



THE OAKLAND BOYS, Part Three

by Andy Muntz



Five young men, Dan Arena, Danny Foster, Lou Fageol, Stanley Dollar and Edgar Kaiser, grew up together near Lake Merritt in Oakland, California, and though they lived more than two thousand miles from the nearest Gold Cup race, would all make an impact on Gold Cup racing history.

Arena had been the first. He burst upon the scene in 1938 as a no-name youngster with a home-built boat and, in the span of only a few years, became the driver for one of the sport's top race teams, designed a new record-breaking boat for that team and built another new boat that introduced the sport to the power of Allison engines. But,

despite his success, Arena would not experience a victory in a Gold Cup race. That distinction would instead be left to his four friends, starting with Danny Foster.

Foster sat beside Arena during that Gold Cup in 1938 when the two young racers captured the attention of boatracing fans with their improbable second place finish. Arena was back the following year as the pilot of *Notre Dame*, but Foster would not return to the cockpit of a Gold Cup boat for another eight years. Instead, he raced midget racecars, earned his pilot's license and went into the Army, first as a test pilot and eventually flying a C-46 transport that flew "The Hump," the dangerous route through the Himalayan Mountains between India and China that was used



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The crew works on the Allison powered *Miss Golden Gate III* in the pits at Detroit, preparing for the APBA Gold Cup.

to deliver supplies to the Chinese Army during World War II.

He returned to Oakland in July 1946, just in time to help Arena install the Allison engine in the new *Miss Golden Gate III*. Foster also was in the pits to help Arena finish second in the Gold Cup later that summer; and, when Arena sold the boat to Albin Fallon after the race, he became part of the deal. Fallon wanted Foster to stay behind and drive the boat in the President's Cup. "Well," he explained in an interview published in the *Unlimited NewsJournal* in December 1984, "I told Arena I had nothing to do — I was just on leave."

Foster's ride in Washington, D.C., with the boat renamed *Miss Great Lakes*, erased all doubt that the Allison engine would be a

commanding force for years to come. In the first heat, he crossed the starting line in fourth place and passed all the others before he reached the first turn. Guy Lombardo jumped to an early lead in the second heat and managed to hold off *Great Lakes* for two laps, but Foster eventually surged ahead and took the checkered flag with a new heat record of over 71 miles per hour. Finally, in the third heat, Foster led from start to finish. "We just had a ball with that thing," he said

Three brothers, the proprietors of a family business called Dossin's Food Products, had developed an interest in hydroplane racing during this time and figured the sport might be a good way to advertise their Pepsi-Cola distribution business. So, the following winter, Foster approached the Dossin brothers with a proposition. He would purchase the old *So Long*, the boat his friend Lou Fageol had raced before the war, and would put an Allison engine in it.

The Dossins thought it was a great idea, so Foster went to work. The only problem was, the engine was too big to fit in the 22-foot hull. To make room for



Sue Dossin photo

The Dossin Brothers, Walter, Russell, and Roy with their many trophies. Sadly, after the 1947 racing season Russell passed away.

the monster, Foster had put the cockpit inside an aluminum container that dangled several feet over the water behind the hull. When the aluminum cowling was in place over the engine, the hydroplane looked like a racecar had parked on its rear deck.

The 1947 Gold Cup was held on Jamaica Bay, Long Island, and like the event the year before, it attracted a large field of contestants; 21 in all. But, unlike the previous year, only seven boats made it to the starting line, including four from Detroit. Ironically, of those four, three had direct ties to faraway Oakland: *Notre Dame* was driven by Dan Arena, *Miss Great Lakes* was built by Arena and the Dossin brothers' *Miss Peps V*, formerly owned by Lou Fageol, was rebuilt and driven by Danny Foster.

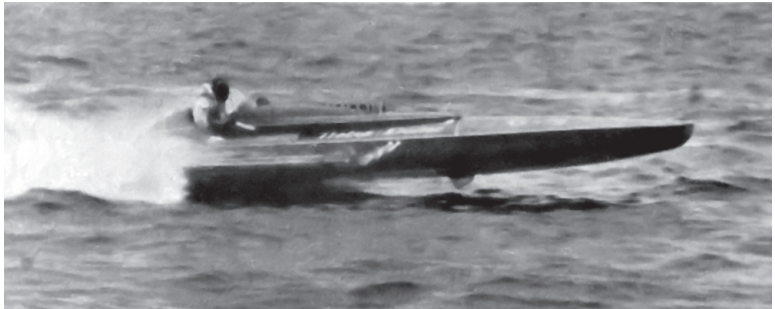
The racecourse itself proved to be treacherous. A breeze blowing against the tide had kicked up a steep chop that caused the drivers to lay off the throttle much of the way around the course, lest the rough water turn their hulls to kindling. In fact, that's what happened to defending Gold Cup champion Guy Lombardo. Only two laps into the first heat, the waves had punched a large hole in the sponson of his *Tempo VI*, which put Lombardo out of contention for the rest of the day. Arena, meanwhile, won the first heat in *Notre Dame*, but a flooded supercharger housing caused him to miss the second heat and allowed Foster an easy wire-to-wire victory. Foster then drove the *Peps V* at a steady pace during the final, ended up crossing the finish line in first place and won the Gold Cup.

Foster made it two Gold Cups in a row the following year under similar circumstances. With a strong breeze blowing against the Detroit River's current, 21 of the 22 boats that entered the 1948 race were forced out of the running, mostly because their hulls had fallen apart as they crashed through the waves. Mel Crook of *Yachting Magazine* described the event as "a mass destruction of floating equipment rivaling the scuttling at Scapa Flow." Meanwhile, the lone survivor was Foster behind the wheel of



Danny Foster and Albin Fallon in the renamed G-4 *Miss Great Lakes*.

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Dan Arena in Herb Mendelson's final G-5 *Notre Dame*, powered by a 24-cyl Dusenber.

H&RM Collection



Bandleader Guy Lombardo in the U-13 *Tempo VI*, the former *My Sin*.

Anchor Jensen Collection



Danny Foster in the Dossin's rebuilt, repowered (Allison), and renamed from *So-long* to *Miss Peps V*, wins the 1947 APBA Gold Cup.

Sandy Ross Collection

Miss Great Lakes. The boat lasted long enough to cross the finish line of the final heat and then began to sink when it returned to the pits.

Fellow Oakland native Lou Fageol also had entered that fateful 1948 Gold Cup, but was counted among the casualties. Following his less-than-stellar accomplishments in the 1939 and 1940 Gold Cup races, Fageol had turned his attention toward the family business and became president of the Fageol Twin Coach Company, makers of twin-engined passenger buses. He also was interested in a new class of limited inboard hydros called the 7-litre class, which happened to use the same engine found in a Twin Coach bus. He entered a 7-litre boat named *So Long Jr.* in the 1946 Gold Cup and another 7-litre boat named *So Long* was among the battered contestants in the 1948 race.

Fageol got his first ride in an unlimited-class hydroplane in 1949 when he was asked to drive a new Arena-designed boat named *Such Crust II* in the Silver Cup. The boat handled so rough, however, that the riding mechanic, Ray Taverner, demanded that Fageol make a quick stop at the press dock after the fifth lap so he could get out of the thing. Driving the team's other boat, the *Such Crust*, two weeks later at the President's Cup, Fageol managed a second place finish before the race was canceled by poor weather.

The big news in 1950 was the appearance of the revolutionary *Slo-mo-shun IV* from Seattle, which set a world straightaway speed record earlier in the summer and then, with designer Ted Jones at the helm, easily won the Gold Cup race on the Detroit River. While that was going on, defending champion Bill Cantrell was nursing injuries he had suffered while driving another boat a few days before. Cantrell drove his *My Sweetie* to a second place finish in the first heat, but was so sore afterward that had to be lifted from the cockpit. So, Fageol completed the day's work. The same thing happened a week later in the Detroit Memorial Race. Cantrell won the first and second heats in *My Sweetie*, then Fageol wrapped it up with another victory in the final heat.



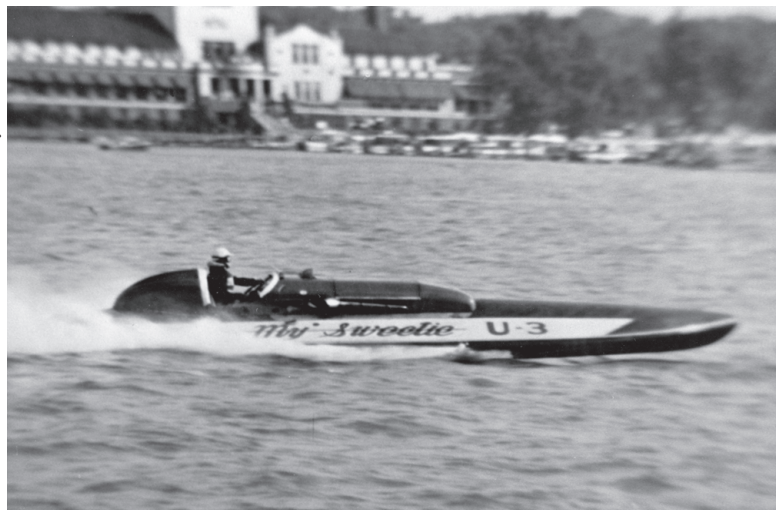
Lou Fageol in the 7-litre H-4 *So-long*. He won the High Points title and upped the one-mile straightaway record in 1949.

Bill Stroh Collection



Breadmaker Jack Schafer's U-1 *Such Crust I* (driven by Dan & Gene Arena & Fageol in '49) with the U-11 *Such Crust II* (driven by Dan Arena & Danny Foster in '49) at Detroit.

H&RM Collection



Wild Bill Cantrell in the first *My Sweetie*, designed by John Hacker and built by Les Staudacher, in the 1949 Detroit APBA Gold Cup.

H&RM Collection

Then came Fageol's golden opportunity. The *Slo-mo-shun IV* stayed in Detroit after the Gold Cup so it could be entered in the coveted Harmsworth Trophy more than a month later. But, driver Ted Jones injured his

wrist during a test run on the Detroit River the day before qualification runs were set to begin, which meant the team suddenly needed a new driver. Jones and team owner Stan Sayres considered a couple of the top drivers for the job, including Danny Foster, but the only one available was Lou Fageol, who Jones knew to be mild mannered on shore but with little fear on the racecourse. Sayres talked to him briefly and hired him on the spot.

Fageol won the Harmsworth Trophy easily, beating his friend Dan Arena in *Such Crust* by a large distance, and became the first to average more than 100 miles per hour in a race. A couple of days later, he drove the boat again in the Silver Cup and turned a first lap of an astonishing 106 miles per hour in the first heat.

A year later, the entire Gold Cup fleet made its way across the country to Seattle and, when they arrived, were met by a second Stan Sayres entry, the new *Slo-mo-shun V* with Lou Fageol at the steering wheel. Fageol then stunned the others with something called a “flying start.” As the clock ticked down toward the start of the first heat, he drove *Slo-mo V* off the racecourse and under the western approach to the nearby floating bridge, turned around on the other side, pushed his foot hard onto the throttle and came flying out from under the bridge; the boat’s white roostertail soaring high into the air.

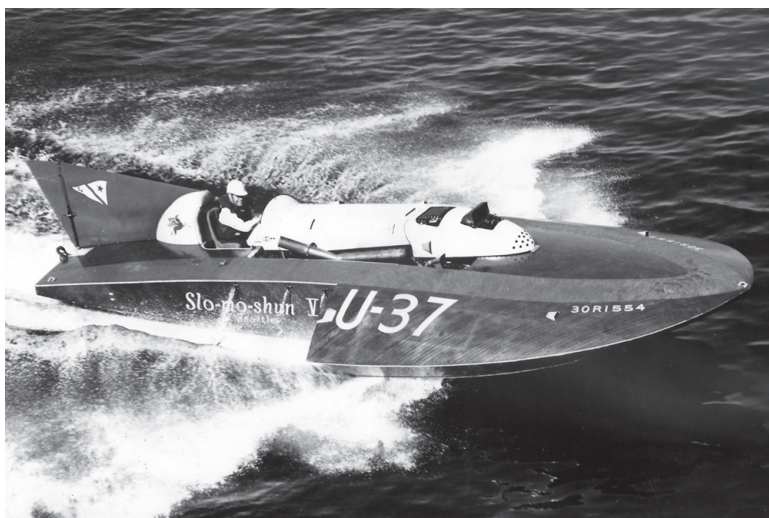
Slo-mo-shun V hit the starting line just as the gun fired and it flew toward the south turn, out-accelerating all except *Miss Pepsi* (2). Chuck Thompson, driving *Pepsi*, held a position just to the rear and to the right of *Slo-mo V* and stayed there for most of the next four laps, pushing Fageol to turn one lap at a record-breaking 108.633 miles per hour. But, during the fourth time around the buoys, *Miss Pepsi*’s engines sputtered, coughed and went silent, which left the heat victory to *Slo-mo V*.

Fageol began the second heat like he had the first, and Thompson did likewise by grabbing a spot at the heels of *Slo-mo V*. But this time the battle was short-lived. A crankshaft broke on *Miss Pepsi* before it had even reached the first turn. That left *Hornet* (3), the second place finisher in the first heat, as the only boat with a chance to catch *Slo-mo V*. Danny Foster, driving *Hornet*, tried valiantly to keep up with his friend, but he couldn’t close the gap and left Fageol with a second comfortable victory.



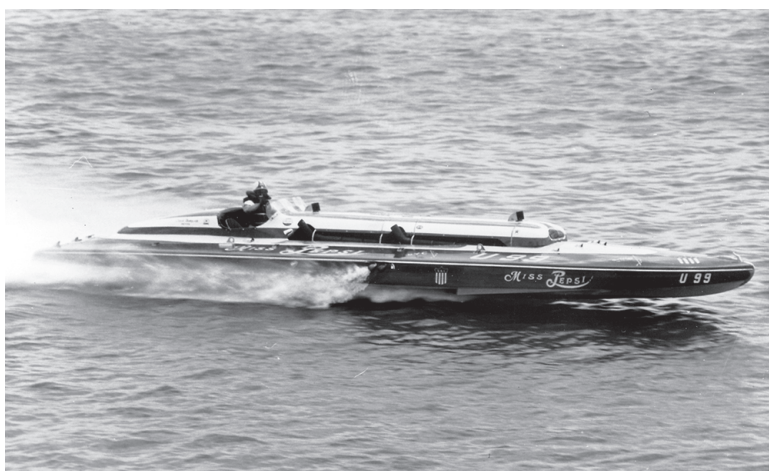
Above: *Slo-mo-shun IV*, hauled east by the Boat Transit Company truck and trailer, reaches Detroit for the 1950 APBA Gold Cup.

H&RM Collection



Lou Fageol in Stan Sayres’ newly minted *Slo-mo-shun V* running at speed on Lake Washington in 1951.

Bob Carver photo



Chuck Thompson in the Walt and Roy Dossin’s U-99 *Miss Pepsi* (2). It was also designed by John Hacker and built by Les Saduacher.

H&RM Collection

That was all that was needed. Just two laps into the final heat, *Quicksilver*, driven by Orth Mathiot, suddenly leaped into the air, disintegrated into a geyser of spray as it hit the surface of Lake Washington and sank to the bottom—leaving behind only a few splinters of gray plywood, a seat cushion and one shoe with a sock still inside. Race officials quickly stopped the race and declared Fageol the winner, but there was little celebrating for his Gold Cup victory. Divers found Mathiot's body two hours later and didn't recover the remains of his riding mechanic, Thompson Whittaker, until the following day.

~~UNJ



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Danny Foster and the tailless G-31 *Hornet* (3). He took over for Bill Cantrell in heat 2, placing second. He was in fifth place when the final heat was called after *Quicksilver* crashed and sunk.

Seattle's First APBA Gold & Tragedy

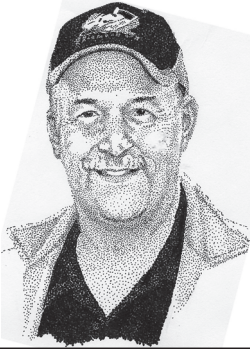
The Portland based *Quicksilver* was built by tugboat pilot Orth Mathiot (56). He was a former 1910 Pacific Coast Champion, who drove for John E. Wolff and the Volger brothers. His wife Irene and daughter-in-law Shirley Duncomb were there. Riding mechanic Tech. Sargent Tommy Whitaker (27), was in the Air National Guard 123rd Fighter Squadron attached to the 325th Fighter Wing stationed in Portland, Oregon and traveling with wife Margret.

The boat was not prepared and was a very rough riding and unsafe boat. Volunteer diver John L. Metzger found the shattered wreck and the Coast Guard Buoy Tender *Balsam* lifted it out and into her work well, seen below, then took it to Sand Point for examination.

~~photos from the H&RM Collection~~



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E Lon Erickson

The Grand Champion ship carrying the H1 fleet of ten raceboats, haulers, and equipment successfully completed the journey from Jacksonville, Fla. to Doha, Qatar arriving on November 1st.

The boats will clear the usual customs inspections; some will serve display event duties, and then be moved to the pit area along the corniche in preparation for the Oryx Cup.

U-9 Work continues on **Mike and Lori Jones'** U-9 race boat in their shop, rebuilding of the transom area along with some of the sponson running surfaces. Plans continue on pursuit of sponsorship arrangements to run the circuit in 2012.

U-21 **Greg and Brian O'Farrell's** U-21 Go Fast Turn Left hull will carry the TapouT sponsorship again for the upcoming Oryx Cup in Doha, Qatar. The TapouT sponsorship was on the U-21 for the Sacramento exhibition and in San Diego for Bayfair.



The U-21 *TapouT* with Sam Cole and TapouT president and founder Dan "Punkass" Caldwell.

U-22 & U-25 Both hulls did make the trip to Abu Dhabi to coincide with the U.I.M. General Assembly meetings taking place in October and to promote the upcoming Oryx Cup. After discussion of a running exhibition in Abu Dhabi, only the U-25 was seen on static display at the hotel hosting the U.I.M. meetings. Both hulls are expected to join the H1 fleet of ten boats already in Doha, Qatar.

Multiple sources within the H1 community have shared a "tentative" 2012 event schedule, it includes some expected events, some missing, and some surprises for 2012. Please check our website for more information.

The Detroit River Regatta Association has announced the Detroit Yacht Club will continue its presenting sponsorship of the A.P.B.A. Gold Cup through 2014. The Detroit Yacht Club, one of the oldest and most prestigious clubs in North America, has signed a contract to remain the presenting sponsor of the Detroit APBA Gold Cup Races for the next three years. The announcement was made by the Detroit River Regatta Association, host organization for the race and representatives from the NYC.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

by Bob Senior

The *Unlimited NewsJournal* is the journal of historical record for unlimited hydroplane racing. We are often asked, "whatever happened to so and so?" We sent a questionnaire, a stamped return envelope, and a recent complimentary copy of *UNJ* to 68 former unlimited hydro participants.

We asked for name, age (optional), residence, occupation, retired?, primary boats or teams they raced with, their top personal achievement in racing, most memorable eye-witness event, any comments about colorful characters they raced with or against, how much do you follow current races, and do you have any advice for current unlimited racers? Here are some of their replies:

Jack Schafer, Jr. makes his home in Irvine, Calif. and is employed in aircraft sales.

He grew up around his father's *Such Crust* hydros from the late 40s and drove numerous unlimiteds from 1975 through '93. **Top Achievement:** He won '83 Columbia Cup, driving *American Speedy Printing*. **Memorable Events:** *Slo-mo V* blow-over, Tex Johnson 707 roll-over, '82 Seafair three-boat crash, riding mechanic Ray Tavenner jumping from one of the *Crusts* in the early 50s. Follows current races regularly. Advice to current racers: Get out front and improve your position.

History

The hull at the right began life as the Merlin powered U-8 *O-Ring Miss* in 1967 and was owned by Laird Pierce and Earl Noyes. It was designed by Chuck Hickling and built by Bob Patterson and Hickling. In 1970 Bob Patterson became the owner and raced #6708 as the U-80 *Super Cinders II* and *Miss Van's P-X* (1), running a Roll-Royce Merlin. In 1974 they changed the powerplant to a turbo-charged Allison, racing again as *Super Cinders II*. The drivers through 1974 were Fred Alter, Norm Evans, Mickey Remund, Roger D'Eath, and Ron Armstrong.

In 1975, Jack Schafer Jr. took over behind the wheel for Ron Armstrong after Tri-Cities (Schafer was ineligible), racing as *Miss Van's P-X* (1) at Seattle and San Diego, and continued through 1978. In 1978 Patterson rebuilt the hull into a cab-over, added



Ron Harsin photo



H&RM Collection photo



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arear wing and uprights, and changed the paint scheme to orange, yellow, purple, and blue. An engine cowling was also added (seen at San Diego on previous page), but used very little.

In 1979 Schafer's next ride, the #7477, started out as George Walther's cabover U-77 *Dayton Walther Special*, designed and built by Ron Jones. It never raced under that name. Bernie Little became the owner in 1976, rebuilt it into a conventional hull, replaced the twin V-8 Chrysler engines with a V-12 Merlin engine, and raced it as the U-12 *Miss Budweiser* (8). He sold it to Ken Thompson in 1979. The U-3 ran without a name, but was called *Myrna Kay* the first three races of the season and *Tri-City Tile & Masonry* the rest of the year. The paint scheme, now orange, brown, copper, and white, was about all that changed. Above, Schafer in cockpit of *Myrna Kay* at Miami.

The following year (1980), Schafer drove for Walt Knudsen in an odd looking 5,000 lb auto-powered boat he built in 1975 called the U-14 *Miss O'Neil Knudsen* (#7514). It ran two V-8 inline Ford engines. Schafer was the fifth driver, preceded by Mickey Remund, Chuck King, John Wolkin, and Paul Grichar. After driving the last race of the season at San Diego, seen in photo at right, he was replaced in 1981 by Ron Armstrong.

In 1981 Schafer was back in hull #7477, still owned by Ken Thompson, but racing as the U-3 *Thousand Trails*. The team only ran the two Washington State races and the California race. At Tri-Cities, Schafer failed to finish the second heat and they were done for the weekend. In Seattle (photo at right), they finished



H&RM Collection photo



H&RM Collection photo



Sandy Ross photo Collection

third in heat 1, failed to finish heat 2, and failed to start heat 3. They made their best showing at San Diego that season, finishing second behind the U-1 *Miss Budweiser* (12) and in front of the U-00 *Atlas Van Lines* (9).

Chuck Hickling designed and built a conventional hydroplane with a slight pickle-fork in his garage in 1978. He named it the U-17 *Tempus* (1). He and Bob Maschmedt drove the boat the first year then Maschmedt took over until Schafer took the helm in 1982. They raced the three West Coast races and in the Houston World Championship. He left after the season, but will return to drive this boat again.

The next season, 1983, found Schafer behind the wheel of Fred Leland's U-40 *American Speedy Printing* (1) in one race, the Missouri Governor's Cup. This hull, #8255, started out as the U-55 *Oh Boy! Oberto* in 1982. It was designed by Leland and built by Ed Karelsen. It became the U-8 *Executone* (2) by the Detroit race, then *American Speedy Printing* (1) in 1983.

Leaving the Leland team after the New York race, Schafer found himself behind the wheel of a familiar boat, the U-12 *Miss Budweiser* (8), but under new ownership. John Still sold the U-30 *Miss Prodelco* to R.B. "Call me Bob" Taylor for 1983. Their first two races, starting at Detroit where they failed to qualify. The U-7 had no name, but was called *Bob Taylor Special*. It became the U-7 *American Speedy Printing Too* for the Evansville race and *American Speedy Printing* (2) the rest of the season, seen at Seattle above right.

Schafer only drove in one event in 1985. He was back driving for Chuck Hickling, but in a new U-17 *Tempus*



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File 10 photo



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(2) (#8517). This hull was designed and built by Hickling. It was a cabover tunnel hull with a pickle-fork and had a low-profile design. It was powered by a Merlin engine. Schafer replaced Bob Maschmedt and attempted to qualify the U-17 *Tempus* (2) at Seattle, but like in Tri-Cities, failed. (Two sources listed it as the U-5 *Miss Seattle* (2), but it said *Tempus* on the deck. (photo on previous page)

In 1986 Jack Schafer Jr. drove in three races for the Coopers, Madison, Evansville, and Syracuse in the former *Tempus* (1). It had been sold to Ed Cooper Jr. and Sr. in 1985, but not raced that year. Schafer failed to qualify it as the U-15 *Miss Liberty* in Madison, but did in Evansville, seen above, here it was called *Miss Freedom Festival* and then *U-Fifteen* at New York. He also drove the U-17 *Tempus* (2) again for Hickling in the two Washington races, in California, and at Las Vegas.



Paul Kemiell photo

Jack Schafer Jr. started out the 1987 season in Miami behind the wheel of the Cooper's unsponsored U-15 *U-Fifteen*. He was replaced by Mitch Evans for Evansville and returned to drive Hickling's U-17 *Tempus* (2) in the Washington State races. After sitting out Syracuse Schafer climbed behind the wheel of the former U-1 *Miss Budweiser* (12). Jerry Kenney purchased #8012 from



Rick Sullivan photo

Little in 1986 and ran it as the U-5 *Frank Kenney Toyota/Volvo* (3). The Griffon engine was replaced with a turbo-charged Allison in '86, which was then replaced by a turbo-charged Griffon in '87. New runners were added over the winter. Schafer replaced E. Milner Irvin for the San Diego APBA Gold Cup (in photo above), and at Las Vegas.

Jerry Kenney only raced in Washington State in 1988. The hull was repainted white and red and was sponsored by Pietro's Pizza at Tri-Cities, but it failed the start the first heat and withdrew before heat 2. Jack Schafer Jr. did race the U-5 *Pietro's Pizza* (2) at Seattle, placing seventh.

He also qualified another boat with the same name at Tri-Cities. Chuck Hickling was also sponsored by the pizza company and it ran as the U-17 *Pietro's Pizza* (3), (though the name wasn't changed on the boat). They also failed to start the first heat and sat out the race.



H&RM Collection photo

For 1989 Schafer was back in the saddle of the same boat he had driven last year, but now with new owners. Tim Donery and Dave Culley purchased Jerry Kenney's pizza boat and renamed it the U-85 *Miss Northwest*. It entered only the three West Coast races. Schafer was disqualified in heat 1 and didn't start heat 2 at Tri-Cities. They failed to finish any heat at Seattle, and finished one out of three heats at San Diego.



H&RM Collection photo

For 1990 Jack Schafer Jr. only attended one race as a driver. The former U-9 *Miss Stroh Light* was sold after the 1988 season to Brian Keogh and Jim Kerwin who ran it as the U-9 *Boss Marine* and *Sundek* that year. In 1990 it became the U-9 with no name on hull but called *Infinity Car Audio* for Miami. Mark Evans qualified, but they didn't race. In their only other race, Las Vegas, Schafer failed to qualify running as the U-9 *Unlimited Marine Radio* at right (no name on hull).



File 10 photo

In 1991 Schafer returned to drive Brian Keogh's boat. It raced as the U-9 *Miss Wellness Plan* (at right), *Miss Motorcraft*, *MS. Clothetime*, and *BASF/Unlimited Detroit*. They missed the Washington State races that season.



F. Pierce Williams photo

Schafer was back in Keogh's U-9 *Miss Wellness Plan* in Detroit, Evansville, and Madison races in 1992. They missed Kansas City, the West Coast, and Miami races that year.

Jack Schafer Jr.'s last ride was in 1993 driving the former U-9 for the same owner, but under a different name, *Miss Exide* (3). George Magnuson and the crew had also rebuilt the sponsons over the winter. Their only showing, Tri-Cities, was also the final race for hull #8809.



H&RM Collection photo

**Craig Fjarlie**

Another View of the Gold Cup

For just over 20 years, I have worked as a turn judge at a number of unlimited hydroplane races. The first time was at the initial Hawaii race in November, 1990. Since then, I've been a turn judge at one or more races every season.

This year, at the Gold Cup in Detroit, I had a chance to do something different. I operated the computer that turns on the camera that records the start of each heat. It was a terrific experience and it included a spectacular view of the race.

I've watched heats from the top of the pit tower in Detroit, but never from the top level of the Gar Wood judges' stand. The pit tower has a fine view, but it's difficult to see the entrance buoy to the first turn. In contrast, the judges' stand offers an unimpeded look at the entire course. The second deck of the judges' stand, for media, is has a good view of the course, but the extra 10 feet of elevation on the top deck makes it even more impressive.

There are plenty of inboard and outboard racers in the greater Detroit area, so there is no shortage of volunteer help. There were a number of people available to serve as turn judges. Wes Patton, the person in charge of H1 equipment and recruitment of volunteers, asked me if I would like to work on the judges' stand. I eagerly said yes. I would be working with Wes, his wife, Diane, the H1 chief scorer, and their daughter-in-law Sue, the chief timer. Sue's husband, Scott, runs the H1 tech truck.

There are two buoys at the start-finish line. The inside buoy is one of the regular course markers. There's an outside buoy a few feet off the judge's stand. It is lined up with the inside marker so officials have a straight line that marks the start-finish line. The two buoys have a black stripe right in the center. They are lined up and anchored as precisely as possible in a river with a current. Next comes the tricky part. Two cameras are set up next to the railing on the top deck of the judges' stand. One is mounted directly on top of the other. The cameras have a thin line on them that stretches across the racing lanes between the two buoys. When everything is lined up perfectly, officials have a race course with a clearly-marked start-finish line.

Each camera is hooked to a computer that turns it on and off; two cameras are used so there is a back-up available should one camera or computer have a failure. A light bulb is visible in the corner of each computer screen. It is tied in with the count-down clock. The light bulb goes on the instant the clock hits zero.

I spent some time on the judges' stand during Friday testing. Sue Patton went over the operation of the computer and I took plenty of notes. The first thing to do is hit F5 to bring up the view from the camera on the computer screen. At the bottom of the screen there is a red dot. Click on that to start recording. After the last boat crosses the starting line, click on the white button just to the left of the red one. That stops the recording. Name the file and click OK. That's all there is to it. If two boats are having a side-by-side battle, the same process is used so the finish can be recorded in case it's too close to call.

The experience was unique and interesting. I saw how the officials work together to watch action on the course, verify point totals, check timing for accuracy, and review the films in case there is a dispute about a gun jump. I found there was plenty of break time and food to eat, I had an up close and personal look at the air show, and I gained a real appreciation for all the work that goes into conducting a race. I'm sure I'll never see a race quite the same way again.

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