



Andrew Tate victorious in a storm-tossed Southern Cup.

by Craig Fjarlie

Andrew Tate drove *Delta Realtrac* to a thrilling victory in the Southern Cup as the unlimiteds returned to Guntersville, Alabama. The U-9 finished a boat length ahead of Jimmy Shane in U-1 *Miss HomeStreet*. Tom Thompson took third in U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* and Brian Perkins was fourth in the U-21 *Darrell-Strong.com presents PayneWest Insurance*. The weather almost won, but nature yielded just enough so the race could be run.



Chris Denstow

Andrew Tate in the U-9 *Delta Realtrac* (left) races side by side with Jimmy Shane in the *Miss HomeStreet* as the two head for the finish line in the final heat.

Testing and qualifying

Testing was canceled on Friday. The seven boats in the pits remained on their trailers, while the wind blew white caps that were almost large enough for surfing. On Saturday morning, *PayneWest* was the first boat on the course. It was followed immediately by U-27 *Greater Gadsden presents Chase Building Group*, driven by Cal Phipps.

J&D's was in the water, but went back on the trailer as *Miss HomeStreet* headed onto the course. The three boats came right back in. A brisk wind was blowing and it was too rough to go fast. Dark clouds had rolled in and at 11:48 a.m., a hard rain started to fall. Boats were buttoned up and people took cover. A restaurant across the street from the pits did a brisk business.

Conditions eventually improved and at 2:15, the course opened for testing. *Miss HomeStreet* was first out. It ran a couple of laps, then went dead in the water near the first turn. All the boats except U-99 *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock* made test runs, with *Chase* running the hardest.

Miss HomeStreet was towed in and, while it was at the dock, crew-member Jimmy Gilbert slipped and

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fell off the boat. He received a bad cut just above his right ankle and was carried off the dock. An ambulance took him to a local hospital for an examination to be sure no bones were broken. *Miss HomeStreet* made a second run, but the water was still too rough for really fast speeds.

Grand Prix boats ran next. At 3:30, *J&D's* made a couple of laps, then came in. More Grand Prix boats ran, then at 4 o'clock the course opened for unlimited qualifying. First out was 440 with Dustin Echols in the cockpit. He was finishing his second lap when he pulled off the course and shut off the engine. The cockpit canopy had fogged up and he was unable to see, so the boat was towed in.

Chase was in the water at the dock, but went back on the trailer. It had no power to the starter. *J&D's* took to the course and ran two laps, the best at 148.306 mph. It then went dead in the water near the entrance buoy to the first turn. There was a problem with the strut bearing.

Delta Realtrac ran next and turned a lap of 157.886 mph. It was followed by *Miss HomeStreet*, which turned a lap of 154.421. Meanwhile, *PayneWest* stayed on the trailer. In the earlier run, the boat had suffered damage to the right sponson and new fiberglass was applied to the non-trip. Perkins was under the sponson, using a hot air gun.

Miss Rock's starter relay was stuck in the closed position and the boat stayed on the trailer while the crew identified and corrected the problem.

A second qualifying session was held and *Miss HomeStreet* turned a fast lap of 160.433. The speed was tossed, however, because of a fuel-flow violation. *Delta Realtrac* ran 158.626 and 440 did 140.265. The schedule called for Lake

[Top] Windy conditions dominated the racecourse on both Friday and Saturday. [Middle] The hometown boat, the U-27 Greater Gadsden presents Chase Building Group, leaves the pits to head across Lake Gunterville to the racecourse. [Above] Cal Phipps at the controls of the U-27.

Guntersville to be closed to hydroplanes at 6 o'clock. Given the weather problems during the day, officials asked for an extension, but the request was denied. There would be another qualifying session on Sunday morning so *Chase*, *PayneWest*, and *Miss Rock* would have an opportunity to get in the show.

The water was bumpy on Sunday, but conditions were good enough that boats could run. *Chase* did a lap of 152.261, *PayneWest* turned 146.247, *Miss HomeStreet* did some test laps (the best at 150.915), and *Delta Realtrac* also tested, running 151.194. Tate primarily did timing runs. Because *Miss Rock* had no laps and Aaron Salmon was not a qualified driver, the U-99 was removed from the draw.

There would be three boats in Heat 1A and three in 1B. The draw put *HomeStreet*, *Delta Realtrac*, and *Chase* in the first preliminary; *J&D's*, *PayneWest*, and 440 in the second.

At 10:18 a.m., the course reopened and Aaron Salmon got his first ride in *Miss Rock*. He ran several laps, the fastest at 136.549, and on the fourth lap the engine cowling blew off. *Miss HomeStreet* took one more tour of the course turning a lap of 141.573. Bumpy conditions kept speeds down.

Jimmy Gilbert was back in the pits, his right ankle and lower leg wrapped. There were no broken bones, but he had a bad cut. Gilbert said the place where he received a tetanus shot hurt more than the cut.

Heat One

Tate grabbed lane one as the boats lined up for the start of Heat 1A. Shane took lane two while Phipps settled for lane three. *HomeStreet* was first across the starting line and led the entire heat, but *Delta Realtrac* was only two lengths back. *Chase*



Lon Erickson



Chris Denslow



Lon Erickson

[Top] The U-99.9 *CARSTAR* powers *Miss Rock* sits at the dock with the hope of making a test run. [Middle] The U-21 *DarrellStrong.com* presents *PayneWest Insurance*, with Brian Perkins driving, holds the inside on Dustin Echols and the 440 *Bucket List Racing* during Heat 1B. [Above] From the left, the U-9 *Delta Realtrac*, the U-27 *Chase Building Group*, and the U-21 *PayneWest Insurance* head for the starting line for Heat 2A.



Lon Erickson



Lon Erickson



Chris Denslow

[Top] As the boats prepared for the start of Heat 3A, Cal Phipps in the Chase Building Group crossed the infield and collided with Brian Perkins in PayneWest Insurance. [Middle] Part of the estimated 10,000 race fans who watched the action from the shore. [Above] Tom Thompson in the U-11 Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's finished the race in third place.

faded. Following the heat, *HomeStreet* was disqualified for committing nine flagrant fuel violations.

J&D's was on the inside at the start of 1B, but *PayneWest* in lane two led across the starting line. The 440 trailed in lane three. In the first turn, *J&D's* slid into *PayneWest's* skid fin spray. The engine almost stalled, but Thompson kept it going. In the second turn, 440 broke a blade on its propeller and stopped. *PayneWest* won easily; *J&D's* was almost a full straightaway behind. *PayneWest* had a minor fuel flow violation that resulted in a \$100 fine, but no loss of points. The 440 had damage from the broken prop and was done for the day.

With 440 out and *Miss Rock* not qualified, it left only five boats in the race. Heat 2A would have three boats: *PayneWest*, *Chase*, and *Delta Realtrac*. Heat 2B would have two boats: *HomeStreet* and *J&D's*.

Heat Two

Delta Realtrac was outside leading *PayneWest* by a length as they came to the line for Heat 2A. *Chase* was fairly close to *PayneWest* through the first lap, then began to fall back. *Realtrac* slowly extended its lead

and won with relative ease. *Chase* was a full roostertail behind *Realtrac* at the finish.

J&D's had the inside in Heat 2B, with *HomeStreet* in lane two. Shane stayed out of the way and led through the first turn. He made it look like a close race, but won with little stress.

The draw for heats 3A and 3B was the same as the draw for 2A and 2B.

Heat Three

Things got messy right away. Before the one-minute gun for Heat 3A sounded, *PayneWest* was coming down the front straightaway while *Chase* came from the backstretch across the course to its left. Phipps attempted to make a lane between *PayneWest* and the buoy line, but the unintended result was a collision. The H1 rulebook clearly states that a boat on the course has the right of way over a boat that cuts the course. *Chase* received a one-minute penalty for the maneuver and lost 200 points.

Both boats were able to continue running, but *Chase* had



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Jimmy Shane signs an inflatable version of his boat for a young fan.

STATBOX

GUNTERSVILLE LAKE HYDROFEST

Guntersville, Alabama

June 24, 2018

2.5-mile course on Guntersville Lake; 35 miles

QUALIFYING (1) U-9 *Delta Realtrac*, Andrew Tate, 158.626, 100 points; (2) U-1 *Miss HomeStreet*, Jimmy Shane, 154.421, 80; (3) U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's*, Tom Thompson, 148.306, 70; (4) U-440 *Bucket List Racing*, Dustin Echols, 140.265, 60; U-21 *DarrellStrong.com presents PayneWest Insurance*, Brian Perkins, DNQ – repairing hull damage, 0 (used test lap 148.004 to enter race); (6) U-27 *Greater Gadsden presents Chase Building Group*, Cal Phipps, DNQ – no power to the starter, 0 (used test lap 152.261 to enter race); U-99.9 *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock*, Aaron Salmon, DNQ – engine problems, 0 (DNR, unqualified driver).

HEAT 1A (1) *Delta Realtrac* 156.743, 400 points, 500 cumulative points; (2) *Greater Gadsden presents Chase Building Group* 141.737, 300, 300; *Miss HomeStreet* DSQ (nine flagrant fuel violations, \$200 fine), 0, 80. Fast lap (2) *Delta Realtrac* 158.058.

HEAT 1B (1) *DarrellStrong.com presents PayneWest Insurance* 136.830, 400, 400; (2) *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* 124.470, 300, 370; (3) *Bucket List Racing* DNF – broke propeller blade, 0, 60. Fast lap (3) *DarrellStrong.com presents PayneWest Insurance* 142.873.

HEAT 2A (1) *Delta Realtrac* 145.283, 400, 900; (2) *Greater Gadsden presents Chase Building Group* 135.852, 300, 600; (3) *DarrellStrong.com presents PayneWest Insurance* 128.939 (fuel violation, \$100 fine), 225, 625. Fast lap (2) *Delta Realtrac* 148.536.

HEAT 2B (1) *Miss HomeStreet* 144.953, 400, 480; (2) *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* 143.858, 300, 670; (3) *Bucket List Racing* DNS/WD – hull damage, 0, 60. Fast lap (2) *Miss HomeStreet* 147.550.

HEAT 3A (1) *Delta Realtrac* 136.441, 400, 1300; (2) *DarrellStrong.com presents PayneWest Insurance* 115.391, 300, 925; (3) *Greater Gadsden presents Chase Building Group* 71.308 (Level IV penalty for encroachment on U-21 prior to the start, one-minute penalty, 200-point deduction, \$400 fine; one-minute penalty for jumping the gun; Level III penalty for destroying a buoy, one-minute penalty and \$350 fine), 25, 625. Fast lap (1) *Delta Realtrac* 138.951.

HEAT 3B (1) *Miss HomeStreet* 144.337, 400, 880; (2) *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* 143.226, 300, 970. Fast lap (3) *Miss HomeStreet* 146.462.

FINAL (1) *Delta Realtrac* 152.004, 400, 1700; (2) *Miss HomeStreet* 151.956, 300, 1180; (3) *Reliable Diamond Tool present J&D's* 134.367, 225, 1195; (4) *DarrellStrong.com presents PayneWest Insurance* 106.595 (one-minute penalty for jumping the gun), 169, 1094. Fast lap (3) *Miss HomeStreet* 156.092.

COMPILED BY ALLEN STILES



Andrew Tate in the U-9 *Delta Realtrac* (left) and Jimmy Shane in the U-1 *Miss HomeStreet* thrilled the fans by battling each other side by side throughout the final heat of the Guntersville Lake Hydrofest.

Perfect Weekend

With his victory on Lake Guntersville, Andrew Tate became the 27th member of an exclusive group of drivers who have accomplished perfect weekends. A perfect weekend occurs when a driver is the fastest qualifier for a race and then proceeds to win every preliminary heat and the final. Who has had the most perfect weekends? Here's a list that ranks all of the drivers who have had more than two perfect weekends during their career:

1. Dave Villwock28
2. Chip Hanauer24
3. Bill Muncey23
4. Dean Chenoweth12
5. Chuck Thompson10
6. Danny Foster5
- Jim Kropfeld5
- Billy Schumacher5
9. Tom D'Eath4
- George Henley4
- Ron Musson4
- Mickey Remund4
- Jimmy Shane4
14. Guy Lombardo3
- Mark Tate3
16. Bill Cantrell2
- Warner Gardner2
- Bill Stead2
- Mira Slovak2

damage to its right sponson. As the field came to the line for the start, *Chase* jumped the gun, earning yet another one-minute penalty.

In the first turn, *PayneWest* hit the apex buoy, causing it to break loose and float away. *Realtrac* won the heat, *Chase* physically finished second, but ended up third because of all the penalties.

The apex buoy in turn one was not replaced before Heat 3B. *HomeStreet* took lane one and *J&D's* had lane two. Again, Shane tried to make it look like a close race, but won with little effort.

The damage to the right sponson of *Chase* caused the team to scratch the final. That left a four-boat race: *HomeStreet*, *Delta Realtrac*, *J&D's*, and *PayneWest*.

Final Heat

J&D's had the inside at the start, but was behind both *Delta Realtrac* in lane three and *Miss HomeStreet* in lane two. *PayneWest*, on the outside, jumped the gun. Andrew Tate took the lead going into the first turn with Jimmy Shane in *HomeStreet* one length behind. The duel every-



Andrew Tate hoists the Southern Cup during the awards ceremony.

one had been waiting for all day suddenly developed.

For five laps, the battle raged. *Realtrac* was narrowly ahead, but it was obvious the tiniest miscue would hand the win to *HomeStreet*. Going into the final turn it appeared Shane would be able to use the inside to his advantage. *HomeStreet* pulled even as they passed the apex, but Tate kept his speed up and won the drag race to the finish line. At the most, he was one length ahead. Neither driver had any reason to be ashamed of his effort. The race was absolutely the best of unlimited hydroplane racing.

Back in the pits, Andrew Tate was physically drained, but smiling broadly. "There was a whole lot of HomeStreet blue, but I'm happy for the Delta Realtrac team," he said. "We have to be consistent from here on out. Every point counts," he added. Asked to describe course



Chris Denslow

The *Delta Realtrac* team and family members gather for a photo with their trophies after winning the 2018 Guntersville Lake Hydrofest.

conditions, he said, "It's a big body of water and the wind was blowing the wrong way. It made the backstretch pretty interesting."

Unlimited racing has returned to Guntersville. Weather conditions as well as mechanical issues resulted in a less-than perfect show during qualifying and preliminary

heats, but the boats produced a thrilling finale that made up for the earlier disappointments.

Will they be invited back in 2019? Early indications are that Southern Cup organizers want them to return. There's a good chance it'll happen. ❖

Seattle race to be broadcast live on TV again.

The Albert Lee Appliance Cup in Seattle will be televised live again, according to an announcement made by Seafair. The event will be broadcast live on KONG-TV and live-streamed on King5.com from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on race day, Sunday, August 5. "KING5's commitment in supporting Seattle's iconic community events and festivals means you can enjoy Seafair Weekend on site, on KONG-TV, and streaming on your mobile device or from your easy chair," said Richard Andersen, CEO and president of Seafair.

Last year, a 66-year tradition of televising the Seattle race live was broken when KIRO-TV decided not to do a live broadcast of the event, saying the ratings for previous broadcasts were not adequate to justify the cost of producing the program. KIRO instead prepared a 90-minute special about the race that was broadcast later that evening, but that was widely panned by hydroplane fans because it featured very little racing action.

The operators of KIRO's cross-town broadcasting rival KING5 Media Group decided they would fill the void. Founded in 1948, KING was the first television station in the Pacific Northwest and was there to broadcast the very first unlimited hydroplane race held in Seattle in 1951. It is currently the dominant media company in the region, delivering the largest local news audience and the most local programming. The company includes KING-TV, an affiliate of NBC, and the independent station KONG-TV.

"The KING5 Media Group and Seafair share a rich history built on service to the community, and we're proud to support such an iconic Seattle event," said Jim Rose, president and general manager of the KING5 Media Group. "We look forward to bringing the excitement of the hydroplane races and airshow to viewers near and far on the properties of the KING5 Media Group, including KONG-TV and King5.com." ❖

Four unlimiteds begin the season with test runs on the Columbia.

Sunny weather and a slight breeze greeted four unlimited hydroplanes as they kicked off the 2018 H1 Unlimited Hydroplane Series season with a daylong preseason test session in the Tri-Cities, Washington. The Tri-City Water Follies hosted the event on the Columbia River on Friday, June 1.

Parked along the shore were the 440 *Bucket List Racing*, driven by Dustin Echols; *Miss HomeStreet* driven by national champion Jimmy Shane; U-9 *Les Schwab Tires* driven by Andrew Tate; and U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool present J&D's*, driven by Tom Thompson.

The *Bucket List Racing* was the first and last boat on the temporary 2.5-mile racecourse and racked up the most testing laps of the four boats. The team made four attempts and completed 16 laps during the day.

"We are looking good now," said Echols. "Really good. Each time out we got better and better and I am excited on how fast the boat is now." Echols said it was the fastest the boat has ever gone, eclipsing the mandatory 130 mph qualifying lap that is required to qualify at each of the H1 Unlimited races.

The *Bucket List* team spent much of the off-season building new gearboxes and custom-made propellers that contributed to the team's success during the testing session. "We accomplished all our objectives and then some," Echols said.

Miss HomeStreet and Shane completed 14 laps during three separate appearances on the racecourse and made three engine changes during



[Top] The 440 team was the first to get their boat on the water for testing.
[Middle] Jimmy Shane piloting the *Miss HomeStreet* around the racecourse.
[Above] The crowd at Columbia Park in Kennewick, Washington, along the shore of the Columbia River.



[Top Left] The U-9 *Les Schwab Tires* on the Columbia River. [Bottom Left] Cindy Shirley, crew chief of the *Miss HomeStreet*, is interviewed during the live stream broadcast of the event. [Top] Andrew Tate with some race fans. [Above] Tom Thompson waves to the fans on the beach as the U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* is towed back to the pit area.

the day. “We accomplished everything we set out to do,” Shane said. “Our team dynamic is great and we verified that we got the boat back together in the off-season.”

Andrew Tate said slight aero changes to the U-9 race boat made it faster. “The boat felt great,” he said. “Now we have to get next to the other teams in competition to see how the boat reacts. Preparation wins boat racing and the nine laps we ran today will put us in good shape going into the Gunter’sville Lake race.”

The *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* was on his second lap around the course when Thompson felt a vibration surge throughout the hull and chose to shut down the engine. As it turned out, that was a good decision. After it was towed back to the dock, the team discovered the boat had propeller shaft issues that could have been catastrophic had Thompson not come to a stop.

“It was a long, short day,” he said. “This is why we test prior to the season. Had this happened at

the first race, the team would have had to spend the night working in the pits to get the boat ready. Now, the team can return to the Seattle area to make the necessary repairs in their shop. It’s a relief to know we have changes that worked and we have a race course set-up for our first race.”

Because it was a preseason test and a temporary racecourse, no average speeds were recorded. ❖

Photos by Chris Denslow

Unlimited-class Speed Records

ALL-TIME SPEED RECORDS:

	<u>SPEED</u>	<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>BOAT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
QUALIFYING	173.384 mph	Dave Villwock	Miss Budweiser	1999	San Diego
COMPETITION LAP	166.221 mph	Steve David	Miss T-Plus	1992	Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
HEAT AVG.	161.712 mph	Mark Tate	Winston Eagle	1993	San Diego
RACE AVG.	156.830 mph	Mark Tate	Close Call	1997	Pearl Harbor, Hawaii

SPEED RECORDS ON A 3-MILE COURSE:

	<u>SPEED</u>	<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>BOAT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
QUALIFYING	143.426 mph	Dean Chenoweth	Miss Budweiser	1980	Detroit
COMPETITION LAP	138.817 mph	Dean Chenoweth	Miss Budweiser	1980	Detroit
HEAT AVG. (4 Laps)	96.476 mph	Chuck Thompson	Miss Pepsi	1951	Detroit
HEAT AVG. (5 Laps)	127.659 mph	Dean Chenoweth	Miss Budweiser	1980	Detroit
RACE AVG.	120.050 mph	Chip Hanauer	Atlas Van Lines	1982	Detroit

SPEED RECORDS ON A 2.5-MILE COURSE:

	<u>SPEED</u>	<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>BOAT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
QUALIFYING	173.384 mph	Dave Villwock	Miss Budweiser	1999	San Diego
COMPETITION LAP	166.221 mph	Steve David	Miss T-Plus	1992	Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
HEAT AVG. (3 Laps)	161.712 mph	Mark Tate	Winston Eagle	1993	San Diego
HEAT AVG. (5 Laps)	154.260 mph	Mark Tate	Close Call	1997	Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
RACE AVG.	156.830 mph	Mark Tate	Close Call	1997	Pearl Harbor, Hawaii

SPEED RECORDS ON A 2-MILE COURSE:

	<u>SPEED</u>	<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>BOAT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
QUALIFYING	165.974 mph	Chip Hanauer	Miss Budweiser	1993	Evansville, Ind.
COMPETITION LAP	156.713 mph	Chip Hanauer	Miss Budweiser	1993	Evansville, Ind.
HEAT AVG. (3 Laps)	154.185 mph	Chip Hanauer	Miss Budweiser	1993	Evansville, Ind.
HEAT AVG. (5 Laps)	146.904 mph	Chip Hanauer	Miss Budweiser	1993	Evansville, Ind.
RACE AVG.	145.024 mph	Mark Tate	Smokin' Joe's	1996	Evansville, Ind.

GOLD CUP SPEED RECORDS:

	<u>SPEED</u>	<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>BOAT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
QUALIFYING	170.087 mph	Mark Tate	Winston Eagle	1993	Detroit
COMPETITION LAP	158.155 mph	Chip Hanauer	Miss Budweiser	1993	Detroit
HEAT AVG.	152.526 mph	Chip Hanauer	Miss Budweiser	1995	Detroit
RACE AVG.	147.943 mph	Mark Tate	Smokin' Joe's	1994	Detroit



Hydroplane & Raceboat Museum



Jim Vota

The two fastest boats in unlimited history. [Left] Dave Villwock drove the *Miss Budweiser* to a qualifying speed of 173.384 mph at San Diego in 1999. The hull is still active, currently racing as the U-7 *Spirit of Detroit*. [Right] In 1992, Steve David drove the *Miss T-Plus* around the course at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, at 166.221 mph. The boat first appeared in 1982 as the *Atlas Van Lines*, when it was driven by Chip Hanauer.

Unlimited-class Course Records

GUNTERSVILLE, ALABAMA (2.5-mile course on Lake Guntersville):

	<u>SPEED</u>	<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>BOAT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>
QUALIFYING	158.626 mph	Andrew Tate	Delta Realtrac	2018
COMPETITION LAP	158.058 mph	Andrew Tate	Delta Realtrac	2018
HEAT AVG. (3 Laps)	156.743 mph	Andrew Tate	Delta Realtrac	2018
HEAT AVG. (5 Laps)	152.004 mph	Andrew Tate	Delta Realtrac	2018
HEAT AVG. (6 Laps)	106.719 mph	Ron Musson	Miss Bardahl	1964
RACE AVG.	147.880 mph	Andrew Tate	Delta Realtrac	2018

MADISON, INDIANA (2-mile course on the Ohio River):

	<u>SPEED</u>	<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>BOAT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>
QUALIFYING	148.837 mph	Dave Villwock	Qatar	2012
COMPETITION LAP	150.933 mph	Dave Villwock	Qatar	2012
HEAT AVG. (3 Laps)	137.608 mph	Dave Villwock	Qatar	2012
HEAT AVG. (5 Laps)	136.106 mph	Dave Villwock	Qatar	2012
RACE AVG.	134.684 mph	Dave Villwock	Qatar	2012

TRI-CITIES, WASHINGTON (2.5-mile course on the Columbia River):

	<u>SPEED</u>	<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>BOAT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>
QUALIFYING	170.471 mph	Dave Villwock	Miss Budweiser	1999
COMPETITION LAP	162.666 mph	Dave Villwock	Spirit of Qatar	2011
HEAT AVG. (3 Laps)	156.957 mph	Chip Hanauer	Miss Budweiser	1994
HEAT AVG. (4 Laps)	151.412 mph	Andrew Tate	Les Schwab Tires	2017
HEAT AVG. (5 Laps)	150.423 mph	Dave Villwock	Spirit of Qatar	2011
RACE AVG.	144.911 mph	Jimmy Shane	Miss HomeStreet	2017

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON (2-mile course on Lake Washington):

	<u>SPEED</u>	<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>BOAT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>
QUALIFYING	163.451 mph	Dave Villwock	Miss Budweiser	1999
COMPETITION LAP	155.256 mph	Kip Brown	Qatar	2013
HEAT AVG. (3 Laps)	150.880 mph	Mark Tate	Winston Eagle	1993
HEAT AVG. (5 Laps)	141.880 mph	Jean Theoret	Miss Beacon Plumbing	2006
RACE AVG.	140.011 mph	Mike Hanson	Kellogg's Frosted Flakes	1993

DETROIT, MICHIGAN (2.72-mile course on the Detroit River):

	<u>SPEED</u>	<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>BOAT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>
QUALIFYING	163.669 mph	Dave Villwock	Qatar	2012
COMPETITION LAP	160.358 mph	Dave Villwock	Qatar	2012
HEAT AVG. (3 Laps)	157.171 mph	Andrew Tate	Delta Realtrac	2017
HEAT AVG. (4 Laps)	152.851 mph	Jimmy Shane	Miss HomeStreet	2016
HEAT AVG. (5 Laps)	152.759 mph	Jimmy Shane	Miss HomeStreet	2017
RACE AVG.	149.027 mph	J. Michael Kelly	Graham Trucking	2016

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA (2.5-mile course on Mission Bay):

	<u>SPEED</u>	<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>BOAT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>
QUALIFYING	173.384 mph	Dave Villwock	Miss Budweiser	1999
COMPETITION LAP	164.919 mph	Mark Tate	Winston Eagle	1993
HEAT AVG. (3 Laps)	161.712 mph	Mark Tate	Winston Eagle	1993
HEAT AVG. (5 Laps)	153.550 mph	Dave Villwock	Spirit of Qatar	2010
RACE AVG.	152.631 mph	Dave Villwock	Spirit of Qatar	2010

Around the Circuit

Race Site News



Chris Tracy

My read on David Williams' new book about Mira Slovak.

Longtime hydroplane racing fans have been handed a treat: David Williams' new book, *A Race to Freedom; The Mira Slovak Story*. It's a compelling story of how commercial airplane pilot Mira Slovak, as a courageous young man, left his friends and family in Czechoslovakia and in a harrowing escape, defected to the West. He gave up all to flee communism. But that's only a small piece of Slovak's fascinating life story told in the book.

The book is also an account of Slovak's stories and adventures, including hurdles and curves that Slovak faced and overcame as a refugee and immigrant. Readers will find that Slovak worked with the CIA and the CIA helped Slovak a lot. As the story goes on, readers understand why Slovak learned how to pilot a crop-dusting plane, how he fell into being Bill Boeing, Jr.'s personal pilot, why Washington Senator Warren Magnuson got a bill through Congress for Slovak, how the sport of unlimited hydroplane racing allowed Slovak to personally thank President Eisenhower for signing Magnuson's bill, and how Slovak progressed from crop-dusting pilot to a senior captain with Continental Airlines.

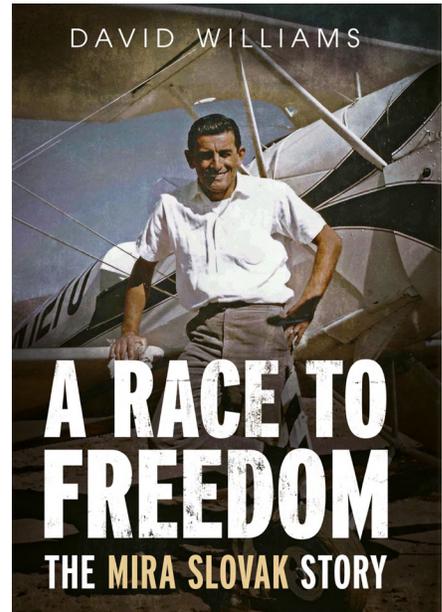
But really the bulk of the Mira Slovak story is about hydroplane racing or flying, Slovak's two passions. Hydroplane fans will enjoy hearing Slovak's perspective on

racers, boats and—especially—the people in his era of hydroplane racing. Some of his perspective is not always flattering, especially his interactions with driver Ron Musson, but his point of view about boats, people and specific races will add to the knowledge base fans have about the years when Slovak drove hydros.

Readers will be reminded that in the good old days of piston hydros, many boats often did not finish heats and equipment was often unreliable. And, driving? Well, it was more art, contrasted with the science used by today's turbine boat pilots. And hydroplane racing was dangerous and drivers, including Slovak, too often got hurt while driving and far too many died.

Slovak's other passion was flying, including air races and stunt flying. We learn about all the planes he owned or flew and that flying personal planes was as dangerous as driving hydroplanes.

Hydro fans will be mesmerized and they will likely overlook some shortcomings. Many UNJ readers know that I am a retired librarian and books and the book-trade are in my professional wheelhouse. Williams' book could use significant additional editing. At times, I found myself wanting to redline whole paragraphs; there are just too many unnecessary details or descriptions that are not important to the overall story.



Some chapters, such as critical chapter 12, while only 27 pages long, has at least 14 characters and even more towns or places mentioned, which makes it confusing to read—and a map would have helped provide some geographical clarity. There are so many adjectives or descriptors used in describing people that sometimes it sounds like an episode of Garrison Keillor's, *Guy Noir, Private Eye*. Often trite.

And there is, at times, way too much recreated dialog that gives the book a fiction tone. That said, all longtime fans will forgive these faults. Instead, fans will remember Slovak's powerful story and, like me, recall that they remember that boat, that race, that owner, and/or that driver, as the reader relives parts of Slovak's spectacular life. ❖

HydroFile

Race Team News

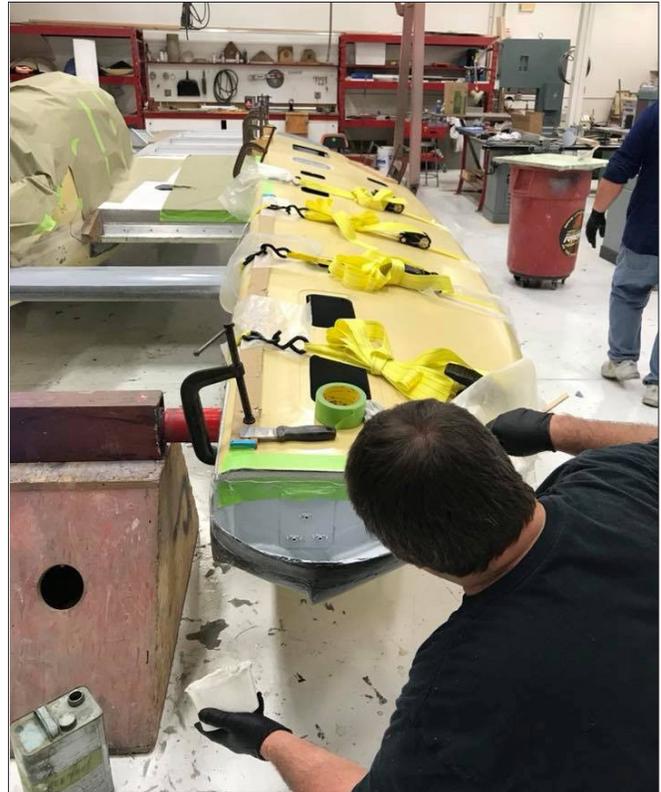


Lon Erickson

With the beginning of the 2018 race season underway, timely and relevant team news becomes a challenge for a monthly publication such as this. Things are very fluid and happening at a quick pace. For the latest, we will try and keep you up to date on our Facebook page and, at this stage of the season, use this space to bring you more long-term team news.

U-1 HomeStreet Racing

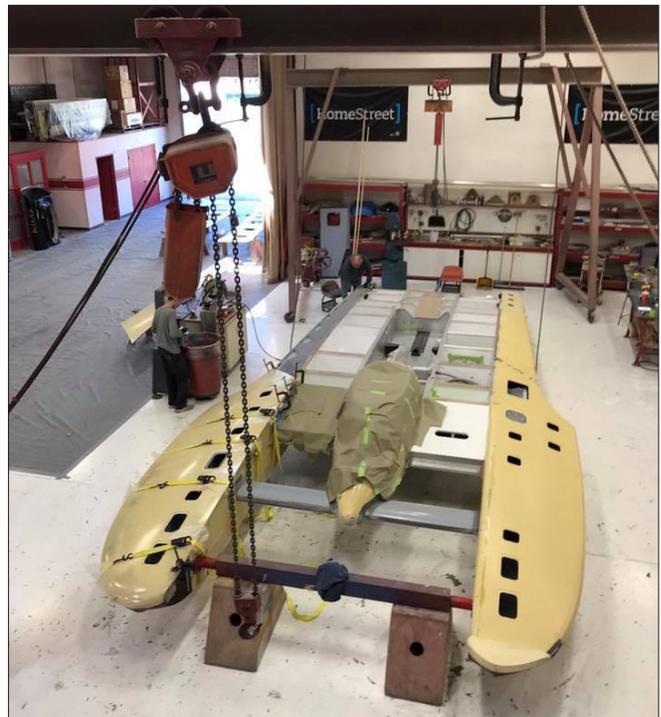
Great progress is being made on the new HomeStreet Racing hull in the team's shop in Tukwila, Washington. During the past month, internal hardware has been installed, decks are on the boat, running surfaces completed, and the boat is being prepped for paint. The goal is to have it completed in mid-July, though no definitive plans have been announced for testing or racing in 2018.



Miss Madison Race Team



Jim Labrie



Miss Madison Race Team



Miss Madison Race Team

U-2/U-7 Bartush/Spirit of Detroit

Repairs to the U-7 Spirit of Detroit were not completed in time for it to compete in the season opener in Guntersville. The target is for it to be ready for the Madison Regatta. The U-7 (former Bud T-5) is now in the Bartush warehouse shop with the team, which is re-installing systems and hardware to possibly test the boat before going to Madison.

Henderson Hydroplanes



U-21/U-48 Go Fast Turn Left Racing

Before the team left for the first event of the season in Guntersville, another all-hands-on-deck work party focused more attention towards completing the new U-48 hull. Work will continue with hopes of having the new hull in the Tri-Cities.



Go Fast Turn Left Racing

U-12 Racing/Graham Trucking

Owner Rob Graham (below) in conversation with the NewsJournal told us, "I can tell you at this point that we won't be at the Guntersville Hydrofest or the Madison Regatta." When we asked why the decision was made not to attend the first two events, he simply said the team had some real challenges come its way. As for the remainder of the 2018 season, Graham responded: "We do have other issues we're trying to work through, but I'm confident things will start coming together for us. Our current plan is to meet the fleet in the Tri-Cities at the end of July."

Lon Erickson



U-27 Wiggins Racing

Through several independent sources, we've learned that Wiggins Racing will carry the colors of Oberto for the West Coast swing in the Tri-Cities and Seattle. Owners Charley and Milt Wiggins will take over the Oberto sponsorship that was previously on the U-16 Ellstrom Racing. The image below is one of the possible proposed graphics scheme for what the Oberto-sponsored hydro may look like.



My \$0.02 Worth

Editorial Comment



Andy
Muntz

By most accounts, the running of the race in Guntersville went exceedingly well. Yes, too bad the weather didn't fully cooperate. Stiff winds, white caps, and even a tornado warning did their best to hamper the action. But, in the end, the fans were treated to a top-notch event. They are no doubt anxious for the boats to return next season.

Postings on Facebook praised the people of Guntersville for being terrific hosts and many expressed their excitement about the close race action. But, there also were others who apparently find pleasure in complaining. As they watched the race in the comfort of their homes far away, they said the live stream of the event was sometimes difficult to watch.

Now, I'm no expert in the technology of video streaming on the Internet, but I do know enough to realize that it's not easily done. There are lots of factors that can

get in the way, such as bandwidth. You'll get lots of bars on your phone when only a few users are accessing the local cell tower, but that reception quickly deteriorates when huge numbers of people are sharing that tower with you, such as when 10,000 fans are there watching a boat race.

It doesn't bother me so much that these complainers don't understand the basics of technology, but it does bother me when these so-called experts think that a jittery video feed is a sign of the sport's apocalypse and that H1 is somehow to blame.

Let me just say a couple of things about that. First, there was nobody more desirous of a clear video feed to your computer than the volunteers for H1 who were there in Guntersville trying to make it happen. What's more, please remember that they are volunteers.

NASCAR has a few thousand employees who work full-time, all year long to make sure that their events are marketed and organized in the best way possible. IndyCar is not as big, but has several hundred full-time employees, many in marketing.

H1 doesn't have any full-time employees. Zero. All of the people who organize the races, inspect boats, referee the action, build the website, and make sure you get live streaming on your computer actually make their living doing something else. They lend their expertise to H1 because they are passionate about this sport.

So, instead of complaining about them, how about thanking them, instead? The fact is, if it wasn't for them, there wouldn't be any boat racing action for you to watch on your computer. ❖

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Letters may be edited for clarity and space.

PLEASE JOIN US AT THE NEXT MEETING OF UNLIMITEDS UNANIMOUS.

2 p.m. on Sunday, July 8, 2018

Mercer Island Public Library, 4400 - 88th Ave. SE, Mercer Island, Washington 98040