

UNLIMITED NewsJournal

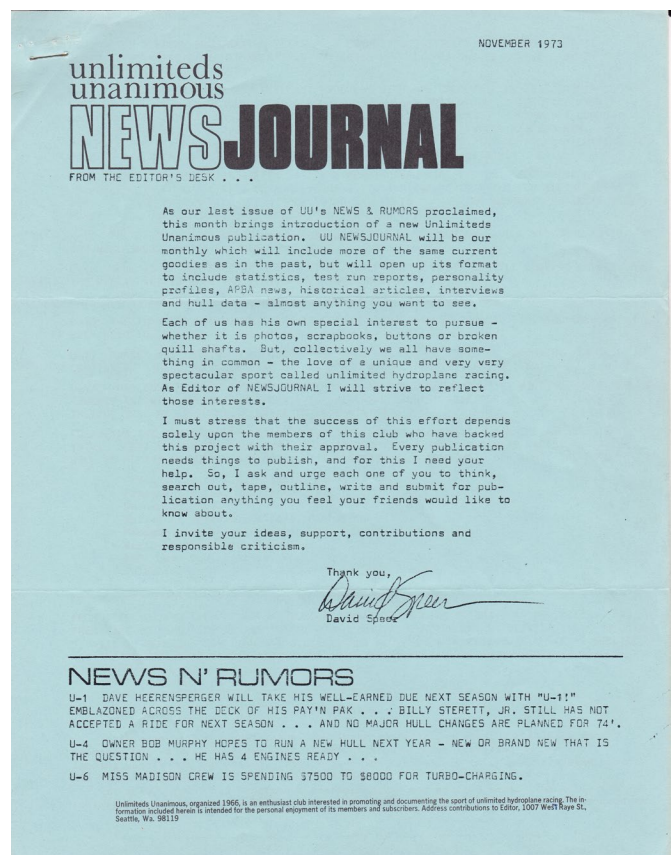
A CHRONICLE OF SPEED

NOVEMBER 2023

50th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE:

Celebrating a half century of hydro news.

The members of Unlimiteds Unanimous, a Seattle-area hydro-racing fan club, received a pleasant surprise in the mail in November 1973. Instead of the usual Minutes of that month's meeting and an information sheet called News & Rumors, they received a new publication called the *NewsJournal*. Fifty years later, the *Unlimited NewsJournal* has become the most widely read publication about the sport of unlimited hydroplane racing. And, its readership now expands far beyond the membership of that Seattle fan club. People across the world depend on *UNJ* for their hydro news and information. With this issue, we'll take a quick look back at where we were when that first issue came out and get a first-hand account of one of the top stories at that time.



The cover of the first issue of the *Unlimited NewsJournal*.

ALSO IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

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50th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE:

News N' Rumors (1973)

A standard feature of the *Unlimited NewsJournal* for the past 50 years have been regular reports about what's happening within the race teams. In the first issue, and for many years, the column was called "News & Rumors." (It's now called Hydro-File.) Here is the News N' Rumors column for that first issue of *UNJ* in November 1973. Do you know how all the questions posed here would eventually turn out?

U-1 Dave Heerensperger will take his well-earned due next season with "U-1" emblazoned across the deck of his *Pay 'N Pak*. Billy Sterett, Jr., still has not accepted a ride for next season ... and no major hull changes are planned for '74.

U-4 Owner Bob Murphy hopes to run a new hull next year—new or brand-new, that is the question ... he has four engines ready.

U-6 *Miss Madison* crew is spending \$7,500 to \$8,000 for turbo-charging.

U-7 After several frustrating years as a competitor, Shirley Mendelson McDonald calls it quits. The *Notre Dame* has been sold to Bernie Little. Is she to be the last of the sportsman owners?

U-8 Jim McCormick reports excellent progress with his cabover. He is a confirmed cabover man ... On October 23rd, a police-type radar unit, which is accurate within 1 mph, clocked him at runs up to 183 mph on the Owensboro course. This was a competition set-up with a 3.242 gearbox and throwing a 13 1/2" X 19" wheel at 3,800 rpm. He may make a mile-record run next spring if all goes well. ... and with L&M cutting back on its sport spectaculars, he has a "sponsor-hunter" on retainer.

U-11 *Shakey's Special* is sitting at Sand Point Naval Air Station. Equipment has been improved with purchase of three more Allisons ... and are negotiations for another gearbox. ... Tom Martin will definitely drive, and he is hoping for the national Shakey's Inc., money. ... Turbo-charging is under consideration.

U-12 The Beerwagon is upside down and getting a new bottom. Hull will run as is and will sport hotter engines.

U-16 Hull is up for sale by Bob Gilliam. *Valu-Mart's* south Seattle shop is closed to the public and is awaiting delivery of their new boat.

U-75 Danny Walls may drive the new Ohio-sponsored hull next year.

U-95 The Turbines Unlimited staff is seeking a big-money sponsor ... a crew has been reduced in size for the winter.

U-71 Muncey was testing a Hillborn turbo-Allison set-up in early November. Cantrell continues to head the crew that may have a new hull for 1974, and maybe not.

U-77 Work continues on the new Walther hull at Ron Jones's shop. It will be Rolls-Merlin-powered and will definitely sport an experimental front stabilizer ... with luck they'll test at Lakeland, Florida, in late winter.

Following the annual APBA meeting, held this year [1973] at Cincinnati, eight races are set for 1974. Seattle took the Gold Cup with a \$52,500 bid. There may be nine races, and there will be plenty of boats on hand. The question is obvious ... how about the fuel? ❖

50th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE:

What is it like to drive an Unlimited hydro?

The only feature story in the first issue of the *Unlimited NewsJournal* was a description of what it is like to drive an Unlimited hydro. It's a question that all hydro fans have wondered from time to time, and is something that a few have tried to describe. The story 50 years ago tried again. On October 5, 1973, UU members Jim Dunn and Bill Osborne went for a ride in U-11 *Shakey's Special*. The following is Bill's account of that experience.

BY BILL OSBORNE

With none of the rush-for-the-one-minute-gun starting woes, the Allison caught smoothly and we were underway. In almost no time we were traveling 70 mph and the feeling wasn't too impressive. Then driver Tom Martin very quickly accelerated up to 135 and suddenly I sensed THE incredible feeling.

At this speed I had expected a deafening roar and searing heat. The noise was noticeable, but because of the helmet's insulation, the level of sound wasn't as loud as a trailer test. The heat streaming back made it possible to ride without a long-sleeved shirt (ala Chuck Thompson) on an otherwise cold day.



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

The U-11 *Shakey's Special* as it appeared in 1973.

If you've ever stood on a boat or trailer when the engine is fired, the vibration is quite apparent, but on the water the ride seems very smooth. Water streams off the sponsons in darting sheets that were almost hypnotic. Somehow that seemingly large boat becomes very small. Everything happens quick. Quickly you notice that the ride is smooth except for the short jabbing shocks each time the sponson hits a wave. At racing speeds, it is like a series of sharp jolts coming quicker and quicker. But, then the conditions that day were quite ideal compared to the rough Detroit River.

Turning the boat is unforgettable. An easy smooth effort gets the boat set-up for a wide-arc turn that is pleasant, but in a tighter racing turn

the boat shifts off its planing attitude in a distinct move and the hull tends to wallow its way through the corner. To the spectator, the boat appears to slide through the turn smoothly, but out there things are happening in a short period of time.

The boat wants to straighten itself out and it is difficult to maintain a constant turn while constantly fighting the torque and centrifugal force. The boat responds immediately and fights through the corner in a series of short arcs. Turn and straighten, turn and straighten.

Accelerating out of the corner the boat quickly pops up on its tail and back to straightaway speed. I became quickly aware of the need to establish reference points on shore. Failure to do this can bring the shore or Lake Washington Floating Bridge up awfully quickly.

All too soon the ride was over and we were on our way back to the pits. What does this add up to? Well, I certainly have more respect for the men who race these boats. Yet, I know it is one thing to take a joy ride, entirely another to race side-by-side at 150-plus. This writer commented to Bill Muncey, "I finally understand why you guys do it!" ❖

50th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE:

When turbine power came upon the sport.

When the first issue of the *Unlimited NewsJournal* was produced, the biggest story at the time was the development of the *U-95*, the first successful turbine-powered boat to compete on the unlimited hydroplane circuit. Three months before that first issue, the *U-95* had made an appearance at the 1973 UIM World's Championship race in Seattle, but despite the great amount of interest that it received, the boat never made it onto the racecourse. That would come the following season—until its engine came apart during the Seattle race and the boat sank into Lake Washington. Nevertheless, the sport's first turbine-powered hydro had an impact on the sport that can't be measured. On November 9, 1986, during a 20th anniversary celebration for the Unlimiteds Unanimous club, the publishers of the *NewsJournal*, the featured guest speaker was Leif Borgersen, who spoke about his experience as the driver of *U-95* in 1973 and '74. Given the high level of interest that existed for the *U-95* when the first issue of the *Unlimited NewsJournal* came out, we thought it was a fitting story to repeat for this 50th anniversary issue. What follows are excerpts of what Leif Borgersen said during that celebration in 1986:

TRANSCRIBED BY DAVID L. PETERSON

We looked back then and we said to the sport, we want to try something new and different. The person I worked for, Jim Clapp, is really the one that deserves all the credit for doing something new and inventive. He said that money wasn't going to be his holding back. He was going to put everything he could into it, being successful in the area of turbines.

He told me one day before I was even hired by him, "Well, I tell you what, if I ever own an unlimited, it will have turbines, and someday I will." A year and one-half after I talked to him out on Lake

Washington, in his turbine pleasure boat, he was building the first turbine hydro.

I was fortunate to be involved with that program. Good people, a lot of money, and a lot of effort went into it. But I really look back and I wonder to myself, was that really the turning point, and was that a good turning point? I see the turbines going out and pretty much dominating the sport without the parity and equalness, and I sometimes wonder if there can be something in the future where everybody will go that way or there might be some rule changes that would make for better racing.

I personally, like you, love to see deck-to-deck racing and a lot of excitement. I don't think that it matters whether they're going 150 mph average or 110 mph average. I think the excitement would still be there.

What made you select the engines that you did?

Vietnam was in. That was a situation of the world back then. We originally wanted a larger, single engine—a model 53 series that is now the marine engine, the TF-25. The reason that we couldn't get that motor is that it would have cost



Randy Hall

\$325,000 for one of those from the factory. We went to Lycoming and said, this is what we want to do and how we want to do it, are you interested in participating? They said no, sorry. So, we said, what engines are available? They said, “Well, this would be the best engine for you but we’re under contract with the military and we can’t supply you with the marine engine.”

The engines that would be available were the 11s and the 13s, the engines that were used in the Huey helicopters that were flying in Vietnam. They were coming back surplus at that time but did not have enough horsepower. I think that on a good day with everything right they were supposed to put out 900 horsepower. We wanted to go with one engine, but it was pretty much prohibited, so we decided to go the “twin pack.”

This is when Ron Jones and everybody was going, “What are we doing?” because all of a sudden it changes overnight from one turbine engine to two turbine engines. Gearbox problems and everything came out of that.

Amazingly enough, with twin packs



Randy Hall

TOP: Chuck Lyford (left) and Leif Borgersen on the deck of U-95 during the boat’s appearance in Seattle in 1973. **ABOVE:** The crew working on the U-95 in the team’s Seattle shop.

in piston motors it’s always been, “Oh man, you’re going to have double trouble. Now you’ve got twice as many things to go wrong.” We were fairly successful in that way. The turbine motor being with no mechanical connection between the two, the other one didn’t really know it was there, unless the percentages were split so far apart.

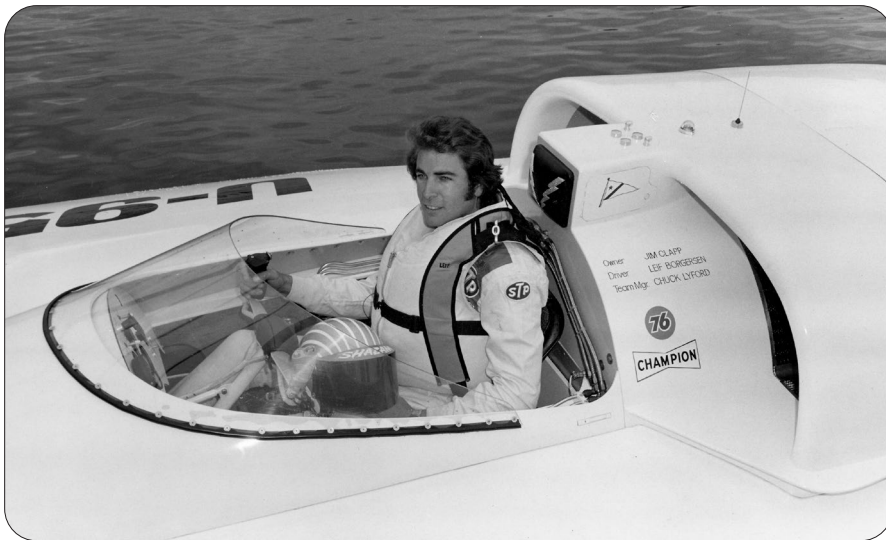
What we would do is we would start one engine with the brake configuration and then start the second one and try to

trim both of them together. One of the tricks we used to use was we would go out and, in our testing period, we’d tune the motors to get the percentages as close as we could. In doing that there would be no lag factor between the two. The engines wouldn’t work against each other, they were just sitting there doing their own thing.

The key to the success of that was the gearbox. The Gearworks, Mantel and John Maddox, were really the ones that



Enid Brown



Bob Carver Photos



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

TOP: The arrival of the U-95 to the Stan Sayres Pits in Seattle in 1973 caused quite a sensation among the hydro fans. Here, the crowd stands there gawking at the strange thing. **MIDDLE:** Leif Borgersen in the cockpit of the U-95. **ABOVE:** The U-95 as it was painted for the 1974 season and with its twin Lycoming T53-L-13 gas turbine engines on display.

made that all work. From the time we put that original gearbox in, we never had a problem with it.

It never was planned to go with that motor and configuration. That motor that looks like a garbage can just got bigger and became a different series and had to put out more horsepower. Everything else is very, very similar. The blades, the internal working organisms, just all got a little bit bigger as time went on, and that's the engine that most of the teams are using today: the L-7.

In 1973, U-95 made a last-minute appearance at the pits in Seattle.

That was an interesting time. That was probably one of my most pressured times, pressure because we weren't ready at all. That was owner pressure to be there. The poor guys in our shop worked day and night for weeks to get where we were.

Jim Clapp passed away prior to the 1974 season. This drastically changed the plans of the U-95.

The Clapp family estate fell under the family structure, and the lawyers came in and basically said, "We are starting out all new again. We have decided not to sell the boat at this point in time. We would like to see if it can be a feasible thing—would the boat work?" No one knew at that time if it could compete or not, so they decided to give it X amount of dollars and fund it.

Basically, what we had to do was sit down with a chalkboard and list every single item that had to be done before we went to our first race: How many hours it would take? How many dollars it would take for parts? We did this and gave it to the lawyers.

We dealt with the lawyers at that point in time. His wife [Pamela Clapp] was living and was still involved with the program, but the lawyers were heading it up. The reason it became so sticky was because there were under-age children involved with the Trust, so there was a

very high and likely chance that someone could have come along and said that there was a misappropriation of the Trust fund. It was a very delicate period at that time, and a lot of the decisions we made were really hampered because we didn't have the backing, the cubic dollars of Jim Clapp.

If you went in and said we need this he'd say, "Hey, get four of them." That's just the kind of guy he was. He always made the money available. He was really interested and dedicated to making the turbine unlimited run. Unfortunately, when he passed away, we lost a lot more than we really counted on. We pretty much knew that we had maybe a year's worth of running.

Potential sponsors of U-95.

We hired a person back then, Dick Friel, to find us a sponsor. Dick at one time was working Playboy magazine. He had shown them films, there was going to be a bunny on the tail, and it would have been a neat tie-up. We also approached



Randy Hall



Randy Hall



Randy Hall

Scenes of the U-95 in action at the 1974 UIM World's Championship race in the Tri-Cities, Washington. **TOP:** Leif Borgersen in the cockpit of the turbine-powered U-95. **MIDDLE:** Borgersen returns to the pits after a run on the Columbia River. **ABOVE:** U-95 being lifted and placed back on its trailer while *Miss Budweiser* is in the background.



Randy Hall

Its tail had been removed when Borgersen took the boat onto Lake Washington for the 1974 Gold Cup in Seattle.

Olympia Beer at that same time. They were somewhat interested, but nothing ever came about.

The revolution begins.

We went to Miami and had a miserable performance—95 mph with the foot right to the floor, both engines doing nothing. I guess that was the first salt problem with turbines. We'd gone out on Lake Washington and really run fast, went to Miami and just went zero. We talked about it, and Lycoming back then said you can't inject water into the motor, you can't do all these different things.

Finally, we were pretty embarrassed, so Chuck Lyford and myself went to the hardware store and bought two six-foot, half-inch-diameter pieces of copper tubing and some copper solder. We went back to the Holiday Inn at Owensboro and I said, "What are we going to do?"

Lyford said, "We're going to put water into those motors. We're going to fool 'em."

I thought to myself, "Just like nitrous oxide, we're going to blow the motors up!"

In the Holiday Inn parking lot, we

borrowed a garbage can from the back restaurant and took the copper tubing and bent it around, using it as kind of a frame, a bending tool. We made marks about every three inches on the copper tubing and Lyford got out the drill and said, "Well, what do you think we should do? How much water should we flow?"

I said, "We flow about a gallon, a gallon and a half with the Rolls at a hundred inches, an eighth-inch drill, I don't know."

He says, "Sounds good to me!" and starts drilling.

We drilled holes in the tubes, soldered some fittings onto them, took one of the fuel tanks, separated it, and made it a water tank with a boost pump. We put a button on the steering wheel and made it so that the button would activate the pump, which in turn put pressure into the system. We mixed it, like we did with the Rolls, 50-50 water and alcohol, and we injected water into the motors.

We had a two-way radio communication at the time, and Lyford said go out, run it and see what it feels like. So, I used it like I would nitrous oxide coming off the corner and, boy, all the percentages

went whoop, the boat went zoom, and the driver held on. It made all the difference in the world. We had no compressor stalling of the motors any longer. The motors said, "Hey, I'm at 57 degrees. I'm at sea level. I'm supposed to put power out." And, they did. We went out and set a lap record. The change in the boat was like day and night.

Unfortunately, that same type of thing can cause motors to go away when you do that type of stuff. In Seattle, we had what must have been the first turbine wheel that ever exploded. It went through the bottom and the boat sank.

As years went on, other teams were basically using the same systems as we came up with. The manufacturer said, "Don't do it" because it blows motors up. But then does Rolls worry about putting nitrous oxide through theirs?

Problems with salt water.

We only ran once on salt water, when we went to Miami, which was our first race. We knew the temperature was going to give us a problem, running in warmer air, and when I drove back there I got a chute speed of about 95. It was terrible.

You'd just sit there at the same speed all the way around at fully depressed on the throttle setting.

We ran miserably but made it into the final, due to attrition, even though we'd lost one motor. We over temp'd the motor and the blades started to go away. Going into the final, Lee Schoenith was walking around checking out the competition, and he looked at us and he looked at the boat and he said, "You're just going to run the boat with one motor?"

We were down to one motor, so we decided to pull the one engine out of the boat and go out and run with one. We didn't even know if we'd be able to get on a plane. Believe it or not, we were able to run.

One of the biggest problems we had was with water coming over the front of the boat. Whenever I left the dock, no matter where I was or what kind of water it was, I just put my head down and pushed on the throttle, and there was five gallons. I was soaking wet every time.

The revolution ends.

After the boat sank in Seattle [the 1974 Gold Cup], at that point in time, they decided that they weren't going to go any further, and they were going to put it up for sale. The equipment was piecemealed off. A lot of people from Florida, in the aviation business, came in and bought a lot of our tooling and engines. Pete La-Rock acquired the hull.

The things that we did back then, we were very lucky to be as successful as we were. When you look at the years it's taken to get to where the turbines are now, the engines really haven't changed that much. They've gotten a little bit bigger and, of course, they put out a lot more horsepower. If you took the engines that we used and compared them against the engines that they're using nowadays, the only way you could tell 'em apart would be by physical size. The basic design of the engine has stayed very similar. ❖

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



A guide to help hydro fans spend their hobby money.

THE NEXT HYDROPLANE MUSEUM ON-LINE AUCTION is from November 6 through 12. There will be plenty of hydro collectibles offered. Please be sure to check it out at <https://thunderboats.maestroweb.com/> and support a good cause.

CHRISTMAS IS APPROACHING. Check out the Hydroplane Museum gift shop for items for that special friend on your shopping list. Visit www.thunderboats.ning.com and then click on the "SHOP" button. You'll find racing videos, books, hydro apparel, a membership button, and much more.

SPEAKING OF THE MUSEUM. Membership dollars are the lifeblood of any non-profit organization. You can support the Hydroplane Museum by using the same web address and click on the "Join the Museum" button. Special hydro-shaped thumb drives, loaded with appropriate racing video, are now offered as membership premiums.

FIFTY 5 YEARS, by Bill Osborne. A Personal History of Unlimited Hydroplane Racing. Five years ago, 1,000 copies of Bill's book sold out quickly. He has reprinted it, adding new chapters on Jimmy Shane, J. Michael Kelly, the Tate family, and Bill Cahill. He also added many new personality profiles. This book is a 'must' for every hydroplane racing fan. The 360-page book contains over 500 color photos. The book sells for \$78 postage-paid. Checks or money orders only, payable to Bill Osborne, 106 River View Drive, Lyle, WA 98635.

FACEBOOK PAGE FOR HYDROPLANE SOUVENIR COLLECTORS. Phooey on eBay! This is the place to go for buying or selling unlimited hydroplane collectibles. Do a quick Facebook search at Hydroplane and Racing Boat Pins and Collectibles. There are now over 1,000 member on this page. Check it out and join the fun!

HOW SEATTLE BECAME A BIG LEAGUE SPORTS TOWN. From George Wilson to Russell Wilson, by Dan Raley. This book gives you great stories about the Seattle sports scene, from hydros to stick-and-ball sports, boxing, mountain climbing, golf, hockey, and more. It contains 324 pages, over 200 historical photos, 100 chapters, featuring 107 of Seattle's greatest sports figures. There is a three-page chapter on the late, great Bill Muncey. Yours truly is quoted on page 60. The book is available at all University of Washington bookstores.

AND MAY I TOOT MY OWN HORN? I have an abundance of extra Seattle Sea-fair race programs for sale at reasonable prices and I pay the postage. Contact me at bob.senior37@hotmail.com for a price list.

That's all for this column. See you in 2024! ❖

MAHOGANY AND MERLOT:

Ideal weather and vintage hydros. Who could want more than that?

BY CRAIG FJARLIE

Mahogany and Merlot never disappoints. Every year it produces something new to enjoy. The 2023 event was the 13th renewal of the annual vintage program on Lake Chelan. Weather was ideal, with warm sunny days, clear blue skies, and calm wind.

A total of seven vintage unlimited hydroplanes were on hand, plus a number of inboards representing a variety of classes. The nearby docks were filled with beautiful antique and classic wooden boats.

On Friday, October 6, the only boats that ran were vintage Unlimiteds, giving rides to a number of people, including many who had patiently waited during the Covid shutdown to finally have their wish fulfilled. Boats that gave rides included the replica *Miss Wahoo* in its 1957 configuration, the replica *Miss Thriftway*



Vintage hydros at the dock getting ready to go onto Lake Chelan.

Chris Denslow

in its 1956 configuration, the 1958 *Miss Bardahl*, *Notre Dame* (actually the former *Miss Lumberville* painted to look like Shirley McDonald's first boat), the winged *Pay 'N Pak* in its 1974 configuration, and

Blue Chip, owned by Mitch Evans, in its 1964 configuration.

On Saturday, two more vintage Unlimiteds arrived in the pit area. The 1966 version of *Tahoe Miss*, owned by Steve Hayden, pulled in as the sun was coming up. About three hours later, Ken Muscatel brought the 1954 vintage *My Sweetie*, *John Francis* to the lake. A third boat was expected but the team had to cancel at the last minute. U-36 *Miss U.S.* (which raced in 1957 as *Miss U.S. IV*) stayed in Omaha.

Miss Wahoo, *Miss Bardahl*, *Miss Thriftway*, *Notre Dame*, *Blue Chip*, and *Pay 'N Pak* continued to give rides. Mike Hanson was slated to handle *Tahoe Miss*, taking over the cockpit from Dixon Smith who drove it earlier in the year. Hanson made two runs, then relinquished the wheel to Mitch Evans for the rest of the day. Later in the afternoon, Mitch remarked, "That boat is 'ginormous.' I didn't think two more feet could make that much differ-



Chris Denslow

The 1956 version of *Miss Thriftway* cruises side by side with the 1958 version of *Miss Bardahl*.

ence, but it does.”

Problems began to sideline some of the boats being used to give rides. *Miss Bardahl* broke a quill shaft and was done for the day. Around 10 a.m., *Notre Dame* was on the course with Kip Brown driving. Suddenly, the prop shaft broke right behind the strut. There was no damage to the hull, but the prop went to the bottom of the lake.

Edward Muncey received a ride in *Miss Thriftway*. The boat made one lap when the quill shaft broke. *Thriftway* chugged back to the pits. As it turned out, the *Bardahl* team had a spare quill shaft and were able to replace the one that broke, so their boat could run on Sunday. There was no spare quill shaft for *Miss Thriftway*, so it joined *Notre Dame* on the beach for the rest of the weekend.

At noon, classic and antique boats had time on the lake. Inboards ran next, in exhibition heats. Flatbottoms ran first, followed by small hydros, mid-sized boats, then the largest inboards. Among the vintage inboards were *Gold Streak*, *Advance United*, *The Don* (the name honors builder Don Kelson), and the newly refurbished *Hombre*.

Following the first round of inboard heats, Ken Muscatel took *My Sweetie*, *John*



Photos by Chris Denslow

TOP: The barren hills of Eastern Washington loom behind as *Miss Wahoo* cruises onto Lake Chelan during Mahogany and Merlot.
MIDDLE: Somebody is getting a wild ride aboard the 1974 version of the "Winged Wonder" *Pay 'n Pak*.
ABOVE: The restored *My Sweetie*, *John Francis* of 1954 appears on Chelan.



Francis for its only run. He had a passenger, Patrice Pieters, the friend of a man who has expressed interest in buying the boat from Muscatel. Other unlimiteds were on the course at the same time, also giving rides. They were followed by the second round of inboard exhibition heats.

At the end of the day, *Tahoe Miss* went on tilt and was pulled out of the pits, its time on the water done. *Tahoe Miss* currently has a stock Allison, but owner Steve Hayden has an aux-stage Allison and hopes to use it in the boat at some time in the future, to make the 1966 configuration complete.

Sunday was another gorgeous-weather day at Lake Chelan. More rides were given in the vintage Unlimiteds. *Pay 'n Pak* ran only a couple of times. All the fuel the team brought had been used, so the boat went on tilt, ready for the road trip home. Mark Evans had hoped to take *Blue Chip* out for a couple of laps, but Mitch demurred. The boat had been run numerous times giving rides, everything was still in one piece, and Mitch wanted to put it away for the winter with no extra work required.

When the time allotted for rides expired, vintage inboards ran two more rounds of exhibition heats. John Walters drove the 280 class *Gold Streak*, and he could scarcely contain his excitement.

Mahogany and Merlot draws numerous current and former racers who enjoy the vintage sights and sounds. Among those in the mix were Tom Anderson, Jack Barrie, Tracy Bratvold, Ed Cooper, Tad Dean, Tim Donery, Charlie Grooms, Brent Hall, Mary Henley, Lori and Mike Jones, Tim Kenney, Joe Kettner, Fran Muncey, Jan Shaw, Pancho Simonson, and Kelly and Sharon Stocklin.

The program concluded shortly before 3 p.m. on Sunday. The Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum and its many volunteers produced another memorable weekend. We are already looking forward to the 2024 event. ❖

TOP: The *Notre Dame* made an appearance on Lake Chelan until it suffered a broken prop shaft. **MIDDLE:** Steve Hayden's *Tahoe Miss* arrived in Chelan on Saturday morning. **ABOVE:** The *Blue Chip* was on its home waters. The boat is owned by former Unlimited drivers Mitch and Mark Evans, who are lifelong residents of Chelan.

Photos by Chris Denslow

MY \$0.02 WORTH

Editorial Comment by Andy Muntz



On the opening page of the first issue of the *Unlimited NewsJournal*, editor David Speer provided a brief introduction to the publication. A group of Seattle-area hydro fans called Unlimiteds Unanimous had been getting together since 1966, had been producing information for its members called News & Rumors, and was now venturing into a new enterprise.

In addition to the goodies contained in the previous publication, this new effort would open up its format, Speer promised. It would include “statistics, test run reports, personality profiles, APBA news, historical articles, interviews and hull data,” he wrote. “Almost anything you want to see.”

It was quite a challenge for the folks at Unlimiteds Unanimous—a collection of friends with a passion for unlimited hydroplanes who’d gather each month in Pat Fahey’s house on Queen Anne Hill. There, they’d review the latest news about the sport, swap stories, share the photos they had taken, and make plans for their

annual task of leading tours through the Stan Sayres Pits when Seafair arrived.

After each meeting one of the attendees would compile what had taken place and would mail it to members in the form of the News & Rumors information, as well as the Minutes of each meeting. Then, somebody thought to expand that News & Rumors information into a more formal monthly publication. As a result, in November 1973 the members received the first issue of the *NewsJournal* in their mailboxes.

As Speer introduced the first issue, he pointed out that the success of the publication depended solely upon the members of the club. “Every publication needs things to publish,” he wrote, “and for this I need your help. So, I ask and urge each one of you to think, search out, tape, outline, write and submit for publication anything you feel your friends would like to know about.”

Well, it seems to have worked. Here we are a half century later and the publication is still going strong. It’s also

changed. Distribution is no longer limited to Unlimiteds Unanimous members, but to anybody in the world who has access to the Internet and an interest in unlimited hydroplanes.

But one thing is the same. The publication still needs your cooperation. If you have an interest in writing a story about the sport, we’re interested in seeing it. Please don’t be afraid to contact us with your ideas.

But you can also get involved even if you’re not a writer.

Like the *NewsJournal*, Unlimiteds Unanimous is also still in business. The monthly gatherings no longer take place in Pat Fahey’s basement, but in library conference rooms throughout the Seattle area. You are invited to join us. There are no dues or initiations to this club, either. All it takes to join is an interest in showing up at a meeting and talking about hydro racing.

The date and place of the next meeting is listed below.

We’ll see you there! ❖

EDITOR: Andy Muntz

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

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PLEASE JOIN US AT THE NEXT MEETING OF UNLIMITEDS UNANIMOUS

2 p.m. on Sunday, November 12, 2023

Bellevue Public Library, Room 6, 1111-110th Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA 98004