



Unlimiteds in Review 2012

from Brian Anderson

The H1 Unlimited hydroplane series kicked off its longest, at least in terms days, season for 2012 in the small town of Madison, Indiana. A town made famous for a feature movie a few years back starring Jim Caviezel and of course, its annual regatta. This year again, Lucas Oil would sponsor the event. But the real season began months earlier as preparation began for the six race but 7 month long grind.



Karl Pearson photo

As usual, most of the pre-season news revolved around sponsors, hulls, and persons. The biggest splash was made by the newly reformed USA racing partners headed by Matt Gregory. Matt, son of the late Kim Gregory jumped back into the sport feet first

by landing Degree for Men as a sponsor and put the U-10 back together which has last seen action when Dave Bryant drove and crashed the boat at Seattle a couple of years back. Scott Liddycoat, 2011 rookie of the year driving the U-7 *Valken.com* fame was hired to drive making this team an instant contender.

With Degree jumping to the new U-88 team this left Billy Schumachers' U-37 team without a sponsor so Beacon Plumbing was signed and the boat was painted in a beautiful scheme with many shades of blue with bubbles giving it that J. Michael Kelly would continue driving for this team.



Karl Pearson photo

Over at Performance Precision Marine of Decatur, Indiana the load would be lightened as it was announced that the Valken would be no more and the U-57



Karl Pearson photo

was sold to group headed by Mark Evans, who would run the boat. This left only the U-5 which would again be sponsored by Graham Trucking and stay with its multi-colored paint job. Jeff Bernard stepped down as driver and Jimmy Shane was hired.

Defending champion Dave Villwock would return in Erik Ellstrom's *Spirit of Qatar* with a new predominately maroon paint scheme and be ready for the first race as would his chief rival Steve David in

Madison, Indiana's U-6 *Oh Boy! Oberto*. The Madison team is a throwback as it is the only community owned hydroplane left on the circuit from a history that included other towns trying to duplicate their efforts.

A group effort in its own right "Our Gang Racing" out of Preston, WA. headed by Nate Brown would field its entry, the U-17 *Red Dot*, a fast boat that would be driven by Nate's nephew Kip Brown. Also planning on attending the opening race of the would be the U-11 *Miss Peters & May*, owned by the Unlimiteds Racing Group headed by Scott Rainey and driven by J.W. Meyers. The teams paint scheme returned to the bright yellow (chartreuse?) and blue with the number on the rear wing sporting a combination stars & stripes and Union Jack scheme.

Rounding out the teams prepping for the opener would be the U-22 owned and driven by Mike Webster of Reading, PA. The hull, a



Karl Pearson photo



Ron Harsin photo



Ron Harsin photo

former *Miss Madison* would arrive with a brand new red, white and blue paint job. The late Fred Leland's team would also be there with Greg Hopp doing the driving. Cal Phipps would be in Dave Bartush's U-13 *Spirit of Detroit*.

Rules for the opening race would stay about the same as the bulk of the 2011 races.

The starting procedure would once again call for no boat being beyond the exit buoy of the back stretch before the one minute gun after the run "at speed" past the officials tower. And, as always jumping the gun at the true start was a no-no. The gallons permitted flow would be the same for all boats at all races.

The first race of the year always favors the better prepared teams and this season was no exception. Dave Villwock led all qualifiers in his *Spirit of Qatar* at 148.837 with Steve David and Jimmy Shane close behind. The course would be the same 1-2/3 mile shortened course on the Ohio River that was used in 2011. The Madison race featured many heats due to the short course and the tight river. In the end Dave Villwock stayed dominant, taking firsts and a second in his three prelims before winning the final heat giving him another victory in Madison. Hometown favorite Steve David in *Oh Boy! Oberto* was second with Scott Liddycoat in the *Degree Men* taking third. The season was off to a good start as the favorites rose to the top early.



Karl Pearson photo



Karl Pearson photo

The Gold Cup in Detroit, the sport's most prestigious event was up next with the same 12 entrants. For the most part the rough Detroit River behaved as 8 of the 12 boats posted speeds of 150 mph or greater with Dave Villwock again leading the way at 162.904 just edging Steve David. It was obvious these would be the two boats to beat this season. The prelims of this race will be remembered mostly for Mike Webster's blow over crash in heat 1-C which took the boat out for the season. Mike suffered no injuries. The final stacked up as a battle between the two fastest. Both Villwock and Steve David wanted this race bad for their owners, crews, sponsors and the like. Both the U-1 and the U-6 hit the line with Villwock in lane 2 taking a slight advantage in the Belle Isle bridge turn. He kept Steve David tight in lane one and when *Oberto* slid out just slightly he got wet and Villwock stretched his lead and never looked back. J. Michael Kelly in the *Beacon Plumbing* hung around for third and from all appearances *Spirit of Qatar* was going to run away and dominate the season.

Hot sunny weather greeted the fleet as they arrived in Tri-Cities, WA. for the annual running of the Columbia Cup on the Columbia river. The field added three more boats for the northwest races. These would be the U-21 *HAPO/Albert Lee* driven by Brian Perkins for Greg O' Farrell's Go Fast, Turn Left racing team, the U-13 *Bucket List Racing* which would be owned and driven by Kelly Stocklin of the famous Beaver Lake Yacht Club and a second boat for the Leland team to be driven by Ryan Mallow sporting a yellow paint job. The fleet lost two teams after the Gold Cup- the U-22 due to the accident and the U-13 *Spirit of Detroit* chose not to continue.

For the third straight race *Spirit of Qatar* dominated qualifying with 159.645mph lap and easily took heat 1A on Saturday. However, when the final heat came around both *Beacon Plumbing* and *Graham Trucking* out dueled Villwock for the inside. Thinking he had it nailed Steve David jumped the score up buoy at the one minute gun by fractions and payed a very severe one lap penalty. That left the Jimmy Shane and J Michael Kelly to stage a real classic that came down to a sprint for the finish off the final turn. Jimmy Shane in *Graham Trucking* took his first victory by the smallest of margins. Dave Villwock finished in third. Going into the annual race in Seattle for the Albert Lee Cup it was still Villwock as the one to beat but now the field seemed to be opening up some.

Qualifying got underway for the Seattle event and it was clear *Spirit of Qatar* team wanted to be back on top. They promptly posted the fastest lap at 151.626 but the next eight contenders were within 10 mph. The season seemed to be tightening up just a bit.

In the final both Steve David and Jimmy Shane got inside of Villwock at the start and never looked back. Being in the inside lane Steve David controlled the heat and took the victory over the up and coming *Graham Trucking* of Shane. Sponsor Art Oberto had himself



Chris Denslow photo



Karl Pearson photo



Chris Denslow photo



Karl Pearson photo

another hometown win. After four races in 5 weeks the sport took a few weeks off for the September race in sunny San Diego, CA.

The Spirit of Qatar team and driver Dave Villwock, team now without a victory in its last two races again came out fast, this time their qualifying mark of 162.118 was nearly 5 mph faster than its chief rival. The best Steve David could get out of the *Oberto* was 157.980. The course on San Diego's saltwater Mission Bay has always produced lightning fast speeds and this year's field of 11 was no different as six teams posted speeds of better than 150 mph. One notable driver change took place as Tommy Thompson took over for J.W. Meyers in the U-11 *Peters & May*. Ryan Mallow and the second Leland entry did not make the race. The prelims saw lots of great action but only Villwock, David and Shane posted wins and the fastest two were now being challenged by the U-5 of Shane. In the final the three ran close but Steve David had them, barely, edging out Shane with Villwock close behind. The top three boats all finished within 2 mph of each other!

But the race didn't end there. In a post race inspection it was found that Steve David had committed a fuel violation and the victory was handed to Jimmy Shane and *Graham Trucking*. The Madison-Oberto team protested their penalty. The equipment used to analyze the fuel flow were subsequently tested. After what seemed like an incredibly long period (weeks) the penalty against *Oberto* was rescinded and the original victory stood. What happened on the water and witnessed by fans was the actual result. And now it was time to pack up and head to the middle east.

Before the boats arrived in Doha, Qatar for the now annual Oryx Cup-UIIM World Championship race one of the teams made a detour. The U-11 *Miss Peters & May* would head to Conniston, England for a straightaway trial. The event being the Conniston Records Week. Ultimately, the boat posted a speed of 176.110 over the kilo and was without a doubt the fastest craft on the water for the event.

The race in Doha had the national championship up for grabs as Steve David had managed to pull ahead of Dave Villwock in season points and could wrap up the title or lose it depending on the outcome of the Oryx Cup.

Going into the Oryx Cup several changes descended on the fleet. First, Degree for Men announced they were dropping sponsorship of the U-88 of owner Matt Gregory and due to some damage suffered in San Diego the boat would not be making it overseas. Then the U-21 of driver Brian Perkins would switch numbers to U-88 to finish out the season for them. Brian's boat would be sponsored by the Snoqualmie Casino of Washington state for the event. If that were not enough Leland Unlimited owner Stacey Briseno announced that it would part ways with long time driver Greg Hopp and put Ryan Mallow in the cockpit for the event.

The prelims were held on weekdays due to a prediction of upcoming incimate weather.



Chris Denslow photo



Antony Stuhbury photo



Chris Denslow photo



Karl Pearson photo

This time the victories were spread out amongst Zimmerman, twice; David, Perkins and Shane. Notably absent in this list was Dave Villwock who had a myriad of problems and watched the title slip away and was won again by Steve David and *Oh Boy! Oberto*. It was the team's third in the last four years. Villwock's appearance in 4B did the hull in, after taking a major hop while leading the boats engine mounts broke and the boat caught fire. It was disappointing end to the season where they were fastest qualifier at every event and left doubt as to whether they could even make the next event.



Chris Denslow photo

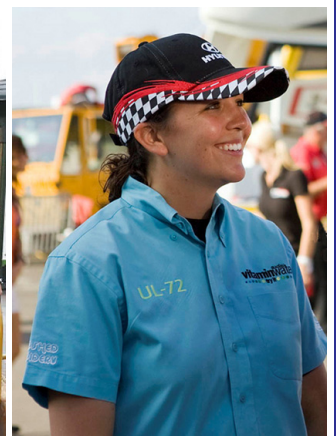
In the final Jimmy Shane out ran Steve David for his second career win and first Oryx Cup trophy. Finishing off their outstanding performance the all white U-9 of Jon Zimmerman took third.

The season ended with Steve David on top, followed by the strong performance of Jimmy Shane and then a bit farther down was Dave Villwock who had begun the season so strongly and still had, in terms of qualifying speeds, the fastest boat on the circuit. The surprise team of the season had to be the U-9, driven by John Zimmerman who stayed consistent and seemed to pick up speed as the year progressed and above all stayed out of trouble. They did quite well with what they had, which was no season sponsor but picked up the likes of Sound Propeller Services and Al Deeb Chrysler amongst others. In fourth was *Degree for Men* with Scott Liddycoat, which didn't quite challenge for wins as expected and lost their sponsor with one race to go.

From a fans point of view the season had a lot to offer. A strong start by the favorite *Spirit of Qatar* who then faded and was overtaken by his chief rival *Oh Boy! Oberto*. All the while an up and coming driver in Jimmy Shane broke through for not one but two victories with one of them featuring a thrilling final turn sprint to the flag. There was lots of terrific heat action with a good field for every event which in the past wasn't always the case. And of course, there was the usual amount of controversy over rules, the starting procedures, leap frogging on the backstretch and a protest to settle a race, all of which doesn't make the average race fan even raise an eyebrow anymore, it's just a part of the whole show.

Crashes and blow over's were kept to minimum which was good to see except Mike Webster probably wouldn't agree with that as rebuilding the U-22 will occupy his off season, and the fans in England got to see a true honest to goodness American Unlimited Hydroplane run a fairly fast kilo trial. Newcomer Kelly Stocklin's former G-Class boat with a smaller than usual T-53 made the west coast swing bringing a little something different to the water. It scored points in a couple of events and should be a welcome addition even if a bit underpowered. As usual the thing that seems to be missing most is more races which will be raised by two for 2013 with planned events in Sacramento, CA and Couer D' Alene, Idaho. But what happened to the two female drivers that took drives the year before? Both Bianca Bononcini and Kayleigh Perkins were nowhere to be seen in 2012 which could be seen as step backward. The sport is not there yet but seems to now be moving in the correct direction. Here's to more races, competition, teams, sponsors, and fun in the sports future.

Bianca Bononcini is pregnant, engaged to Jimmy Shane, and now lives in Havre De Grace, MD. Her due date is around the beginning of June, so we don't think she will be driving a boat for quite a while, if ever again. Kayleigh Perkins-Mallory is still racing, working on getting their 1 liter inboard ready for the upcoming season, but so far no mention of anything unlimited related for a ride. At left Bianca at San Diego. ~ Karl Pearson photo - At far right, Kayleigh after the 2011 Seattle accident. ~ Tom Gordon photo



Book Review:

What Were They Thinking ?

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 WWII, 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.

In 1956 and 1957 *Shanty I* was the boat to beat, winning three races and getting five podium finishes before breaking up in the Potomac River in the President's Cup. Owner William T. “Bill” Waggoner came back in 1958 with the odd looking *Shanty II*. The design alone looked as though it would roll over in the turns. It did!

A series of “also-rans” followed, with boats like *\$ Bill*, *Miss Liberty*, *The Dutchman*, the step hull *Gale's Roostertail*, the “Bat-Wing” *Miss Smirnoff*, and Don Edward's *Golden Komotion*.

Auto power came along once more with Dave Heerensperger'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.

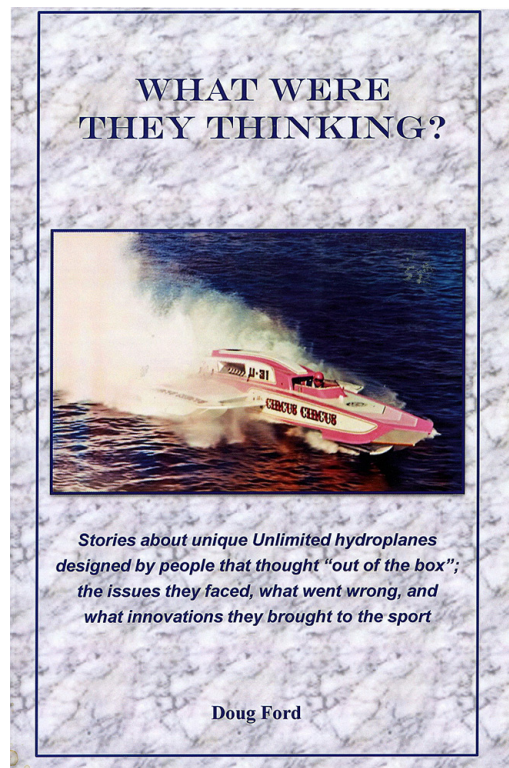
Moving into the '70's, Jack Buhl's *Sweet Thing*, Jim Herrington's turbine powered *Miss Lapeer*, and Walt Knudsen's *Miss O'Neil and Knudsen* each has chapters describing their uphill battles to a competitive level.

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 Houston, but couldn't find enough speed.

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.

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.

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.



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.

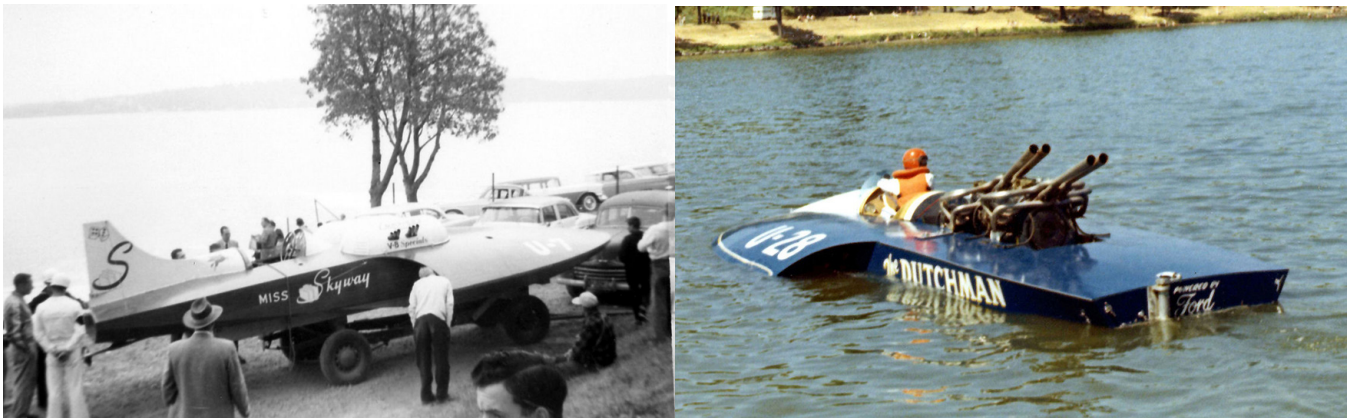
What Were They Thinking was author Doug Ford's first book. His second ***The Risk Takers and Record Breakers*** book is also available through the H.A.R.M. gift shop.

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

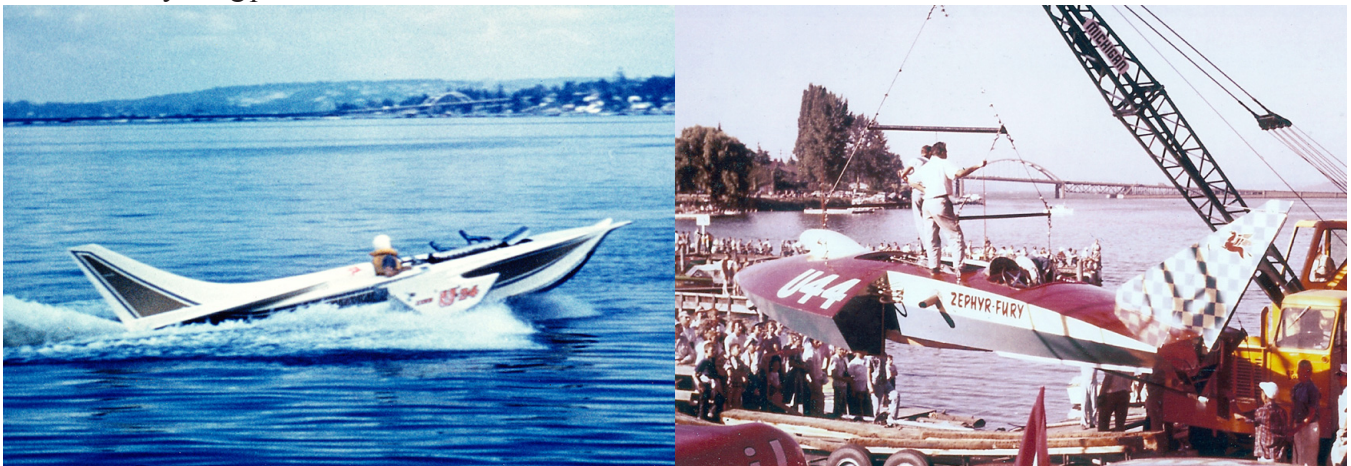
Review by: Kirk Pagel. Special Projects Editor for the Unlimited NewsJournal

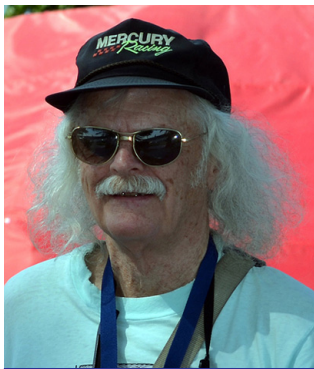


Above left: The G-12 *Etta* and George Sarant ~ H&RM Collection. At right, the U-12 *Scooter Too* at Seattle ~ Suzanne Gott photo.



Above left The U-7 *Miss Skyway* at Seattle ~ Dave Harris photo. Right, U-28 *The Dutchman* ~ Sandy Ross Collection. Below left a painting of the U-24 *Miss U* at Seattle ~ H&RM Collection. Right, U-44 *Zephyr Fury* at Seattle ~ Jerry King photo





Heritage
Craig Fjarlie

Miami Memories

by Craig Fjarlie

The April, 2010, issue of *Southern Boating* magazine had an interesting tidbit in a column called Scuttlebutt. A group known as Friends of the Miami Marine Stadium and the World Monuments Fund released results of an engineering study that showed the stadium is in better condition than previously thought. Repairs to the concrete work would likely cost 33–50 percent less than the City of Miami’s original estimate of \$15 million. A follow-up study of the piles in the seabed is still needed to determine if the stadium can be returned to active use.

Marine Stadium was damaged in the 1992 hurricane that hit south Florida. It has been closed to the public ever since, but is still standing in spite of calls by some people to tear it down.

Marine Stadium was the site of unlimited hydroplane races from 1971 through 1990, and the course was used in 1993 although the stadium was closed. It also was used for inboard races, for musical concerts (a Jimmy Buffett concert, *Live by the Bay*, was filmed there), and other events. A few scenes of an Elvis Presley movie, *Clambake*, were filmed in front of the stadium.

The Unlimited Racing Commission needed a new season opener when Tampa Bay was deemed too rough, and Gunter’sville was too small and removed from large population centers. Miami Marine Stadium was selected as the site for the first race of the 1971 season. It was a tricky course; the first turn would be completely enclosed with no escape route. Boats would race out to the open water of Biscayne Bay, then come back down the front straightaway, past the pit area and the stadium. A few years later the course was shortened to avoid the open water of Biscayne Bay. A small island separated the pit area from the course. Traffic through the pits was one way, to avoid collisions.

The Miami course always had some interesting incidents. The first issue was racing on saltwater. The water of Biscayne Bay is saltier than it is in San Diego. Fears were unfounded. Billy Schumacher had a close call at the wheel of *Pride of Pay ’n Pak*. The boat spun out directly in front of the stadium. Dean Chenoweth drove *Miss Budweiser* to victory. In subsequent years, security attempted to keep spectators back from the front railing of the stadium. The 1972 race went off without



Joe Mignon photo



Bill Osborne photo

Towne Club, Miss Budweiser trail *Pride of Pay’n Pak* at Miami. The U-25 place second to *Atlas Van Lines* in the final. The U-1 failed to finish the race and the U-5 finished fourth.

a hitch and Bill Muncey drove Lee Schoenith's *Atlas Van Lines* to victory. Muncey and the *Atlas* went on to claim the national championship that year.



Above *Miss Budweiser*, who placed fourth in the final, trails the new winged *Pay 'n Pak*, the victor. This was the first of four wins for the U-25 team. ~ H&RM Collection photo

The winged *Pay 'n Pak* proved it was the boat to beat in 1973, and *Sports Illustrated* was there to document the Miami victory. The following year was a mix of horror and fascination. Skipp Walther was killed in a morning test run. Fortunately, the stadium was virtually empty when the accident happened. *Valu-Mart* spun out at the start of its first heat. The U-95 became the first turbine boat to enter a heat of competition, but had unexpected problems with saltwater. Howie Benns won his rookie race aboard *Miss Budweiser*. In 1975, *Valu-Mart* had a new name, *Weisfield's*, and Billy Schumacher drove it to victory.



H&RM Collection photo

Bill Muncey put his critics to shame in 1976. He had purchased the *Pay 'n Pak* team during the winter. He proved he hadn't lost his touch and drove *Atlas Van Lines* to victory. That same year, rock singer Stephen Stillstoured the pit area as a guest of driver Tom Sheehy. The following year he guided the cabover "Blue Blaster" to first place in its initial race. ~ H&RM Collection photos



H&RM Collection photo

Though *Atlas Van Line* leads above, *Weisfield's* wins the final. The trailing *Lincoln Thrift* finished fourth.



The final heat of the 1978 Miami race was one of unlimited racing's most embarrassing. Muncey finished the final heat alone as most of the boats lay dead in the water by the pit area, unable to start. Referee Bill Newton could be seen paging through the rule book, trying in vain to find a reason to stop the race and order a re-run. *Miss Budweiser* crewmember Dave Culley offered the best comment on the bizarre day, "You can't blame Muncey, he drove a great race." ~ Walbridge & Belig photo



The first hint that Muncey's long reign on top was drawing to a close came in 1979. Although



he won the race, Steve Reynolds and the new *Miss Circus Circus* were worthy challengers. Reynolds would have to wait until the final event of the season to reach the winner's circle, but the "Blue Blaster" was no longer in a league of its own. *Atlas Van Lines & Miss Circus Circus* photo from Sandy Ross Collection

Only five boats entered the Miami race in 1980. The new Rolls-Griffon-powered *Miss Budweiser* scored the first of five straight wins that season. *Bud* repeated in 1981, winning every heat. Following the race Dean Chenoweth commented, "I don't know how you'll get a boat to go faster than this one." *Atlas Van Lines*, straining to run with the Griffon boat in the final heat, expired in front of the pit area at the end of the first lap. *Atlas Van Lines* above left, *Miss Circus Circus* above right ~ both Sandy Ross Collection photos



Dean Chenoweth won the Miami Spark Plug Regatta race in 1980, '81, & '82. Jim Kropfeld won Miami Spark Plug Regatta in 1983, and the Miami Budweiser Unlimited Regatta 1984, & '85. ~ H&RM Collection photos

Several things were different in 1982. Muncey had been killed in Acapulco the previous October. A new *Atlas Van Lines*, with Chip Hanauer in the cockpit, made its debut. Jeff Neff, of the Bud crew, watched the new blue boat power its way up the backstretch. “Looks awful familiar,” he opined. Although *Budweiser* held on to win the race, it wouldn’t be long before the new *Atlas* would be stiff competition for *Miss Budweiser*.

Miami had been the first race of the season since 1971. All that changed in 1983 when a new race at Lake of the Ozarks was first on the calendar. Miami was the second stop. Jim Kropfeld, who had taken over the *Miss Budweiser* cockpit following Dean Chenoweth’s accident the previous season, won his first race in front of the Marine Stadium crowd.

Miami was the first race on the schedule in 1984, as the Lake of the Ozarks event was held later in the year. There were plenty of boats on hand, but four failed to qualify. Among those that waited on the beach was *Lite All Star*. Boog Powell, who had played first base for the Baltimore Orioles, was traveling with the team and watched the race from the pits. Kropfeld defended his win aboard *Miss Budweiser*. At right is *Chet’s Music Shop* who placed second at Miami in 1983.



H&RM Collection photo

In 1985, *Miss Budweiser*’s domination at Miami came to an end. The team had the new “bubble” boat, the first with an enclosed cockpit. The craft had numerous problems and failed to qualify. Only six boats made the field. Turbine boats *Miller American* and *Miss 7-Eleven* both had problems with saltwater, and Scott Pierce drove the piston-powered *Executone* to victory.



David Lee photo

The 1986 Miami race had one interesting boat, John Prevost’s auto-powered U-200 *Miss MerCruiser*. Jim Kropfeld won with the turbine-powered U-11 *Miss Budweiser*, the former *Lite All Star*. Kropfeld won again in 1987 aboard the new T-2 *Bud* boat.

The 1988 race had a mix of weather conditions and frightening moments on the water. At 4:00 on Saturday afternoon, George Woods was taking a few test laps in Jim Harvey’s *Oh Boy! Oberto*. A violent storm struck while he was on the course. As *Oberto* came past the pit area, a bolt of lightning flashed through the roostertail. A driving rain drenched the pit area, the stadium parking lot, and neighboring communities on Key Biscayne. Salt was still a problem for turbine teams. *Miller High Life* was unable to start either of its preliminary heats. In the first turn of the final



H&RM Collection photo

Miss Madiason placed second to *Miss Budweiser* in the 1988 Miami Budweiser Rewgatta. *Miss 7-Eleven* finished sixth.



heat, *Mr. Pringle's* and *Miss Budweiser* collided. *Pringle's* ended up crushing *Bud's* cockpit. Kropfeld suffered a broken neck and wore a halo brace the rest of the summer. The piston-powered *Oberto* won the re-start. Above is the *Miss Budweiser* (17) damage at Miami in 1988. At right is the Budweiser Miami Regatta winner, *Oh Boy! Oberto*. ~ both H&RM Collection photos

In 1989, Houston was the first stop on the circuit, followed by Miami. *Miss Circus Circus* jumped the gun in the final heat and *Miss Budweiser* was down on power. Scott Pierce gave Bill Wurster his second victory at Miami, taking the checkered flag aboard *Mr. Pringle's*.

Miami's string of consecutive races came to a close with the 1990 regatta. Tom D'Eath drove *Miss Budweiser* to an easy win over Chip Hanauer in *Miss Circus Circus* in heat 1A, and was the odds-on favorite to win the race. In the shape-up turn before the start of the final, Hanauer carried D'Eath wide and made it to the first turn first. *Circus* sprinted away up the backstretch and went on to victory. "This is the first time I've left Miami International Airport with any degree of satisfaction," Hanauer later remarked. At right, *Miss Circus Circus* driver Chip Hanauer addresses the crowd at the 1990 Miami trophy presentation. Team Manager Dave Villwock is behind him, to the right. Both are wearing Budweiser hats. Budweiser stepped up as sponsor of the Miami race after original sponsor Champion Spark Plugs dropped out. Hanauer and Villwock both went on the drive *Miss Budweiser*. Note the Circus Circus hat on the Bud bottle.



Craig Fjarlie photo

There was no Miami race in 1991, but the boats came back in '92. *Miss Budweiser* won, this time Chip Hanauer was the driver.

A hurricane hit south Florida in late 1992, damaging Marine Stadium. The structure was deemed unsafe for use and was closed. A race was held in '93, but spectators had to watch from the beach. Attendance was low. Miami was the third stop on the schedule, the latest in the year that the race was ever held. It is



Jim Vota photo

noteworthy that this was the last race Lee Schoenith attended before he passed away. Hanauer and *Budweiser* won, Dave Villwock and *Miss Circus Circus* took second.

With Marine Stadium unavailable for public seating, the unlimiteds said farewell to Biscayne Bay and Miami. For 20 years, the incredible view from the stadium has been only a memory. During the piston era, the sound of the engines reverberated off the concrete walls. A steel band often played behind the stadium after the race, as spectators filed out.

The sun in south Florida could be brutal for crews, although the heat and humidity were never as bad as Evansville, or Madison in 2012. The salt content in Biscayne Bay was heavy, although not as heavy as the content in Qatar.

Will the unlimiteds ever return to Miami? Stadium proponents are waiting for a vote by Miami City Commissioners for approval to move ahead with repairs to the facility. If approval is granted, it still could be a couple years before the stadium would be ready for public use.

If the day comes when Miami Marine Stadium re-opens, it seems only right that the unlimiteds should make every effort to return to Biscayne Bay. For more than 20 years, the boats raised roostertails on the water. That's too much history to just leave the books closed. The sport needs additional race sites. If an opportunity opens for a race in Miami, let's hope the stars align so it can happen.

Editor's note: A recent issue of *Preservation* magazine carried a feature article on the effort to repair Marine Stadium.



HydroFile
Lon Erickson

1. The Oh Boy! Oberto/Miss Madison team is welcoming **Scott Liddycoat** as a new team member. Scott brings many years of racing experience, boat building and design, and holds world records in several classes of inboards. Scott drove the U-7 *Valken.com* winning the 2011 Oryx Cup, and drove the 88 *Degree Men* in 2012. Scott's role on the Oberto team has yet to be specified.

22. Activity around the rebuild of the Webster Racing hull continues. The boat has been upside down in the shop, getting finish treatment on the bottom, along with building a new cowling. According to the **Webster's**, turning the boat and work on the deck is next on the schedule.

37. Schumacher Racing has announced that **Bob Catipovic** has joined the team for the balance of the 2013 season. Bob was with the **Ted Porter** owned Formulaboats.com team when Schumacher driver **J. Michael Kelly** was with that team and won the 2009 Oryx Cup. Catipovic later became crew chief for the Porter team. In 2012 he was with the USA Racing/88 Degree team.

In other Schumacher team news, it has been learned that Billy & Jane have donated the former *Valu-Mart/Weisfield's/Olympia Beer* hull#7474 to the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum. In 2005, Billy acquired the hull from **Dave Bartush's** warehouse collection of vintage hulls but never put together a restoration project for that hull.

96. *Erick Ellstrom* and Ellstrom Racing have announced that *Kip Brown* and the 17 Our Gang Racing/*Red Dot* hull will continue to carry the 95 *Spirit of Qatar* colors for the 2013 racing season. The 17 hull raced in the first race of the 2013 season in Doha, as the 95 *Spirit of Qatar*, replacing the Ellstrom's 96 *Spirit of Qatar* hull that was heavily damaged from a severe hop and subsequent on-board fire. Erick Ellstrom didn't rule out the possibility the 96 hull could make an appearance in 2013 however the extent of the damage won't really be known until the hull returns to the Ellstrom shop in Ballard, WA.

100. The Leland Unlimited team continues to work on the upgrades to the #0010 hull to meet the current H1 specifications. They have stripped down the hull, removed the Degree graphics and are making decisions for the 2013 color scheme.

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Editor, *Unlimited NewsJournal*, 16418 192nd Ave. S.E. Renton, Washington 98058
or E-mail to: USA1st@msn.com
Letters may be edited for clarity and space.

**Next Meeting of
Unlimiteds Unanimous
Shoreline Public Library
345 NE 175th Steet
Shoreline, WA
-everyone welcome!
Sunday May 19th
UNJ 2 pm -- 4:30pm**

Silver Lake Dental Arts

Michael C. Johnson, DDS, PS
Brent N. Kellogg, DDS, PS
1809 100th PL SE
Everett, WA 98208
425-337-3922
sldarts@verizon.net
www.sldarts.com