

UNLIMITED NewsJournal

A CHRONICLE OF SPEED

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They were always trying.



Randy Hall

Bob Gilliam stands on the deck of the U-29 *Atlas Van Lines* in 1970, a boat that was owned by Bob Fendler. Both Gilliam and Fendler are examples of Unlimited hydroplane competitors who were always trying.

BY CRAIG FJARLIE

Throughout the history of Unlimited hydroplane racing, a few names have risen to prominence. They receive the lion's share of publicity, accolades, and trophies. They are fondly remembered for their accomplishments on the racecourse, driving the fastest boats that were prepared by the best crews.

At the same time, a number of participants remained in Unlimited racing for years, but rarely enjoyed a moment in the spotlight. They were usually overlooked when it came to receiving gratitude and acknowledgment for their contributions to the overall show.

It's time to give credit where credit is due. To clarify a couple minor points, the

owners and drivers in this column are no longer actively involved. It would be unfair to include current participants, since their legacies are incomplete.

Also, while some owners and drivers found success on the racecourse to be elusive, they made significant contributions in other ways. Accordingly, to avoid inadvertently casting aspersions on their

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Jack Barrie



Norm Evans

overall record, those long-term participants have been excluded from this list. The participants will be reviewed in alphabetical order.

Jack Barrie

His first Unlimited ride was *Handyman Home Centers* in 1985. Barrie drove a number of boats that carried multiple names, including *KISW/Miss Rock*, *American Spirit*, and *Miss Tubs*. His last time in an Unlimited cockpit came in 2000 aboard *New Kid in Town*.

Andy Coker

An employee of Florida Power and Light, Coker drove for the Madison team, starting in 1985 when the boat carried the name *American Speedy Printing*. The boat, former *Winged Wonder Pay 'n Pak*, was 12 years old when Coker took his turn in the cockpit, and it was outclassed by newer boats. He briefly drove *Seaco Aviation Fuels* when it was owned by Bob Gilliam. That boat was the former *Miss Circus Circus* of 1979, but it, too, was past its prime when Coker drove.

He tried to drive *Eliminator* for Mike Bancroft in 1987 and '88, but was unable to qualify. Coker made one return engagement with the Madison team when he drove their 1988 hull at Tri-Cities in 1993. That effort also ended in disappointment when *Kellogg's Frosted Flakes* failed to qualify.

Norm Evans

Slo-mo-shun V did its famous backflip when trying to qualify for the 1955 Gold Cup. Cut loose by Stan Sayres, the repaired craft was named *Miss Seattle* in 1956 and sported its checkered tail fin. Its first driver was Norm Evans, a marina operator from Chelan. The boat's best finish that year was second place at the Copper Cup on Flathead Lake, Montana.

Evans took the wheel of *Miss Bardahl* in 1957. It was the former *Tempest*, owned by Norm Christiansen. In 1958, Ole Bardahl had his own boat and Evans drove it to victory in its first race, the Apple Cup on Lake Chelan. In spite of the win, Evans was replaced by Mira Slovak for the remainder of the season.

Evans drove a number of boats, including *Nitrogen* and *Nitrogen Too*. He was at the wheel of *Miss Seattle Too* in 1960 and won the Diamond Cup. He continued driving boats such as *\$ Bill*, *Miss Eagle Electric*, and *Parco O-Ring Miss*, but was unable to crack the winner's circle again. His last opportunity was in 1979 when he was named to drive Bob Murphy's *Century 21*, but the boat was unable to qualify.

Bob Fendler

Arizona attorney Bob Fendler spent 21 seasons in the Unlimited class. Most of the time he was an owner, but initially he drove his boat, as well. He purchased the former U-19 *Coral Reef* and it appeared at the 1965 Diamond Cup at Coeur d'Alene,



American Speedy Printing with Andy Coker driving in 1985

Idaho, with the name *Miss San Diego*. The following season the craft was known as *Wayfarer's Club Lady*, and Fendler continued as driver.

In 1967, Fendler drove in one race, but at Madison he relinquished the cockpit to Jim McCormick. The boat took third place at Tri-Cities. In 1968, Fendler had Atlas Van Lines as his sponsor, and he unveiled the long U-35. McCormick drove through Madison, then Bob Miller took over and finished the season, taking third at San Diego.

The U-35 was shelved and in 1969 Fendler brought out the U-19. Earl Wham drove in three races but resigned, unwilling to push the boat at the level needed to try to make it a winner. McCormick returned for the remainder of the season and took third at the Gold Cup.

Fendler had the new cabover U-29 *Atlas Van Lines* in 1970. The boat was powered by twin Chrysler Hemi engines; Ron Larsen was its original driver. Fendler pulled the boat off the circuit after three races and replaced the Chrysler engines with an Allison. During the conversion, the U-19 was brought out as *Atlas Van Lines II* and Bob Gilliam drove it. At the Gold Cup in San Diego, Fendler entered both boats. Bob Gilliam and Bob Miller took turns in the U-29; Terry Sterrett drove the U-19.



Bob Fendler's new *Lincoln Thrift* was driven by Mickey Remund in 1974

Randy Hall

The U-29 was named *Lincoln Thrift 7-1/4 Special* in 1971, and George Henley had the driving assignment. He stayed with Fendler through the first race of 1973. Gene Whipp drove in the President's Cup and won, giving Fendler his only major race victory. Whipp promptly resigned, and Andy Miller, Danny Walls, and Jack Brown drove at various races to finish the season.

Fendler had a new Ron Jones hull in 1974, the U-55 *Lincoln Thrift*. Mickey Remund was in the cockpit. The next year, Milner Irvin was the driver and finished second at Owensboro. At the conclusion of the season, Fendler was out of racing until 1989.

Steve David was named to drive *Heartbreakers Gentlemen's Club* when Fendler returned to the Unlimiteds. The boat carried his former number, U-55, but had been *Oh Boy! Oberto* in its first season, 1982. Fendler campaigned two different boats and remained involved through 1999. His boats had several names and a number of different drivers. Sponsor names included *Jackpot Food Mart*, *Ms. Pog*, *Taco Time*, *Appian Renegade*, and *The Waikiki Trolley*.

The list of those who occupied Fendler's cockpits was almost a who's who of well-known drivers in the 1990s. They included Mark and Mitch Evans, Jerry Hopp, Ken Muscatel, Tom Hindley, and Jerry Hale. Unfortunately, none was able to crack the winner's circle.

Bob Gilliam

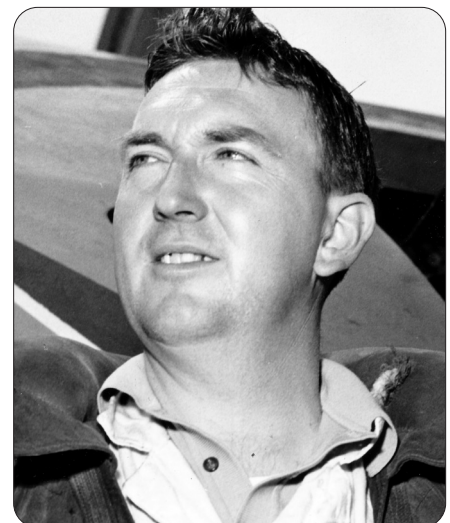
For more than 20 years, Bob Gilliam enjoyed messing around with race boats. He started driving Unlimiteds in 1956 and participated in at least one race every year through 1973. He took some time away, then came back in 1985. His involvement ended in 1987. Gilliam designed, built, and drove his own boats. He often took two or more boats to a race and recruited someone else to drive the second entry.

Gilliam's first boat was named *Miss B&I*, sponsored by a Tacoma variety store. He won the Copper Cup on Flathead Lake, Montana. The only other Unlimited in that race was *Miss Seattle*, the former *Slo-mo-shun V*. Gilliam attempt-



Bob Fendler

Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum



Bob Gilliam

Bob Carver Photos



Randy Hall

Norm Evans piloted Bob Gilliam's Totum Trailer Sales in 1970.

When Gilliam was without a sponsor, his boats carried the name Fascination. He built a number of boats over the years.

ed to drive *Sunnee*, a boat owned by Lyle Parks in 1956, but was unable to qualify.

When Gilliam was without a sponsor, his boats carried the name *Fascination*. He built a number of boats over the years. Beginning in 1959, his fleet was sponsored by Seattle radio station KOL. Seafair had three races in its 1961 program. The seven fastest qualifiers competed for the World Championship; the next four qualifiers raced for the Seattle Trophy, and the three slowest dueled for the Seafair Queen's trophy. Gilliam drove *Fascination* to a clear victory in the latter event. That same year he drove Bill Schuyler's *\$ Bill* at the Gold Cup.

Gilliam was able to attract sponsors for most of the years he raced. The craft that had won the '61 Seafair Queen's trophy was known at *Tri-City Sun* in 1965 and *Hilton Hy-Per-Lube* in 1966. Also in 1966, Gilliam was asked to drive *Miss Tri-Cities* for Ken Murphy. It was the same boat he had beaten in Montana in 1956. The aged hull was unable to qualify.

Gilliam's primary boat was named *Mr. P's* in 1969, *Valu-Mart* in 1971, and *Pizza Pete* in '72. He spent time away from his own boats to drive Bob Fendler's *Atlas Van Lines* and *Atlas Van Lines II* in 1970.

Among the drivers who handled Gilliam's second boat at numerous races were Lloyd Jett and Dick Short aboard *Fascination* in 1958, Bob Larsen in the cockpit of *KOLroy Too* and *KOLroy* in 1959 and 1960, and Norm Evans in *KOLroy Too* in 1960

and *Totum Trailer Sales* in 1970. Tom Snyder handled *Fascination II* at the 1962 Gold Cup.

Walt Kade was tabbed to drive *Fascination I* in the '62 President's Cup and *Totum Trailer Sales* in 1970. Bob Miller drove *Fascination 1* in 1963 and again in 1965. Chuck Walters, a long-time outboard racer, was unsuccessful when he tried to qualify *Sunny Jim* in 1973. Bill Wurster drove *Valu-Mart* in 1972 and '73 and handled U-21 *Valu-Mart II* in '73.

When Gilliam returned to the Unlimiteds in 1985, he attempted to qualify *Domino's Pizza*, the former *Miss Circus Circus* of 1979, at the Oklahoma Thunderboat Regatta, but was unsuccessful. George Johnson also was in the cockpit of *Domino's* in '85, and Andy Coker drove *Greater Peninsula* in 1986 and *Seaco Aviation Fuels* in 1987.

When Gilliam parked his fleet for the last time, he left a legacy as someone who was involved for fun. He filled fields, built boats, brought in new sponsors, and helped train rookie crewmembers in the art of Unlimited hydroplane racing.

Chuck Hickling

Chuck Hickling spent a lifetime in boat racing. He was competing in outboards as early as 1930. His initial involvement with Unlimiteds came in 1951 when he competed in the Seafair Trophy Race a week after the Gold Cup. *Slo-mo-shun IV* and *Slo-mo-shun V* ran against inboards. Hickling drove a small boat named *Snapper*.

His first opportunity to drive an Unlimited

in competition occurred in 1957 when he was in the cockpit of *Miss Seattle*. He drove *Miss Pay 'n Save* in 1959 and won the Apple Cup on Lake Chelan. Later that season he drove *Miss Spokane* in one race.

Hickling was employed by Marine Power and Equipment, a company owned by Peter Woeck, who also owned the boat named *Miss Burien* in 1960 and *Tempest* from 1961 through '63. Hickling drove Woeck's boat and picked up second place in the 1963 Diamond Cup.

Following that season, he drove the original *Miss Budweiser* in 1964. He also handled *Miss Michelob*, the former *Tempest*, at Seafair that year. He was assigned to the cockpit of the second *Miss Budweiser* in '65. Hickling drove *\$ Bill* in 1966 and earned second place at Madison. The next season he drove *Harrah's Club* and garnered second at Madison. Hickling survived a frightening accident at the Gold Cup in Seattle that year.

For the next four years, Hickling took time away from racing. He returned in 1972, driving for Bob Murphy. The boat was the former *Notre Dame* of 1962, and it carried a number of names including *The Smoother Mover*, *Bob Murphy's Marine*, *Ms. Greenfield Galleries*, and *Oh Boy! Oberto*. At the end of the 1975 season, Hickling took time off from driving to



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TOP: Chuck Hickling built *Tempus* in 1978. **ABOVE:** Greg Hopp's first Unlimited-class ride came at the controls of Fred Leland's *United Furniture Warehouse* in 1998.

concentrate on building his own boat.

Tempus made its debut at the 1978 Seafair race. Hickling chose the name because it took time to build. He did most of the work himself. Hickling last drove at Seafair in 1979. After that, he selected others to drive his boats. Bob Maschmedt drove in 1980. *Tempus* was re-named *Miss Budweiser* for three races that season, because the Griffon-powered *Miss Budweiser* flipped while attempting to qualify at Seattle.

In 1981, Bill Muncey attempted to qualify *Tempus* at Seattle, but was unable to make the grade. Maschmedt also drove and he was able to get the boat in the race. Jack Schafer, Jr., was Hickling's driver in 1982, while Scott Pierce and Maschmedt both drove during 1983.

Hickling worked on building a new tunnel boat during 1984, and the second *Tempus* made its first appearance in 1985.

Maschmedt and Schafer both attempted to qualify the boat that season, but had no luck at either Tri-Cities or Seattle. Schafer was the driver for the next three seasons. At Tri-Cities in 1988, the boat was re-named *Pietro's Pizza*. The final appearance for *Tempus* took place at Seattle that year. Mark Evans drove, but was unable to qualify.

Hickling had a diverse involvement with Unlimited racing. He was a driver, owner, crew member, and boat builder. He could be demanding, but he also took time to talk with fans. Anyone who loved boat racing was welcome to stop by his Bellevue shop, as long as you avoided being in his way when he was busy.

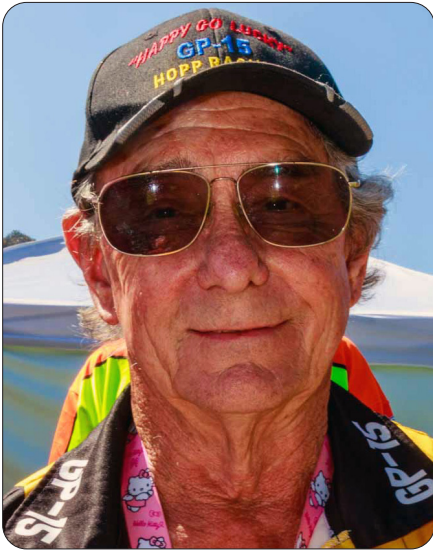
Greg Hopp

Greg Hopp started racing in smaller classes, following his father's lead. His first opportunity in the Unlimited class



Chuck Hickling

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TOP: Greg Hopp
ABOVE: Jerry Hopp

came in 1998 when he drove *United Furniture Warehouse* for Fred Leland. In 1999, Hopp put together his own team, running a Leland hull. The boat carried a number of names, including *Miss Commercial Sealant*, *Miss WIKY*, *Mariann Travel Inn*, *Miss R.S. Eastin*, and *Miss Pontiac*. He also drove *Miss PICO* for Fred Leland at Seafair and garnered second place.

Beginning in 2000, Hopp again drove for Leland and continued the association with Leland Unlimited through 2012. The various boats he drove had numerous names, including *Znetix*, *Miss U.S.*, *Miss Chrysler-Jeep*, and *American Pride*. In 2001, Hopp finished second

at both Madison and the Gold Cup in Detroit. At the 2004 Gold Cup, he handled *Miss Chrysler-Jeep* for Jim Harvey. In 2005, Leland had Beacon Plumbing as his sponsor. Hopp filled in the cockpit of *Jarvis Construction* for Ken Muscatel at the 2007 Gold Cup.

In 2013 and 2014, Hopp drove *Miss DiJulio* for Jay Leckrone. The boat was known as *Jarvis Fire & Water Repair* at the 2013 Gold Cup. Hopp was away from Unlimiteds in 2015 and '16, but drove *CARSTAR/Miss Rock* for Leland Unlimited in 2017. In recent years, Greg and Jerry Hopp have devoted their attention to the Grand Prix class where they have enjoyed considerable success.

Jerry Hopp

Another driver who has spent a lifetime in boat racing is Jerry Hopp. He got his feet wet in outboards and inboards before moving into the Unlimited class. Hopp finished second in national high-point standings in the 145-class inboards in 1980.

His entry into the Unlimiteds took place in 1981 when he was at the wheel of *Design 360*, a boat owned by Dave Jaeger. He was unable to qualify at Tri-Cities and Seattle. Fred Leland bought the boat from Jaeger in 1982 and Hopp was retained as the driver. Again, he was unable to qualify.

Hopp, who worked for McKinstry Industries, finally qualified in 1983, when he drove *Miss LaJolla Plumbing* for Bob Miller at San Diego. He finished in eighth place. In 1984 and '85, Hopp drove for Bill McFadden. The boat carried a number of names, including *Miss Raben Tire*, *Miss Machine Rick Band*, *Rampage III*, and the amusing moniker *Miss Karl Yarling*. Oberto sponsored the boat in 1985 and Hopp took third both Detroit and Madison.

In 1986, Hopp began an association with Al Thoreson that lasted until 1992. Again, the boat had numerous sponsors and names, including *Jackpot Food Mart* and *Miss Go Bowling*. Hopp had the best finish of his Unlimited career at San Diego in 1988, when he took second in *Miss Paddock Pools*.

Hopp drove for Bob Fendler in 1993 and '94; the boat had the names *Taco Time* and *Miss Sprint*. He drove *Miss Casey*, *Miss Busler Enterprises*, and *Miss Cascade Homes* for Mike and Lori Jones in 1995.

Hopp sat out the 1996 season, but drove *Graham Trucking* for Fred Leland at Seafair in 1997. He skipped 1998, then drove Ed Cooper's *Graham Trucking* at Tri-Cities in 1999. He handled his son's *United Furniture Warehouse* at Seafair that year. In 2000, he drove *Miss Madison* at the Gold Cup. The next year he drove *Jack-Son's Jeronimo* for Terry Martin.



Jerry Hopp's first drove an Unlimited in 1981 when at the wheel of *Design 360*.

Hopp's final turn in an Unlimited cockpit took place at Tri-Cities in 2003, when he drove *Miss Tony Roma's* for Leland Unlimited.

As noted in the segment about Greg Hopp, he and Jerry have been seriously involved in the Grand Prix class recently, and both have enjoyed considerably more success than either had in Unlimiteds.

Walt Kade

A popular driver from Detroit, Kade was involved with Unlimiteds from 1950 through 1972. He worked as a mechanic for Packard Motor Car Company. Kade's first time in an Unlimited cockpit nearly ended in tragedy. While testing *Delphine X* before the 1950 Gold Cup, the boat rolled and Kade was seriously injured.

He made the trip to Seattle for the 1951 Gold Cup and drove *My Sweetie*. Later that season, he was back in *Delphine X* at the Detroit Memorial and President's Cup, finishing third both times. Kade picked up another third-place trophy at the 1952 President's Cup where he drove *Such Crust III*. He was unable to qualify *Crusty* at the Silver Cup.

Kade drove *Wha Hoppen Too* in the 1954 Maple Leaf regatta and earned second place. In 1955 he scored his only ma-



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

One of Walt Kade's first driving assignments was in the cockpit of Horace Dodge's *My Sweetie*. He's shown here driving the boat to the Mt. Baker pits at the 1951 Gold Cup in Seattle.

major race win at St. Clair, Michigan, when he captured the International Boundary trophy in the second *Such Crust III*.

Kade was out of action in 1956 but was again in the cockpit of *Such Crust III* in 1957 Silver Cup. He drove *What-A-Pickle* for Gordon Deneau in the Rogers Memorial but was unable to finish the only heat the boat started. Kade next drove in the 1959 Silver Cup, picking up sixth place aboard *Such Crust III*.

Kade drove *Thunderbolt* for George Zigas in three races during 1960. His best finish was second in the International Boundary race. Kade drove *Thunderbolt* in the 1961 Detroit Memorial, then moved to the cockpit of John Dewey's *Miss Lumberville* for the Silver Cup and Madison Regatta. He drove *Miss Lumberville* in the 1962 Spirit of Detroit Regatta and the President's Cup. It's interesting that he also drove Bob Gilliam's *Fascination I* in the President's Cup.

Kade drove *Blue Chip* at three races in 1963. The following year he was unable to qualify *Such Crust IV* for the Gold Cup, but won the Spirit of Detroit Trophy, a semi-feature event for boats that failed to qualify for the Gold Cup. Kade also attempted to qualify *Miss Liberty* for the Gold Cup, but that boat was unable to make the grade.

In 1965, Kade began a long association with Mike Wolfbauer, owner of Savair Products Company. Kade drove

Savair's Probe at Gunter'sville, then took the cockpit of *Savair's Mist*, the boat he had previously driven as *Miss Lumberville*. He handled that craft through 1969. He did drive *Savair's Probe* in three regattas in 1968, picking up second place at the Wisconsin Cup. In his final season with *Savair's Mist*, he earned fifth place at Tri-Cities.

Kade drove two more times before hanging up his helmet. In 1970 he drove *Totum Trailer Sales* at Seafair for Bob Gilliam. Then, at the 1972 Gold Cup, he drove *Sweet Thing* for Jack Buhl. He was fourth in the only heat the boat finished.

Kade was a careful driver who stayed out of trouble during a time when Unlimited racing experienced far too many fatal accidents. He also was an expert mechanic and could build and repair boats when problems developed.

When Kade last drove an Unlimited he was 68 years old and remains the oldest person to drive an Unlimited. That mark will be broken this summer, however, when Dave Villwock drives in the upcoming season. ❖

We have looked at nine participants in Unlimited racing who were involved for years, but rarely received awards or acknowledgement for their dedication to the sport. Next month, we will look at nine more who made boat racing a significant part of their lives.



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

Walt Kade

FROM THE UNJ VAULT: **Austin Snell**

THE MAN WHO TRIED A GERMAN FIGHTER-PLANE ENGINE

Unlimited hydroplane racing in Seattle during the 1950s brought considerable acclaim to a number of local individuals. Neighboring Tacoma didn't get in on the hysteria as deeply as Seattle, but from 1957 to 1963, Austin Snell gave his city something to cheer about. Born in Lewiston, Montana, in 1903, Snell moved to the Pacific Northwest 10 years later. He studied at Washington State College for three years before going into business for himself selling rebrand gasoline. Realizing the potential of advertising with an Unlimited. Snell

decided the hydros might be just the thing for him. Snell christened his boat *Miss Rocket* in 1957, then changed it to *Coral Reef* the following season, in accordance with a name change to his business. The highlight of *Coral Reef's* career came in the 1958 Gold Cup, when the craft took a steady second overall. But the real fascination with the U-19 lies not with its racing performance, but rather with its experimental powerplant, the German-built Daimler-Benz that powered Messerschmitt Bf-109 fighter planes during World War II. The boat simply captured the fancy of anyone with a mechanical bent. Following is the story of a unique unlimited. Dave Speer and Craig Fjarlie conducted the interview, which was originally published in the January 1977 issue of the *Unlimited NewsJournal*.

UNJ: Did you have any experience in other classes before you got into the Unlimiteds?

Snell: No, actually I knew nothing about boat racing. We were as green as

gourds, as anybody who saw us would know!

How did you happen to select Les Staudacher to build *Miss Rocket*?

I went over to see Anchor Jen-



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

Austin Snell started racing Unlimiteds in 1957 with a brand-new boat named *Miss Rocket*, shown here at the new Stan Sayres pits in Seattle,



Bob Mazziel



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

sen who built the *Slo-mos* and asked him about building a boat. He said he couldn't possibly do it during the coming year because of his commitments to commercial work. He said, "Why don't you call Staudacher? He's a volume boat builder and a good one." So I called Staudacher and asked if he'd be interested in building me a boat. He said, "What's your idea of a boat?" I said, "What I want is a combination of *Hawaii Ka'i*, *Shanty*, and *Wahoo*. I'd like to have them all incorporated into one boat." "Well," he says, "that's kind of a large order. I'll think it over and see if I can put it together." So in a couple of days he called me back and said, "I think we can come up with a fairly good boat."

And it was a good boat.

You talked about the three boats that influenced you. Were there specific characteristics about each boat that you seemed to like?

I didn't know enough about it to know what a characteristic was. All I knew is that they were good boats, they were the fastest boats around, and they had won races.

At that time were you getting any input from local racing people suggesting things you might do?

No, I really didn't. I was an impulse deal, you must understand. First, it was something I thought might be attractive. There was no use going to a competitor to find out how he would have you build a boat because he's not going to tell you in the first place. And most of them didn't know, either. Most of the boats were 'by accidents.' not going to tell you in the first place. And most of either. Most of the boats were "by accident." After they'd been worked over a few times, they got to be pretty good boats.

Did you consider the price you paid for the boat to be fair?

Oh, yes. Definitely.

Would you tell us how much it was?

Sure, I'll tell you. The boat itself was \$7,000. The man didn't take advantage of me. When I went back to Bay City to get the boat, I said, "Les, what I haven't figured out yet is—knowing you had a live one on the line—how come you didn't goose him?" He said, "That isn't the way we do it. The guy that's going to get goosed by me is the guy

ABOVE: Marion Cooper brings *Miss Rocket* back to the pit area on Lake Washington in 1957. **LEFT:** Austin Snell (right) with Marion Cooper.

"He said, 'What's your idea of a boat?' I said, 'What I want is a combination of *Hawaii Ka'i*, *Shanty*, and *Wahoo*. I'd like to have them all incorporated into one boat.'"

who tries to tell me how to run my business. He's in for a rough hassle."

Lloyd Jett was your first driver. How did your paths cross?

Well, basically, he had a landing place. He had a good unit there at Rainier Beach. Before I got the boat out here, I went down to see about his provisions. So, we talked about it, and he says, "How about taking a shot at driving your boat?" I said, "What do you know about it?" He said, "Oh, I've driven small boats, but I've never reached the big ones. The basic principles would be the same."

Do you remember the first day the boat was in the water? What things went through your mind?

The most significant part of it I'll never forget as long as I live. We took it over to Lloyd Jett's and one of the major boat drivers happened to be there. He says some smart remark about, "I wonder where that hunk of junk came from?" Then a guy looking right at him looked at me, and he turned around and said, "Is this your boat?" And I said, "Yeah, I happen to be the proud owner of a hunk of junk." And a few epithets went with it. And that's when we parted company for a long time. But later we became very friendly. He said, "I guess my mouth is getting me in trouble." Anyway, the boat started, and we were happy. No attempt to get speed out of it.

Marion Cooper drove for you in the 1957 Gold Cup. Why was he chosen?

Bob Larson was going to drive it, and he could handle the boat real well. Joe Taggart, who was in charge of Gold Cup qualifying, discovered that Larson did not have enough racing time to be eligible. I didn't even know it. Taggart said, "We can't qualify your driver." Now, this is three or four days before the race. What do we do now? I said, "Do you know anybody who would be a good bet?" "You'll have to make your own choice," Taggart said, and he named three, including Cooper. Well, I had heard of Marion, and Taggart said, "They don't come any better." So, I proceeded to call him up.



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

Coral Reef at the Diamond Cup in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, in 1958

We weren't too well prepared, but he did qualify the boat and he made it around a couple of laps.

Did Cooper make any suggestions for improving the boat when he drove?

He corrected one problem we didn't even know we had. He said, "Your boat is all right, your power is limited because of the stock engine. But you've got sort of a shudder. And the only place it can come from is your rudder. I would suggest you shorten it about three inches." So, we took it down to Kenworth and they cut it off. We came back and Cooper took off with it and he said, "That's it." Just as simple as that.

How did you assemble your crew?

They were local boys. Most of them were pretty good mechanics with an interest in boats. The chap who did our paint job was one of the best artists in the country, I think. Another was an electrical technician. Incidentally, George Henry was one of our crew.

Back then did he ever ask about driving?

No, in fact he hadn't even started in

the little ones to any degree that I know of.

How do you recall the first Diamond Cup in 1958?

We opened the course at Coeur d'Alene. *Miss Spokane* had flipped and they had torn it up. And they already had publicity going for the race. So, we were working on the boat—it was a Thursday night as I recall, a week and three days before the Coeur d'Alene race—and the phone rang down at the plant. Somebody was calling to see if we'd come over and open their course a week ahead of time, so the people would get an idea of what a hydro looked like.

"Well," I said, "we have the engine pretty well scattered around the building, but if the boys want to work hard enough to put it back together, we'll come over." I told the crew what we were up against and they said, "What are we waiting for?" Next morning, we were on our way to Coeur d'Alene.

We were the first hydro ever to run on Lake Coeur d'Alene. At that time Harry Reeves was driving. He came over to

open the course on Sunday, a week before the race. He worked at Boeing and had to go back that night. Next morning, the boat was sitting on the trailer and there were people gathering around showing a lot of interest. A committee man said, "Why don't you put the boat in the water and take it around? Make these people happy." So, I said, "What are we going to use for a driver?" The guy said, "That's your problem." I said, "We'll put her in the water and if I can get it started, I'll drive it. I don't know how fast."

I finally got the boat started on the last gasp the battery had. I made about three laps. As I remember, I went about 80 miles an hour, and that was enough for me, because those buoys were coming fairly fast.

We qualified for the race and in the second lap of the second heat we threw a rod through the engine. That was our one and only engine at the time. We had to find another engine real quick with the Gold Cup coming up.

You mentioned Harry Reeves. He was your driver from '58 through '60. Did you happen to select him?

Well, I was in dire need of a driver. Harry had just gotten through winning the national meet on Lake Washington in a limited boat called *Ope*. I thought, "Well, this guy must be pretty good." So, I called him and said, "How about coming over and seeing if you want to take a

cut at this Unlimited?" So, he came over and that was it. Harry did a beautiful job of driving that boat.

When Reeves took over in the cockpit, were there any changes he suggested?

No, actually he took the boat "as is" and said, "It's a pretty good boat. I think we'd better leave it alone. It's a controllable boat."

The '58 Gold Cup was a highlight for you in a number of ways. What was your reaction when you finished second?

Well, it was real good. The local papers finally got with it and they gave us a good go. Public interest jumped sky high—the idea of local boy tangles with a high-priced boat and almost beat 'em. It was kind of flattering.

The only way we could have won would have been for *Hawaii Ka'i* to go haywire. As a matter of fact, *Hawaii Ka'i* crew chief Mike Welsch told me later, "You don't know how lucky we were." "What do you mean, lucky?" I said, "You had a lot of boat and a lot of engines." They blew 11 engines in time trials. He said, "We were down to our last one, and when we took it apart after that race, it was pretty well cobwebbed. If we had had to stomp on it, she wouldn't have held up."

In 1960 you switched to a Rolls engine. Why did you change?

Well, everybody else was going to

Rolls, and I found the engines kind of handy at an air base in Sacramento. I'd read about them coming up for sale. So, I went down a day ahead of the sale. I was nosing around and the yard master came along and asked if he could help me with anything. "Well," I said, "I'm looking for these Rolls engines you have advertised for sale."

He asked me what I wanted them for, and I told him. "Oh," he says, "You want pretty good engines." Now, the engines were in lots, with four engines in a lot. There were no serial numbers, just a lot number. You had to bid the lot.

The yard master said, "These lots have one new engine and three rebuilt or used engines. They've got hours on them. You want good boat engines, but the junk dealers buy them and melt 'em down. So, while you're not looking, why don't we lift the lid on about four boxes, move the new ones out, and put 'em all in one lot. I'll give you a number that they'll be in. Lot 71 That's the number you're supposed to bid." And I did, and I got them, and they were all brand new!

How did Harry Reeves feel about the Rolls?

Oh, he liked it. It accelerated faster, had more snap to it.

In 1960 you went south to Pyramid Lake and to the Gold Cup at Lake Mead.

Charles Mapes was on hands and knees begging us to go. I told him we were in no position to run. "Oh, heck," he says, "put it together, it'll run. It always has." So, I said, "We'll struggle with it and see what we can do."

Anyway, we went down to Pyramid and blew the gearbox and twisted an engine. Then we went to Mead and had a brand-new engine and we blew it. We were standing around weeping our eyes out and somebody says, "Well, what do you think of it?" I said, "Ah, this is getting ridiculous. What we need is one of those German engines."

One of our friends, Rex Bixby, who flies for TWA, was standing there and he says, "You mean the Daimler-Benz that



Bob Carver Photos

Harry Reeves at the controls of *Coral Reef* during the Apple Cup on Lake Chelan in 1958.

was used in the Bf-109? Let's see if we can find one. We have a world-wide board on TWA."

So, this is when you decided to try the Daimler-Benz engine?

It started out as a conversation. Just weird conversation. I figured nobody knows anything about a Daimler-Benz so I'm safe. I can expound on it to any degree, because nobody is in a position to question it.

How did you actually find the engines?

Just before Christmas on a Sunday night, the phone rang. It was Rex Bixby and he said, "I found your German engines." "Oh," I said, "where are they?" He says, "They're going to be on sale at Wright-Patterson Air Field tomorrow." I said, "Oh, that's fine. We're out here." He says, "That's it. I found a couple of 'em for you. It's up to you now."

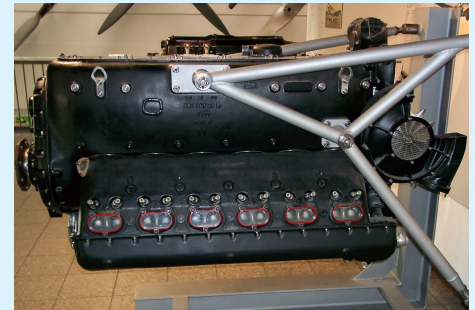
I mulled this thing around, and Monday morning I called the surplus officer at Wright-Patterson. I asked him, "Have you got a couple of Daimler-Benz aircraft engines coming up for sale?" He said they did, and the sale was set for 1:30. And I'm out here at 8 o'clock, which is 11 o'clock there. "Where are you?" he asked. "Washington," I said. "Quite a ways from there. Can you bid 'em?" "No, no," he says. "I'm a government employee. I couldn't touch 'em. But I can give you the name of somebody who might." So, he told me about a Nicholson Electric.

I called them and got a hold of Nicholson himself. I asked him if I could talk him into bidding on the engines for me. I knew the junk dealers paid two cents a pound, and I had figured two cents a pound plus \$50 would make a bid. So, Nicholson says, "Well, if I can get 'em, I'll have to put up a deposit." "I'll send you the money as quick as I can get it," I told him. He said, "You went to this much trouble, I'll go bid 'em and if you get 'em you're in business."

He bid them, we got them, and he called me back and said, "What do you

The Daimler-Benz 601E engine.

The Daimler-Benz (DB) 601E engine was developed as an improvement of the DB 600 engine that was used in the early-model Bf-109 Messerschmitt fighter planes built by Germany before World War II. The DB 601 was first used in the Bf-109E (Emil) version in about 1938. (By the way, the Bf means Bayerische Flugzeugwerke A.G., the company that built the plane when it became operational.) It was also used in the Dornier Do-215, the Heinkel He-100, the Henschel Hs-130, the Bf-110, and the Messerschmitt Me-210.



The primary improvement over the DB 600 was that the DB 601 had direct fuel injection that provided a big advantage to Bf-109 pilots when they faced an opponent with a carbureted engine, which would lose fuel flow and cut-out at negative g-forces. Its other main features were that it used dry cylinder liners, had roller bearing connector rods, and had a unique system of attaching the cylinders to the crankcase. It also used a one-stage supercharger.

From an American viewpoint, it was different because it had an inverted V design, with the valve covers on the bottom and the crankcase at the top. This was normal in German aircraft, however. The designers felt an inverted V lowered the center of gravity in the aircraft and improved visibility for the pilot, who was looking across the narrower side of the engine.

The DB 601 displaced 2,069 cubic inches, as compared with a stock Allison at 1,710 c.i. and a Rolls Merlin at 1,649 c.i. In an airplane it was rated at 1,360 horsepower at 2,000 rpm. The stock Allison was rated at 1,100 hp at 2,600 rpm and the Rolls Merlin was 1,290 hp at 3,000 rpm. The DB 601 was about 145 pounds heavier than an Allison and 100 pounds lighter than a Merlin.

want done with them?" I said, "Put them in a box and send them out here. And how much money do I owe you?" And he told me. He bid them, picked them up, and sent them on their way for \$25 apiece! I about fell over dead. I said, "It can't be done." He said, "I hope that isn't too much."

What model engines were they?

One was a 601E, the other was a 605. The 601N was the original engine. The 601E was a modified N. In fact, it was the last one they ever built of that model. The 605 was a big bomber engine, 3,300 inches. Of course, it was not usable in a boat.

And then I bought a 601N from Lee Schoenith. He was looking in the boat one day and said, "That thing looks familiar. I got one in a crate that we picked up in a sale down in Louisiana. We never opened it, but I believe that's what it is."

How much did you pay for that one?
\$700.

When you got the engines, did you get any manuals with them? Any logs?

No descriptive material. I finally ended up with a manual. The Swedes built the engine under contract for Germany. It ended up that the American attaché in Sweden went on my behalf to

the Swedish people that built the engine during the war. They happened to find a manual, but it was in Swedish. Then another guy in Seattle came up with one in German. I couldn't read either one. So, I had a Swedish engineer translate the important part into English and we got along pretty well with that.

Which engine did you put in the Coral Reef? Was it the 601E?

That's the one we converted. The engine was inverted in the aircraft. We turned it up and had to redo the oil system. It scavenged through the valve covers. The oil flow was designed to go in the opposite direction we were making it go. The oil was piling up, so we had to put baffles on the inside of the crankcase to rechannel the oil flow. Then we had to install pressure feeds into the valve system and into the camshaft system to compensate for the lack of oil.

In the aircraft, the oil would've been there by gravity. We had a heckuva time getting enough pump on it to pump the crankcase out in the boat. The only pump we ended up with that would work was

the oil scavenge pump off a 24-cylinder Allison. It ran enough volume.

What kind of oiling system did the 601E have?

This engine was a ball-bearing type, so you didn't have any pressure control on your rods. You just poured oil through. Well, when it was running in the aircraft bottom side up, the oil would run down and go back through the scavenger, no problem. But our setup, we had to pump it back out of the crankcase.

What other modifications did you have to make? Carburetion?

Well, there was no carburetor on it. It was a fully injected engine. The injection system was Bosch. It was gear driven and laid right in the vee of the engine. It had leads to each cylinder. By adjusting, you could regulate the amount of travel of the piston in the injector. The diaphragm then would pull it back and forth to that point.

What kind of blower system did the engine have?

That engine had the most remarkable blower system on it ever. It was oil

controlled and variable. You could run it from nothing to 10 to 1 just by tightening down an oil valve. Miraculous! We were running at 6- possibly 7 to 1. And we were getting all the air pressure we needed. The intake manifold system was very light. To look at and feel it you'd think it was tin. But it was a high-tensile steel. It was not a heavy casting like the Rolls or Allison. It didn't have to be because it didn't stand any pressure.

What kind of manifold pressure did you run?

Not too high, actually. As I say, it was injected. You didn't blow fuel in. Your pressure came from the fuel pump. It was the speed of the fuel pump itself that caused the induction. I'd imagine we ran 40 to 45 inches. The aircraft specification was 45.

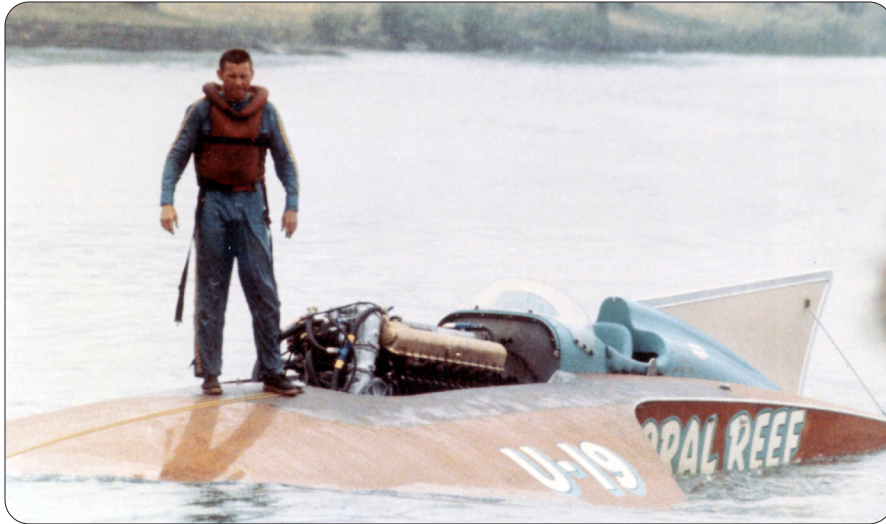
When you got the engine in the boat, how did it work? What were your impressions?

Actually, it was the best boat engine ever built. It had terrific acceleration, terrific power. Russ Schlee was driving the boat—testing it—and he said, "I don't



Coral Reef in Seattle in 1960.

Bob Greenhow



Norm Evans stands on the deck after a test run aboard *Coral Reef* in 1962. The engine beside him is the inverted German Daimler-Benz 601E.

believe it. That engine picks the boat up. It throws it at you. It doesn't just start to climb, it jumps."

Then we got into trouble. We could climb all right, but couldn't get back. And in a turn, that can be bad. We kept trying to figure out what was the matter. The guy who was working on it and supposed to know something kept trying to adjust the deceleration system. But nothing was working. Schlee says, "Well, it's sure not very safe that way. You've got to run outside of everybody in order to play it safe if it gets away. You can't race that way." So, I said, "There's this much about it. We're not going to run over somebody with it." So, I withdrew the boat.

The injection and induction systems were controlled by pressure and vacuum. The diaphragm in it was cracked and we didn't know it. It wouldn't back off. The vacuum couldn't do any business. I took one out of another engine and it worked like a charm. Of course, the race was long gone then.

Obviously, you were impressed with what you had.

Oh, yes, it was something else. We could go from a start of planing—about 60 miles an hour—to 120 in four seconds. Now, that's hard to believe. Bill Muncey was standing on the dock and he says, "How long has that been going

on? There's nobody in the world that can do that." But it moved. It simply moved.

Who was your lead engine man throughout your involvement? Who did your brainstorming?

Well, actually, I don't like to brag, but I turned into the brain because nobody else had the time to monkey with it. I had nothing else to do, so I got all the data I could.

In the end, you seemed to have solved the problem.

Oh, yeah, we had it solved.

Why did you stop and pull out at that time?

Well, I had sold my oil company and

I had nothing to advertise. I would've been running out of my pocket then. I couldn't write it off, and I decided it was a little bit of an expensive luxury. Then I sold the boat to Art Douglas, who bought it for his kid. His kid didn't work at it, so Art finally sold it to [Bob] Fendler. But I wouldn't sell the engines.

What ultimately happened to the engines?

They're down at Harrah's museum.

Would you say that '58 was the highlight year for the Unlimiteds? By '63, was it starting to go down?

Well, I knew it, but I didn't want to admit it. In '58 you had a high pitch of interest. There was no antagonism, no beefs. It was just a good year for racing. And, of course, Seattle had the choice race on the circuit.

When you look back now [in 1977]—the long view—how do you recall your participation?

Well, it turned from a business venture to just basically a lot of fun. I mean, hard work fun, if you can imagine such a thing. Every season I lost 30 pounds and thought nothing of it. The point is, you wouldn't do that normally. And I did just that. We enjoyed a lot of friends that we'd have never known otherwise, too. ❖



The *Coral Reef* hull continued racing for many years, including when it saw action here at Madison, Indiana, in 1966 as *Wayfarer's Club Lady*.

\$ENIOR \$AYS

Feeding Your Hydro Habit by Bob Senior



A Guide to help hydro fans spend their hobby money

HYDROPLANE AND RACEBOAT

MUSEUM ANNUAL APPEAL: It is normal for non-profit organizations to hold a year-end fund appeal, and the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum is no exception. It's not too late to lend support with a donation. You can visit www.thunderboats.ning.com or call the museum at 206 764 9453 with your credit card handy.

SPEAKING OF THE MUSEUM: Visit the museum's online store. Same address as above. Click on the SHOP button. You'll find racing videos, boat racing books, hydroplane apparel, and much more. The museum offers four different hydro-shaped thumb drives, all loaded with appropriate video as membership premiums. This year's boats are the 1966 *Tahoe Miss*, *Miss Pepsi*, *Miss Circus Circus*, and *U-95*.

TAKE A LOOK AT DUANE HERIN ON

FACEBOOK: He offers you a look at photos of his extensive memorabilia collection and lists many items for sale or trade.

MEET PETE SCHILLE, HYDROPLANE ARTIST EXTRAORDINAIRE: Pete has created many of the dynamic Unlimited hydroplane paintings that the Hydroplane Museum has sold at Gala auctions. You can commission him to paint your favorite boat. His email address is racepainter@aol.com.

ROAR OF THE HYDROS! THE GREATEST SPECTACLE ON WATER: By Stephen A. Garey. This book offers in-depth coverage of the sport from its beginnings through 2009. There is a list of drivers' victories, and also an alphabetical mini-encyclopedia of over 100 racers who never made the winner's circle.

Contact the author at sgarey34@aol.com.

CRUSADER. JOHN COBB'S ILL-FATED QUEST FOR SPEED ON WATER: by Englishman Steve Holter. Cobb once held the world land speed record, and developed jet-powered *Crusader* to go for a new world water speed record. He was fatally injured in 1952. The book is available at Amazon.

ITS NOT TOO LATE TO DONATE TO THIS PUBLICATION: Please help perpetuate the *Unlimited NewsJournal*. Kindly consider sending a check payable to Unlimited NewsJournal, c/o Lon Erickson, Treasurer, 1312 - 164th Pl. NE, Bellevue WA 98008. Thank you.

AND MAY I TOOT MY ON HORN AGAIN? Do you collect Unlimited hydroplane race programs? I have two large boxes here, full of extra programs from a wide variety of races. Please contact me for a price list. I pay all postage. My email is bob.senior37@hotmail.com.

That's all for now. See you again in May. ❖

The 2021 season honored at H1 Awards Banquet.

A good crowd of unlimited hydroplane participants gathered at the Angel of the Winds Casino and Resort near Arlington, Washington, on Saturday, January 8, to recognize what was accomplished during the 2021 season and to look forward to an even better 2022 campaign. Here are the award recipients at the banquet:

- ◆ Crew of the Year: Strong Racing Team
- ◆ Crew Chief of the Year: (tie) Mike Hansen, Madison Racing Team, and Brian Hajny, Strong Racing Team
- ◆ Owner of the Year: Vanessa and Darrell Strong
- ◆ Race Site of the Year: Guntersville, Alabama
- ◆ Sponsor of the Year: HomeStreet Bank
- ◆ H1 Volunteer of the Year: Seph Parshall, H1 tech truck official

- ◆ Outstanding Contribution: Tait and Jared Meyer, H1 media team
- ◆ Chairman's Award: Mike and Lori Jones
- ◆ Chairman's Award: Howard Shaw
- ◆ Bill Muncey High-Point National Champion: J. Michael Kelly
- ◆ Third Place Team: U-9 *Pinnacle Peak Consulting*, Strong Racing Team
- ◆ Second Place Team: U-8 *Miss Tri-Cities*, Strong Racing Team
- ◆ Martini & Rossi National Champion: U-1 Miss Madison Racing Team

A video also was presented at the awards ceremony that looks back at the 2021 season. You can find the video at <https://youtu.be/DklzX8blcvE>

Guntersville to celebrate record run.

The Guntersville Lake Hydrofest will be the Alabama town's biggest event this summer with three classes of hydroplanes featured. The 2022 event, set for June 25 and 26, also will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the 200.419 mph world speed record set by Roy DUBY at Lake Guntersville in 1962.

Event organizers are excited to announce the return of the Grand Prix

World hydros and the addition of the Pro-Lite 5-Litre hydros. Also coming will be the restored U-36 *Miss U.S. IV*.

"Our race for 2022 will celebrate several decades of hydroplanes and the impact our water has had on the sport of boat racing," said Philip Mosley, chair of the 2022 Guntersville Lake Hydrofest planning committee. "With three racing classes as well as the appearance of a few

vintage craft, this event will be one of our best."

Tickets for the Guntersville Lake Hydrofest will go on sale April 1. Tickets start at \$15 for a day pass and \$20 for a weekend pass. You can also purchase a \$30 Ultimate Weekend pass, which will give access to the event both days as well as to the pits, or the \$120 Club Level pass, which includes access to a large, private tented area neat the start/finish line. Premium tent spaces also will be available for the perfect tailgate experience.

For information, go to www.guntersvillelakehydrofest.com.

NEWS FROM H1 UNLIMITED

Ten boats are registered for the 2022 campaign.

A total of 10 hydroplanes have already been registered for the 2022 season, twice the number that had been registered at this time a year ago. This doesn't mean 10 boats will show up at every race, but it does show that more hydroplane owners are interested in going racing this year and that most race sites should see greater participation in 2022. The registered boats are: two each from the Strong Racing Team, the Bucket List Racing Team, and the Miss Madison Racing Team, and one each from the Go Fast Turn Left Racing Team, the Unlimited Racing Group, the Go3 Racing Team, and the Graham Trucking Racing Team.

Plans underway for an exhibition in Vancouver, Wash.

A team of volunteers is working on the possibility of an exhibition run for the H1 Unlimiteds on the Columbia River near Vancouver, Washington, on May 20. While nothing is definite yet, those closest to the effort are saying plans are progressing well and they are optimistic that something could happen. The agencies that must give approval to such events have also indicated that there appear to be no major roadblocks that might prevent the event. Fingers crossed, there will maybe be an opportunity to show the residents of southwest Washington and the Portland area what the sport of unlimited hydroplane racing is all about.

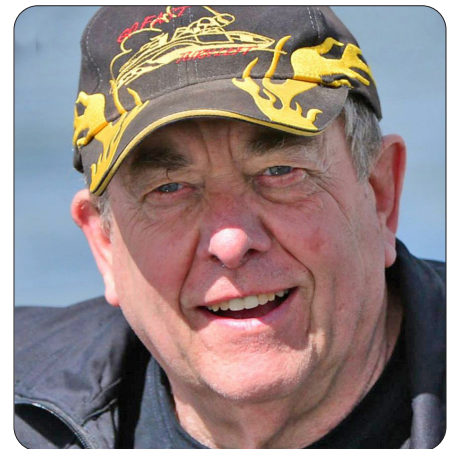
The winter is rules season.

Last winter, the H1 Board started a process of breaking the sport's rule book into separate sections. Before the 2021 season, the Board adopted a set of Racing Rules, the Technical Rules, and a drone policy, while also making some updates to the General Rules. This year, in addition to making some updates to the Racing and Technical rule books, the Board will adopt the General Rules, the Race Site and Promoter Requirements, and the Medical and Rescue Guidelines.

You are invited to join the H1 Fan Club.

Hydroplane fans can help support the sport of unlimited hydroplane racing with an H1 Fan Club membership. Members get two special gifts from H1, too. Plus you'll be added to the H1 volunteer list and will receive a regular newsletter from H1 that will give you the "insider" scoop about what's happening within the sport you love. Membership is only \$50. Go to the H1 website at www.h1unlimited.com today to get an application form and become a 2022 member. ❖

Sport mourns passing of Howard Shaw.



H1 Unlimited

Everybody in the sport of boat racing is saddened by the unexpected passing on December 30 of Howard Shaw. Howard spent several stints as an unlimited official, most recently as the assistant referee. Before he joined the unlimited ranks, he was a successful outboard pilot winning APBA driver's titles in 350 Pro Hydro, 700 Pro Hydro, and 1100 Pro Runabout. Howard was also key figure in the Seattle Outboard Association, helping promote the sport of boat racing however he could. We extend our deepest sympathies and condolences to his wife, Jan, and the entire Shaw family. Race in Peace, Howard.

HYDROFILE

Race Team News by Lon Erickson



U-1/U-91 Miss Madison Racing

The HomeStreet Racing shop has been a busy place with a lot of preseason work going on. While the race boats wait patiently, Mike Hansen, Larry Hansen (below), Paul Floyd (right), and Trey Holt have been building spare parts and taking inventory of the shop. Offsite, Jimmy Labrie is working on one of the boat trailers. After the H1 banquet, the APBA Gold Cup trophy spent some time at the corporate office of Goodman Real Estate in downtown Seattle (bottom right).



Trey Holt



Trey Holt



Trey Holt



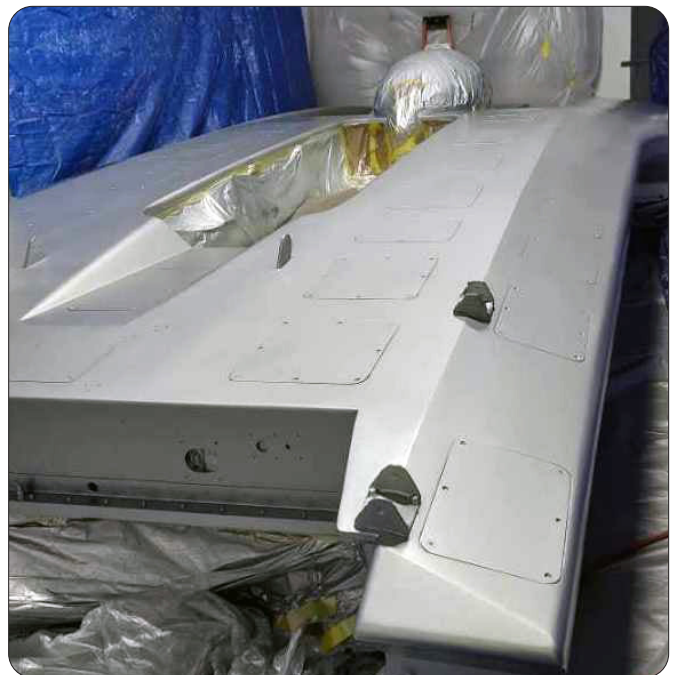
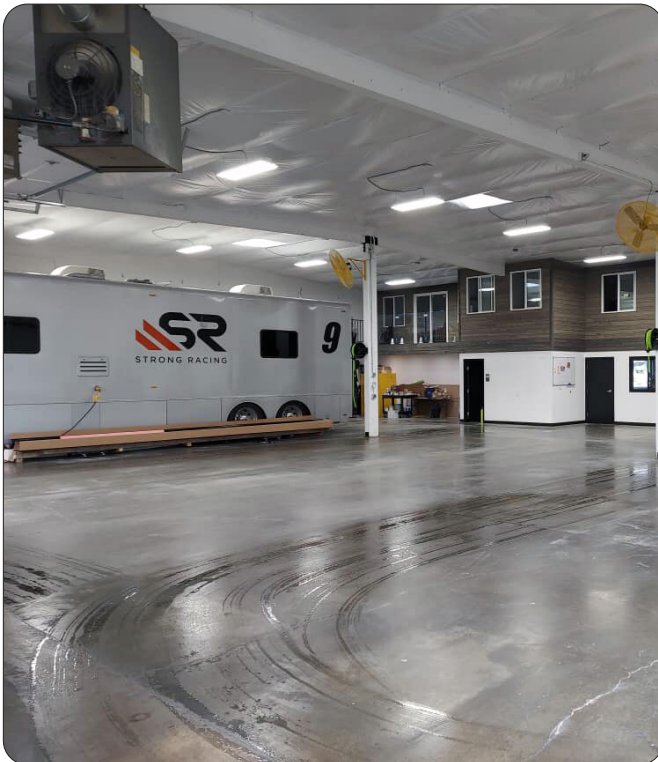
Trey Holt



Miss Madison Race Team

U-8/U-9 Strong Racing

After the recent H1 banquet, *Miss Tri-Cities* team member Mike Noonan (below) spent a couple of days in the Strong Racing shop doing off-season testing and maintenance on U-8 electronics systems. Jason Elhard also gave the *Miss Tri-Cities* a fresh coat of paint (photos at right). After both hulls had some maintenance and updates done during the last month, they will be moving back into the main shop area soon.



Photos from Strong Racing Team

U-11 Unlimited Racing Group

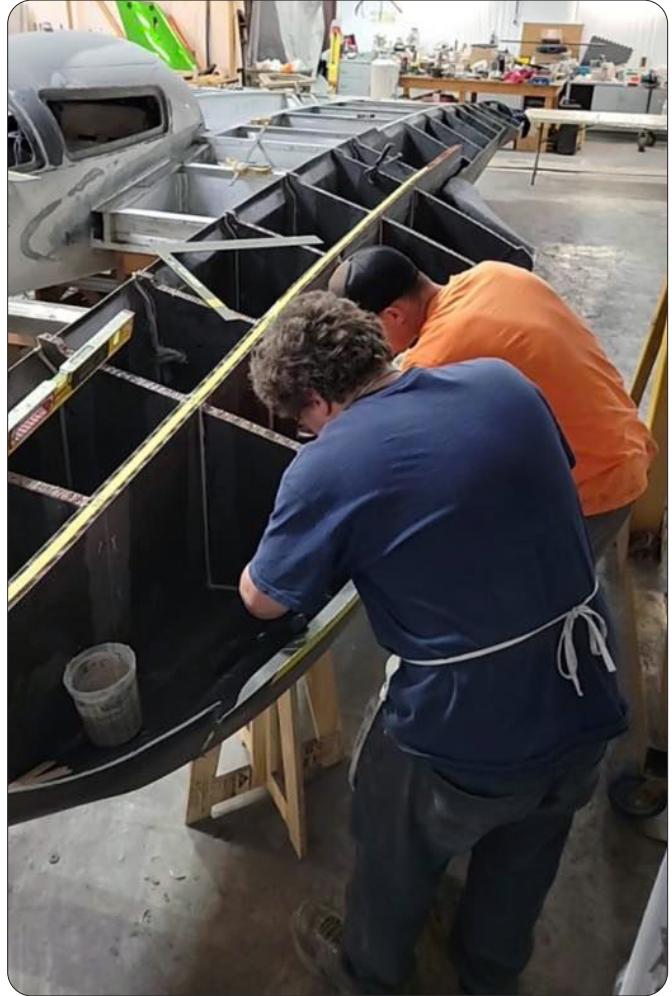
Before the holidays and winter weather set in at the new U-11 shop in Cle Elum, Washington, the boat had been weighed and hardware removed. Parts are thoroughly cleaned and visually inspected, then get placed on the shelf and ready to be magnafluxed. If the part needs repairs or modification, it gets set aside for the work to be done later this winter by the U-11 crew. Having a new shop out of the city has its advantages and disadvantages. At the bottom is a view that owner Scott Raney shot from the front door of the shop, looking outside. Luckily, the work being done now is all inside work.



Photos from Unlimited Racing Group

U-27 Wiggins Racing

The major rebuild of the U-27 continues in the Gadsden, Alabama, shop. Work continues on the new canoes, interior hull fabrication, and, as you can see here, it's starting to look like a race boat. Charley Wiggins, Chris Martin, Jason Colean, and crew are putting in long hours and looking to 2022.



Photos from Wiggins Racing

MY \$0.02 WORTH

Editorial Comment by Andy Muntz



Every so often someone will post a statement on Facebook proposing some particular thing that will solve all of the problems within the sport of unlimited hydroplane racing—if only H1 Unlimited would listen. Then others will chime in and pretty soon there are 200 posts suggesting things such as the sport needs more sponsors, or more races, or it needs network TV coverage.

I admire the passion of the people who participate in this exercise (though I must admit, I sometimes wonder whether they actually believe it's never occurred to H1 that network TV would be a good thing). But it got me to thinking: What should a person do if they actually have an idea?

As someone who is doing strategic planning for the sport, I can assure you that H1 wants to hear about your good ideas. It conducted a survey last fall that gave nearly a thousand hydro fans a way to offer their views on what might be done to improve the sport. At the same

time, I'm also confident there are other ideas for H1 to consider.

Often someone will ask the person proposing these ideas on Facebook whether they have actually reached out to H1 with their suggestion. It turns out they usually haven't. So, as a public service, I thought I'd offer some tips on how to be taken seriously if you were to propose an idea to H1. They are the same as what any organization would ask when considering a new proposal.

1) Put your idea in writing. State the problem you'd like to solve and describe the goal you'd like to achieve with your solution. Provide a summary of your methodology for achieving your solution (How would you carry out your idea?), and describe the benefits that will result. Your idea also should have a realistic timeline. Include a schedule and some benchmarks.

2) Base your idea on actual research. Don't guess, do some homework. If you want more sponsors, for example, find out what potential sponsors are looking

for and what's involved in reaching them. Provide evidence that your plan is achievable.

3) Consider the relationship between cost and benefits. Cost is a big issue in this sport. Your idea can't have high up-front costs and must be financially sustainable over time. What resources will be needed for your idea to succeed? Show how the benefits from your idea will be worth the costs of implementing it.

4) Be aware that your idea must be acceptable to both the boat owners and race sites. Let's face it, the owners have invested lots of money in this sport and the race sites depend heavily on this sport for their success as an organization. They both must be happy with your idea.

If your idea is good, it should be worth the effort of presenting it properly. And, when you're done, send your idea to me at the email address below. I'm looking forward to learning new ways to make the sport of unlimited hydroplane racing better in the future. ❖

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Letters are welcome, but may be edited for clarity and space.

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