmm, possibly. The boat didn't handle nearly as well as it could, but Norm was good to work with. I really liked Norm. I

had never met Mark and Mitch. I was in Chelan, I'm a water district commissioner and I was in Chelan for a water district conference. Mitch has a marina, boat repair, stuff like that. I went and saw him when I was there for that. I told him, he needs to know that his dad was really good to us kids. I was just, you know, 15, 16 years old and worked with him a long time on the boat. He was a good guy. He was one of the toughest guys I've ever known. I mean, he did things in his life that other people died trying to do! I think Norm left when he got the job with DuPont (driving *Nitrogen* - Ed.).

When Evans spun out at the Diamond Cup, was there serious damage to the boat? He wasn't badly hurt.

No, and I think he was thrown out. The boat was towed in and it either punched a hole or caved a hole in the side. I remember him comin' in. George Alexieva was still the crew chief then. I remember Norm shouting, "Don't worry, the boat's all right. We can fix it." Norm would've fixed it and run it, but they didn't want to fix it and



Frank Stottlemyer Collection



Dallas Sartz starting to move inside with *Miss Spokane* and Bill Cantrell runs over him in the *Gale V* (3) shearing off the tail. *Miss Spokane* missed heat 2, but ran the final. ~ Bob Carver photo



Norm Evans at Seattle ~ Sandy Ross Collection

run it. When it got fixed, the boat ended up with a wood patch and an aluminum piece that went from maybe 18 inches forward of the transom clear to the sponson. That got scabbed on.

Is that why they started painting it, to cover some of that?

The boat got painted because, well, Kent said it's not a piece of furniture, it's a boat. He didn't like varnish and they were always real fussy and they were hand-laying the varnish. Big deal, varnishing the boat. When the boat got fixed after it got hurt when Dallas rolled it, they couldn't

get the exact mahogany. If you look at some of the pictures, it didn't quite match right. Staudacher had matched mahogany. It was beautiful. He built church pews out of it. Boats were something extra. But it stood out like a sore thumb. And Kent, I remember for a long time, he kept pressing it's not furniture, it's a boat. Then Kent and somebody else saw a boat. In winter, in Spokane, they had the Spokane hobby show and people who had all kinds of hobbies were invited to bring their hobbies down and showcase 'em. There were match book collectors and yo-yo collectors and bottle cap collectors. And there was a fledgling Spokane model boat club. They were running tether model boats.

Yeah, they went around in a circle.

And the guy who was the president of the club, the big leader in the Spokane model boat club for many years, a guy named Jack Shetter, had a *Miss Spokane* painted lilac and burgundy, with a scallop on the front, with the tail. Kent fell in love with that instantly. So the first thing that happened, the tail got made. The tail was run with the mahogany deck for a while, but the tail was unique. That was a direct copy of what Jack Shetter had come up with. He was always given credit. Then one of the next winters, you know, it was, "We're not gonna varnish this boat anymore." And I think this was maybe the first time we put some light cloth on the deck, some fiberglass. I think we fiberglassed the deck and that was kinda the kiss of death for the varnish. Then the color started. Most of the time it was provided by United Paint in Spokane. A guy named Nate Grossman, his family owned United Paint. Kent would save samples of the paint but then he finally wrote the formula down. They would give him a number and, "Bring this number back and we'll make this color again." That was the transition. Then we bought purplish dye and everybody dyed their coveralls. Everybody had cowboy hats and my dad painted probably 15 cowboy hats with burgundy in our garage. I had a lot of lilac and burgundy stuff then. I think Pancho Simonson (Kent Simonson's son - Ed.) has one of them in his collection.

To get back to the 1959 season, Norm Evans jumped the gun in the final heat at the Gold Cup in Seattle and that made a difference in the outcome of the race. Well, that was the race that was decided in a trailer.

It was like two hours and fifteen minutes later.



The U-25 *Miss Spokane* on tilt at Lake Chelan, the first race of the 1959 season and with the new designed tail. ~ Kirk Pagel photo

It came down to, Norms' recollection of it was, it was the *Maverick* and the *Thriftway*. There was a lot of going back and forth. And Norm said he asked the question, "You mean that if I jumped the gun the *Maverick* wins?" And they said, "Yeah." He said, "I jumped the gun." (Laughter.) And then he went to work for DuPont. The boat went south at the end of the season.

Yeah, Chuck Hickling actually drove at Pyramid. I think Mira Slovak actually took it out once. I wasn't there. It was kind of a big debacle. Nothing happened, nothing very good. They couldn't get the engine started, or something, but they did go down. The guy who



The U-25 *Miss Spokane* at Seattle with the new tail with the chines painted white. ~ Bob Greenhow Collection photo



Chuck Hickling at home in 1959. ~ H&RM Collection photo

lived across the street from us was a trucker. He had a low boy behind his Kenworth. They cut the bottom of the trailer off and put the tilt part of the trailer on the low boy, and took a spare engine, and it looked like a circus going down the road. The tilt was so high it took two ladders to get up on the boat with this thing up on top of the low boy. I don't know if there are any pictures of that, my mother may have some. We had a spare engine, by this time I think we had a spare gear box, so we had an engine and a gear box, and I think they even took an unconverted aircraft engine just to take it along, you know, for nuts and bolts.

How did Rex Manchester come into the picture as driver?

He lived in Spokane. He was married to Mary, had a couple kids.

One was . . . I was a junior or senior and he was like a freshman in my high school, Bill Manchester. Rex was, I don't remember his exact title but he worked for, I think, Inland Asphalt, an asphalt plant, and he was, like, maybe the batch manager or something. He made batches of asphalt. Because the paving was done early in the morning, you know, first light, he was always going to work at 3:00 in the morning. Had strange hours. And he had a 280.

So he had experience racing.

The first kind of cabover 280 limited that I'd ever seen. It had been a rear cockpit and they put the cockpit ahead of the engine, way before pickleforks or anything like that. Called the *Peppermint*. It was painted like a candy cane. He and his wife and everybody that worked on the boat had red and white striped shirts. He was good. He probably had a cheater motor, which most people did, but he was good. By this time, if Kent Simonson isn't the crew chief he's having a lot of influence on the boat. Yeah, Kent is crew chief by now. And I'm working on the boat all the time. I get paid what everybody else does, zero. So we get told that this new guy is gonna drive. I think we went to a limited race where

he was, and it was pretty spectacular. The Miss Spokane board of directors, some of them were in the inboard club. I remember my dad going to their Christmas parties. Kids couldn't go because they had liquor. And maybe strong language! But they were kinda intermingled. There were some guys that ran limiteds that would help out on the boat once-in-a-while if you needed an extra hand or something. Rex was part of the inboard club. He was kind of the up and coming young rising star. At that time he was probably one of the younger guys.

He was probably in his twenties, or something? Well...

A little older than that.

A little older than that because, I don't know if he was in World War II right at the end, but he'd been in Korea, I think. He was, I think, an ex-Marine. Could've been in his thirties by then.

Yeah, and you know, extremely personable guy. Ladies liked him a lot, a lot, and he liked ladies. So, we took the boat, late spring or whatever, up to Coeur d'Alene Lake because somebody would do a crane for free and we could go up there and test. We took him up there and he was very personable even before he actually got in the boat. The nights that we worked on the boat he always came down and if nothin' else stood around and talked. Knew he was gonna get the ride. He was interested, real interested in everything that was going on. So, we put him in the boat and we pushed the boat off. He had practiced starting it a couple times. And started, boom, right away. And my friend, Chuck, and I... I remember standing on the end of a dock that was just a little walkway, and there was a boathouse to our backs. He made one easy kind of lap and as he was starting to go away from us there was a sound that we'd never heard before. The engine was turning more revs than it had ever turned, that we had ever heard. He went down, made a lap, and then made a turn in front of us. I remember both of us were, "This is the guy, this is the guy!" I mean, he turned the boat better than anybody who'd been in the boat. I mean, he was a natural. He was absolutely, you know, a very gifted driver at that point.

Even though he was new in the boat, he took to it right away.

It was like he'd been in it before. I mean, we expected it from Norm because he'd driven a lot of boats but this was, he was always a good performer. Things were lookin' good with Rex, he didn't cut anybody any slack.

This is the end of part one of our interview with Skip Schott. Next month, in part two, Schott tells more about Rex Manchester taking over the driving duties, the heartbreaking loss at the 1960 Seafair race, the blown out 1960 Gold Cup, and the flip at the 1961 Gold Cup.



Rex Manchester Miss Spokane driver. ~ Bob Greenhow Collection photo



HydroFile
Lon Erickson

For the April report, we will link to the H1 Unlimited website and refer our readers to coverage they have been providing with "At The Shop" visits this spring from the H1 team shops. You will find photos and updates on some of

the off-season work being done. So far, the visits have reported on 37/Schumacher Racing, 9/ Jones Racing, 21/Go Fast Turn Left Racing, 11/ Unlimited Racing Group, 6/Oberto Miss Madison Racing with the remaining H1 team reports expected to continue in the coming weeks. See the links on the H1 Unlimited website @ <http://www.h1unlimited.com/>

Two major questions still remain unanswered as of the end of April, a driver has not been announced for the new 96/Qatar-Ellstrom Racing team (along with numerous confidential reports the hull is behind schedule to open the 2014 racing season).

And there has not been any announcement of a crew chief for the 6/Oberto team to replace the recently departed Mike Hanson, who left to join Ellstrom Racing.

Discussions have been underway for some time to bring a 3 boat unlimited exhibition event to Evansville, IN. as part of the ShrinersFest June 11-15. An announcement concerning any participation by the unlimiteds is expected May 1st.

2013 Big Wake Weekend Promoter Arrested on Fraud Charges

Robert Richards Jr., 54, was arrested by Placer County Sheriff's detectives on April 1, after a search warrant was served at his Folsom home.

He was booked on suspicion of defrauding by false pretenses and for passing bad checks.

One man owed \$200,000 was paid by a check that bounced, according to a sheriff's office press release. An

ensuing investigation turned up more vendors allegedly defrauded by Richards. He has since been released from jail after posting bail.



Robert Richards Jr.

H1 Unlimited Chairman Sam Cole replied to the story with the following statement:

"Regarding the matter with Mr. Richards: It is a situation that will be resolved through the legal system and it would be inappropriate for any comments from H1 Unlimited at this time. H1 Unlimited is the worldwide sanctioning organization for unlimited hydroplane racing."

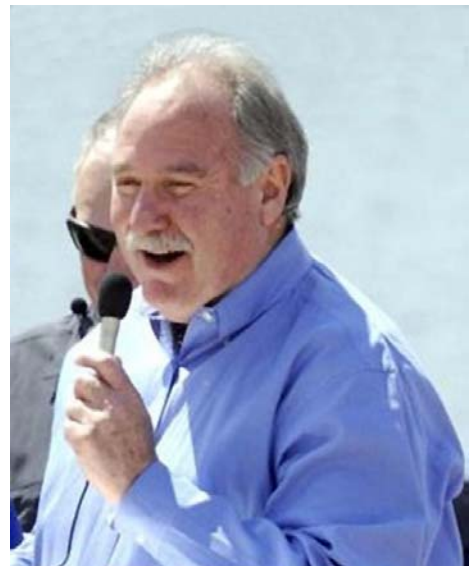
"It remains H1's intention to return to Folsom Lake. It is a great place to race, the fans were incredible and the surrounding counties and communities were so receptive. We feel there is long term viability for an event there. Despite the low lake levels and drought problems we all face this year, H1 continues to work on a 2015 return."

Coeur d'Alene Diamond Cup is Back on Track

by Steve Nelson

With the Coeur d'Alene race now officially added to the H1 schedule, organizers of the 2014 Diamond Cup say this year they will pay more attention to the 'business side' of staging a boat race. Diamond Cup President Doug Miller says he expects that the 2014 event will not only pay for itself, it will also retire all debts that surfaced in the wake of last year's race.

Miller sat down with Steve Nelson of the *Unlimited NewsJournal* recently to talk about what worked and what didn't work last year, when the race returned to Coeur d'Alene after a 45 year absence. Miller says it should surprise no one that the event did not make money in its first year back. He points out that new race sites face start-up costs that other venues have years to absorb.



Diamond Cup President Doug Miller

"We have had to start the race site from scratch; from ground zero. We haven't been able to inherit anything."

But Miller admits that even Coeur d'Alene could have ended 2013 with money left over, if not for one major problem; most of the spectators were able to watch the race without paying a cent.

"The reality was that only one out of three or one out of four people paid to view the event. We didn't have the proper perimeter security in place to make sure that everybody coming through on land had the proper wrist band. We lost double – or triple – what we collected. Had we collected from the people that showed up, we would have been comfortably in the black "

Miller says attendance counts were not scientific for last year's three day event, but the Kootenai County Sheriff's department and crowd management people estimated the crowd size at between 45,000 to 52,000 people. But gate receipts for land and water accounted for only about 12,500 people. Miller says the problem didn't fully register until after everyone had gone home.

"For 2013 we had a lot of moving parts. We had just a ton of stuff going on, on land and out on water. The big wakeup call came to us about a week and a half after the event was over, when we got our settlement from Tickets West. It was considerably less than what we had anticipated."

Miller says Tickets West collected revenues of \$300,000 for 2013. That was far below estimates, and is the key reason that the organization's \$71,000 check to H1 bounced.

"It was a huge shock to us the following week, when the ticket receipts didn't cover the things outstanding. One of the biggest things we had outstanding was that last check to H1. We have been making payments to H1 throughout the fall and winter to get the ship righted. Once again, we have been taking ownership of our financial obligations and responsibilities, not only to H1 but to all our other creditors."

Miller, who is not taking a salary from the organization, declined to disclose total debts owed. But the Diamond Cup has since agreed to pay \$7,000 each month to H1, to retire the 2013 debt. By April,

2014, the Diamond Cup still owed \$58,000 of the original \$80,000 H1 bill. The Diamond Cup has also paid a reduced settlement to the Portland based Starplex Corporation, for its 2013 contract with Crowd Management Services. Others, such as Kootenai County Fire & Rescue and Hite Crane, for example, say they too are also owed for services they provided.

Miller says the lesson was expensive, and won't happen again.

"We will be doing a much better job of capturing the revenue that is due to us for the people that are in attendance, on the land and on the water. We are calling last year our 'college education' and now for 2014 we having to pay off our college loans. We are now paying off our college loans going forward."



Hite Crane operator at last year's Diamond Cup ~ Steve Nelson photo



Fans watching the race from the barge set out on the north end of the course. They plan to add two more in 2014 for a total of three. ~ Doug Miller photo

Miller says the first step to sewing up the hole in the money bag will be to guard the gates better.

"It started at the fairgrounds, where people got on the buses, where the majority of the parking was. We allowed a lot of people to get on the bus that didn't have the wrist bands on. This year, rule #1 is that nobody gets on a bus unless they have a wrist band. We will have 6-foot high perimeter fencing along the entire length of the land, covering 2.7 miles of land real estate. We had fencing, but it was not enough and not adequate."

For that plan to work, the Diamond Cup will stretch an opaque fabric along the fence. Miller admits the job is daunting because the shoreline is long, and the road must remain open, both to limited vehicle traffic and to travelers on the lake's 'Centennial Trail.

"We can't shut the road down without an act of congress. We just need more limited access than what we had. We need to do a better job of traffic management."

Miller says the Diamond Cup will also eliminate freeloaders from tying to the log boom.

"The log boom had the same problem. We have to do a much better job with the water patrol this year. First thing, the log boom is going to be all reserved sections. It's not going to be first come first served."

Over the winter, Miller has been grading himself and his committee. On the plus side, the racing was exciting and well received by the community. The weather was gorgeous, and a lot of critics lost traction. And, Miler says, not a single insurance claim was made. Most of the grades were good.

“When we grade ourselves on what we did, we did a really good job with the transportation plan – the buses and routes – we give ourselves an A. On the collection of funds – we give ourselves an F+.”

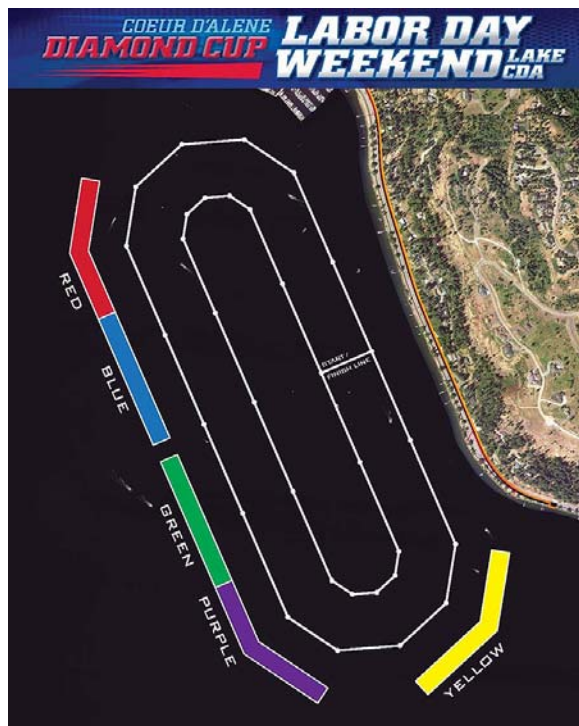
To prepare for 2014, Miller says the Diamond Cup organization is receiving help from the Spokane Small Business Development Council, to learn how to run the event like a business.

Last year we were basically throwing a dart at the wall, as to what we needed and what we hoped would work. Some of it did and some of it didn't. Now that we've done one, they are helping us.”

Other changes to look forward to in 2014 include adding the 5-litre race boats to the event, more effort to keep pleasure boats out of the ‘no wake’ zone, and adding two more floating barges to the north end of the log boom. Each floating barge provides a 20' x 60' floating platform for BBQs, lawn chairs, and porta potties. Miller says it's unique to Coeur d'Alene.

On a personal note, Miller admits that financial failures in the start-up year have been a humbling experience.

“It has been very hard, and very stressful. It is probably one of the most stressful things I have ever done in my entire life. I can't believe the personal support I've had from my wife on this whole journey. We've had things come at us that we didn't expect. But we know, we'll get through it. We'll stay the course and come out on top. We tried things last year. Some of it worked, and some didn't. But when it didn't . . . it really didn't work. But once you put something in motion, you can't pull it back.”



Above is the 2014 Diamond Cup racecourse layout



A view of the logboom, and in the distance, the Silver Beach Marina and Coeur d'Alene Resort from the barge. ~ Luba photo

Hanging over the desk in Doug Miller's Coeur d'Alene office is a framed photograph of the U-00 *Maverick*, driven by Bill Stead, winner of the 1959 Diamond Cup. Leaning against the wall is a round sign showing the original DIAMOND CUP logo, a memory of the first hydroplane race that was held on Lake Coeur d'Alene in 1958. Those memories, and what they mean to boat racing fans in the Inland Empire, are not lost on Miller.

“We know that if we do our job right in 2014, we will collect our revenues, and not only satisfy our expenses for 2014, but also pay off what we still owe for 2013. Our goal is to get the Diamond Cup back up to where it was in its heyday in the early to mid-1960's where we saw 100,000 plus people for three days. I think with the proper tools and guidance and supervision and mentoring, in a couple of years we can be back up to those numbers.”

Book Review:

What Were They Thinking ?

From Kirk Pagel

Stories about unique Unlimited hydroplanes designed by people that thought “out of the box”; the issues they faced, what went wrong, and what innovations they brought to the sport

Author: Doug Ford, Printed by 48HrBooks, copyright 2011
ISBN-978-0-9847589-0-6

Published by Doug Ford Engineering, LLC / Paperback.
price \$24.95 + tax.

Available at the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum in the Gift Shop.

Following WW II, the Unlimited class of hydroplanes flourished with the large surplus of Allison and Rolls Royce Merlin aircraft motors. Doug Ford jumps right in to the post-war era, writing about some of the other boats that used those, and different motors you wouldn't expect to power those hulls.

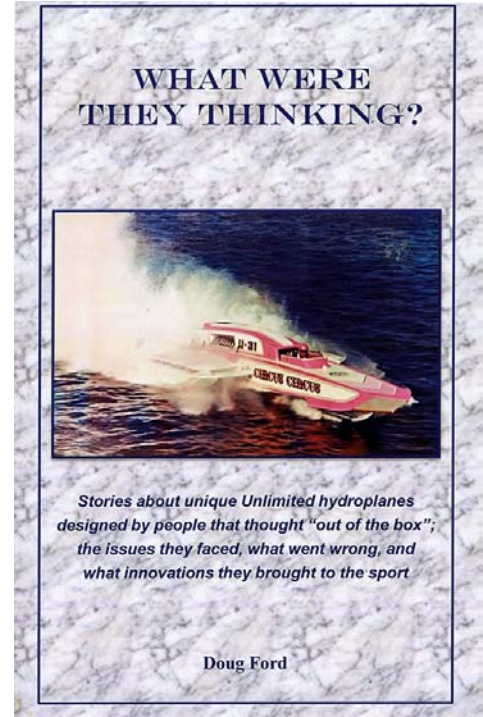
The forward cockpit, rear engine pickle fork *Etta III*, from 1953 is discussed in the first chapter. Also from 1953, *Gale III* and Joe Schoenith's other boats are examined.

In 1955, *Scooter Too*, *Zephyr Fury* and *Miss Wayne* each had their interesting tales. From 1956 and 1957, the auto powered *Miss Skyway*, and the one point *Miss “U”* provided a lot of copy for the local newspapers.



Herensperger's *Pride of Pay'n Pak*, in 1969. It placed third at the Tri-Cities that year, but was shelved for two conventional hulls the next year.

Moving into the '70's, Jack Buhl's *Sweet Thing*, Jim Herrington's turbine powered *Miss Lapeer*, and Walt Knudsen's *Miss O'Neil and Knudsen* each has chapters describing their uphill battles to a competitive level.



In 1980 the outboard powered *Aronow Unlimited* and the Merlin powered *Miss Circus, Circus* both tried and failed. In 1983, Bill Morgan's beautifully prepared *Something Else* tried qualifying at San Diego and Huston, but couldn't find enough speed.

Finally Jim Lucero's narrow transom *Winston Eagle*, which partially sank at Stan Sayres pits on Lake Washington in 1990. That boat got rebuilt to a conventional turbine hull.

R.B. "Bob" Taylor's G.E. turbine powered *Lite All Star* failed to qualify in 1984, likewise for another outboard powered boat, *Texmo* that same year owned by Robert Hall.



Chuck Hickling's tunnel hulled *Tempus* was under powered and under funded. She managed a third place in San Diego in 1986, before finally being shelved in 1987. The *Arcadian* with 8 power head motors for motion withdrew from the only race it ever looked halfway decent in San Diego.

A left, Jack Schafer on the deck of the U-17 *Tempo* after a run on Lake Washington.

These boats represent a lot of toil and money. And who knows? If the 4 point *Circus, Circus* had been successful, maybe all the current fleet of unlimited hydroplanes would look just like it!

Besides the great stories that Doug Ford tells in this book, there is a collection of photos, charts and drawings that show these unusual race boats.

What Were They Thinking was author Doug Ford's first book. His second *The Risk Takers and Record Breakers* book is also available through the H.A.R.M. gift shop.

281 pages, 249 assorted b&w photos and drawings.

Review by: **Kirk Pagel**. Special Projects Editor for the *Unlimited NewsJournal*



Around the Circuit

The Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum (HARM) hosted a 2014 season preview event on April 19. Before the program started, former Seafair Race chair, Pat Malara, announced that he had arranged for the original unlimited hydroplane racing Sports Medicine truck and trailer to be donated to HARM for use as their “rolling classroom” in their education program.

J. Michael Kelly from the Graham Trucking team, Art and Larry Oberto and Jimmy Shane from the Oberto, Jon Zimmerman from the Red Dot, Shannon and Scott Raney from the Peters and May team, and Steve Montgomery representing H1 participated in a panel discussion that was moderated by HARM Director, David Williams. Former hydro driver, Steve Reynolds, and boat builder, Ron Jones, Jr., were also in attendance.

H1's Steve Montgomery reported that the cable TV package was nearly finalized for the 2014 season. H1 is working to improve Internet streaming for the 2014 season, which is challenging as high quality Internet services are not up and running at many race venues. He noted that there would be a change in the start procedure in heats, where boats must stay above 80 MPH. Drivers will get one warning from the coral, but penalties for violations appear not to be finalized yet. All race sites are back in 2014, except Sacramento. Montgomery announced that the 2014 season would likely be his farewell tour, as he is tentatively planning to step away from H1 operations after the 2014 season.

J. Michael Kelly noted that the Ted Porter owned team would campaign one boat this season. Kelly noted that they are well prepared to begin the season. He remarked that he was grateful to be working with crew chief Tom Anderson. He described driving a boat at 200 MPH as a unique opportunity and cool. A side benefit of driving an unlimited hydroplane for Kelly was being able to travel around the country to race sites and even to travel the world when racing in Doha . . . and meeting interesting people along the way. A major goal for Kelly is to win a Gold Cup. Kelly admitted that the toughest part of being a driver was juggling work, family, and racing.

Larry Oberto noted that they were reinventing the Oberto team around their new driver, Jimmy Shane, and everything would be “fresh and new” for the Oberto's 40th anniversary in racing. New paint scheme, but likely will keep the shark teeth, but less red and green in the paint job. Larry indicated that the new crew chief would be more of a data analyst and technology director and appeared to indicate they were negotiating with a candidate. Larry noted a highlight of the long Oberto involvement in racing was winning in Seattle, which celebrated his dad's 80th birthday. He also admitted he has dreams of a new boat in the back of his mind. And Art Oberto commented, “A taste of winning is contagious,” but was also clear that Art's other passion was to bring kids up-close to boats and to the races. Jimmy Shane said he has big shoes to fill on and off the racecourse, in reference to replacing retiring driver, Steve David. Also, Shane noted that he and the boat would support the new Oberto marketing campaign. (Note, no Oh Boy!, just Oberto.) And he was anxious to make his own mark on the Oberto team. Expect *Oberto* to test on Lake Washington before the season begins.

Red Dot driver, Jon Zimmerman, is excited about the changes to the U-9, including making it lighter, a new bottom, plus lots of other improvements. The goal is to make the boat top-tier. And Zimmerman is hungry for his first win and described his boat as “the coolest thing to drive.” At the shop, they are currently painting the boat.

Shannon Raney has ambitious long-term goals for their team. She'd like to see her boat first win a race, win a Gold Cup and take the National Championship. There will be slight changes to the paint this year. The boat is well prepared and almost ready to go racing. Shannon said it was remarkable when they took their boat to England and brought their sport to country not as familiar with it. She said the crowd in England was amazed that a boat could turn at the speed it was going. Scott Raney explained that he believes to grow the sport that it starts with getting youth involved, like the Doha outboard program. Scott also believes that there needs to be some modifications to the unlimited hydroplane show. “What does the audience want and how can we deliver a race that meets their wants and needs?” If this path is followed, it will require a “change in mindset,” according to Scott.

Other: Jimmy Shane got the big laugh of the afternoon when he took the microphone and asked to have someone “quiet down that kid in the audience”—his baby! There will be a testing opportunity in Tri-Cities on May 31. There was some talk about the Madison plan for a two-day race venue, rather than the typical three-day schedule. Montgomery remarked that the two-day format would likely be Sam Cole's preference. Scott Raney noted that some sites have designed their program around a three-day venue. Conspicuously absent were several local teams. No representatives were present from the Ellstrom/Qatar, Schumacher/Beacon Plumbing, LeLand, Brown/Qatar, O'Farrell/Albert Lee and Leckrone teams. No mention of a possible exhibition in Evansville.

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