



## A “Random” Win for Dave Villwock and *Spirit of Qatar* No Surprises in San Diego

by Mac Clouse

One of the biggest rule changes for the 2011 hydroplane season was allowing the drivers to fight for lanes. This was a change that was welcomed by the fans and the drivers. However, after the first 4 races of the season, the results of the rule change were mixed. It did bring back the uncertainty of who would get the inside lanes. The unintended consequence of the change was that boats were now going very slow as they approached the one-minute buoy. In many cases, boats were parking in turn one in the inside lanes waiting for the one minute gun. Some boats were washing themselves down from water flowing over their deck as they went slow. Some boats were washed down by faster boats cutting in and out of lanes. Some boats were colliding. The Seattle race saw all of these problems.

There were some signs that the drivers might be trying some new strategies. For the final in Seattle, Steve David in the *Oberto* leapfrogged four parked boats in turn 1 to get the inside lane; this contributed significantly to his win.

In San Diego and Qatar, the slow speed and parking problems would be compounded by the salt water that can destroy turbines. This would be in addition to the usual problems of getting salt spray while getting on a plane and from the roostertails of other boats. The H1 officials wanted to have ten “healthy” boats for San



Diego, and especially for the big payday race in Qatar. Thus, there were new rules implemented for San Diego and Qatar:

- After the heat draw, lanes would be chosen based on the order that the boats were drawn into the heat. There would also be a random draw for lane choices for the final.
- The 7-boat length overlap requirement was extended to 10-boat lengths.
- From the start of a heat, the boats must maintain their lanes all the way through the first turn.

In spite of the random element for lanes, the result of the race was similar to previous races. Dave Villwock and Spirit of Qatar dominated, winning their three preliminary heats from the outside and the final from the inside to win the Air National Guard Championship. For Villwock, it was his third win of the 2011 season, his record ninth win on Mission Bay, and his 65th all-time win. For the Ellstrom family's hull, it was a record-setting 25th win.

## Testing and Qualifying

With Mike Webster's *Matrix Systems* and Ken Muscatel's "Superior Racing" on their way to Abu Dhabi for a two-boat exhibition, there were ten boats for the San Diego race. The new rules seemed to dampen some of the enthusiasm



for the race. The talk in the pit area seemed to be more about the successful four-boat exhibition that was held in Sacramento the previous week, the upcoming four-boat exhibition in Washington, and the trip to Qatar. In Friday morning's test sessions, in spite of good water, speeds were generally down compared to last year. Most drivers were content to do timing runs from several different lanes since they did not know what the random draw might provide.

Steve David commented about starts, his health, and his plans. "We had an issue, but there were other ways to fix things instead of just relying on random draws for lanes. You can set a maximum time that a boat can spend between buoys, a maximum time that a boat could be in turn 1 prior to the one-minute gun, use GPS to enforce a minimum speed, or enforce a minimum N2 during the milling period. As far as me, my ribs are 100%, but I will still wear the rib protection and will do it from now on. I think all drivers should. This morning I will be looking for the fastest place to start. I have to have more starting marks since what lanes I'll be in is an unknown."

Scott Liddycoat was excited to be in San Diego. "This is a nice course. It's worth the wait all year for this one. We did a 158 this morning, but we had an N2 violation. Then we did a 154. This course is fast."

Mark Evans missed the first testing session. "We blew a belt on the oil pump when we trailer fired. We do plan on having Bianca Bononcini take the boat out this weekend."

J. Michael Kelly went out early but came in before completing a lap. "I almost went over. It wasn't a good ride." Later he went out and did a 152. "We are trying to get the boat freed up. Right now the boat wants to ride too much on the nose. I have to use upward wing on the straightaways to get the nose up, but that isn't safe. I'd rather have it set up so I use downward wing on the straights. I'll be hurt by the new lane process. In Detroit, the Roostertail

Turn, our turning ability, and being in lane 1 worked for our advantage. The inside and turning are our strengths. I don't have the speed to compete from the outside."

Greg Hopp did not have the white boat that he had raced all year. He had the burgundy and black boat that he raced last year (#9899). It was also the boat that ran in the Sacramento exhibition. "This boat is much better. With the white boat, if I went under 100 mph, water came over the windshield and I couldn't see. I could never get the inside lane. This boat is a better ride."

J.W. Myers could not get the *Peters & May* up on a plane. "I don't know what is happening. In Sacramento, I practiced getting up on a plane quickly and it went fine. The engine is getting salt and overheating. I shut it down because I didn't want to ruin a motor."

Friday afternoon from 2:30-4:30 was Fast Lap Friday, the weekend's only qualifying session. The first boat out was Mark Evans in the Formula. He did a much improved 149.920. J. Michael Kelly in the Degree Men did a 152, but it was taken away by an N2 violation. Next was Steve David in Oh Boy! Oberto; he did a 161.252. Scott Liddycoat and Valken.com then did 154.961. Kip Brown in Red Dot then did 148.458. Graham Trucking, with Jeff Bernard, then did 147.388. Next was Brian Perkins in TapouT with a surprising 153.844. Next out was Dave Villwock and Spirit of Qatar. He moved to the top spot with a 163.265.

The fun part of Fast Lap Friday is the continuous stream of boats on the water and seeing if speeds can be increased. After Villwock's run, David came out again in Oberto and regained the top spot with a 163.312. Kelly went out again and did a legal 152.019. Brown then increased his speed to 151.459. Liddycoat then did a 156.054, but had an N2 violation. Bernard did one lap at 143.712, and then returned to the pits. As the session neared its end, Greg Hopp took the U-100 (called Mirage Boats), on the course and did a fifth-fastest 152.907. The last boat out was Villwock for his second attempt. He retook the top spot with a 164.759.

While Villwock was on the course, Oberto was in the slings above the water. When Villwock's speed was



Greg Hopp returns with last seasons #9899, the boat he prefers over #9701 or the newest boat #0010, now a display for the Schumacher's.



J.W. Myers and *Peters & May* spent more than a little time on the end of a rope during the three day weekend this year.

announced, Oberto was put back on the trailer. It's not clear that Oberto really wanted to run again; David was seen in the truck wearing shorts and a crew shirt, not his driver's suit. "We didn't go out because you are only allowed to go out twice, and time was running out in the session," he said.

Perkins was happy with his fourth-fastest speed. "We finally figured some stuff out with the hull. Now we want even more speed." For this race, he had a new sponsor. TapouT is a mixed martial arts clothing company. The company founder and owner, Dan "Punkass" Caldwell was in the pits all weekend. He trailer started the boat and talked with Sam Cole on the PA system about his involvement during the weekend.

Owner Greg O'Farrell said, "We hope something can happen with TapouT. Then I can finish my new boat. This is something that Sam found for us."

Not much happened on Saturday before the late afternoon heats. Bononcini did three laps in Formula:

125.598, 128.917, and 128.369. Villwock took two big hops in the SeaWorld Turn that broke two of the skid fin rods and damaged the front canard. J.W. Myers got Peters & May on a plane and did a 139.738. The officials counted that as a qualification, but Myers did not get the 30 qualification points.

Owner Shannon Raney explained what happened with Peters & May. “In our last attempt on Friday, we put a camera in the engine compartment. We discovered that water was coming in from the side, not over the deck in the front. We fixed the problem and were able to run.”

## Heat 1

Heats 1A and 1B were run at 4:00 and 4:30. In 1A, the U-100 was in lane 1, with *Oberto* in 2, *Formula* in 3, *Red Dot* in 4, and *Degree* in 5. Formula had trouble starting, joined the field late, and died in the backstretch prior to the start.

*Oberto* was first in and out of turn 1, took an early lead, and was never challenged. *Red Dot* was second with Hopp third. As Kelly predicted, *Degree* did not do well from the outside and finished fourth.

In 1B, *Valken* was in lane 1, with *Graham* in 2, *TapouT* in 3, *Peters & May* in 4, and *Qatar* in 5. The Ellstrom crew had replaced its broken skid fin rods and was now using a backup canard that was painted the bright orange of its *E-Lam* days.

*Valken* and *Graham* were first to turn 1. At the end of lap 1, Liddycoat led Bernard with Villwock in third. In lap 2, Villwock passed Bernard to move within a roostertail of Liddycoat. *Peters & May* died at the exit of turn 2.

Villwock used the fastest lap of the heat, 155.424, to catch Liddycoat in turn 2 of lap 3 and won by almost half-a-boat length. Bernard was third with Perkins fourth.

Liddycoat was pleased even though Villwock passed him at the end. “This is a fun course. I wish I would have had a bigger lead going into the last turn.”

Evans explained his problems. “We had to open the cowling to adjust a plug to get the engine to start. We didn’t have time to re-tape the edge of the cowling so water came in and shut down the engine. I restarted and tried to catch the field for the start, but I hit a hole, took a big bounce and almost barrel rolled. The engine quit and wouldn’t restart.”

“We went through a roostertail and that was it,” was Myers explanation of his DNF.

Kelly was disappointed with his finish. “Now we know that we did well in the previous races because fighting for lanes could get us into lane 1. I have a lucky draw for heat 2 and have to take advantage of it.”

## Heat 2

In 2A, *Degree* was in lane 1, with *Formula* in 2, *TapouT* in 3, *Valken* in 4, and *Qatar* in 5. A second straight lane 5 draw had owner Erik Ellstrom kidding by asking if there was something wrong with the #96 Ping-Pong ball. *Formula* again died in the backstretch before the start.



Karl Pearson photo



Karl Pearson photo

*Degree* was first in and out of turn 1 and led *Qatar* at the end of lap 1, with *Valken* in third and *TapouT* in fourth. In lap 3, Villwock passed Kelly in the backstretch and pulled away to win. Liddycoat was third with Perkins in fourth.

*Peters & May* took lane 1 in 2B, *Red Dot* in 2, *Oberto* in 3, U-100 in 4, and *Graham* in 5. The U-100 was compressor stalling as soon as it left the pits. Hopp stayed outside and went slow for all three laps.

*Red Dot* was first to the turn, but *Oberto* pulled even in the backstretch, and took the lead exiting turn 2. *Peters & May* was in third with *Graham* in fourth and U-100 trailing in fifth.

David went on to win by a roostertail over Brown. Myers was third, Bernard fourth, and Hopp fifth.

David was pleased with his two heat wins. “I have no complaints so far. The balls have been kind, but things are totally based on luck. You still have to make a good start, but there are no surprises.”

### Heat 3

Kelly was lucky again in 3A. *Degree* was in lane 1, with *Red Dot* in 2, *Oberto* in 3, *Formula* in 4, and *Peters & May* in 5. *Formula* died before it entered the course and got a DNS.

*Degree* was first to turn 1, but *Oberto* passed it in the backstretch and was first to turn 2. At the end of lap 1, *Oberto* was in first, *Red Dot* in second, *Degree* in third, and *Peters & May* in fourth.

David went on to win by two roostertails. In the last lap Kelly used the inside in turn 2 to pull even with Brown, but Brown had the speed to win the race for the finish for second. *Peters & May* died in lap 3. At the end of the heat, it was announced that David had a minor N2 violation, with only a monetary penalty.

In 3B, *Valken* was in lane 1, with *Graham* in 2, and U-100 in 3. For the third consecutive heat, *Qatar* was drawn last, but Perkins chose lane 5 for *TapouT*, giving lane 4 to Villwock.



Karl Pearson photo



Karl Pearson photo



Karl Pearson photo



Karl Pearson photo

*Valken* was first to turn 1, but *Qatar* led going into turn 2. At the end of lap 1, Villwock was in first, Liddycoat in second, Bernard in third, Perkins in fourth, and Hopp in fifth. The order stayed the same to the end with Villwock winning by a roostertail.

The six boats for the front line of the final would be *Qatar*, *Oberto*, *Red Dot*, *Valken*, *Degree*, and *Graham*.

### Provisional

Two boats wanted to run in the Provisional. *Peters & May* drew lane 1, with *TapouT* in lane 2. Myers led from start to finish to get the trailer position in the final.

### Final

In the preliminary heats, Villwock had shown that he could win from the outside. However, David wasn't in any of the heats. What would happen now that they were finally in the same heat? The person with the answer to this question was Lady Luck. Villwock's string of bad luck ended when he got lane 2. More good luck for him resulted in David in lane 5. It would be a major surprise, in a day where there had been no surprises, if Villwock did not win the final.

*Red Dot* was in lane 1, with *Qatar* in 2, *Valken* in 3, *Graham* in 4, *Oberto* in 5, *Degree* in 6, and *Peters & May* as the trailer. Villwock got a perfect start and was first to turn 1. Villwock and David entered turn 2 together, but David's outside position and Brown and Liddycoat still close in lanes 1 and 4 enabled Villwock to pull away from David. Villwock went on to win by a roostertail over Brown. David was third with Liddycoat fourth, Kelly fifth, Bernard sixth, and Myers seventh.

David was disappointed with the finish. "We had a fast boat, but it took us three laps to get around *Valken*. Good water was hard to find. I had to run in Dave's slipstream. It would have been nice to assign lanes for the final based on merit, not luck. If I had been in lane 1 or 2, it could have been a great race."

Villwock was pleased with the goals he has accomplished this year. "We accomplished some major goals this year. We won the Gold Cup, I set the record for driver wins, and our boat set the record for wins by a hull. It was neat that we could accomplish all of these at about the same time. For this race, we used the same setup all day. We geared for being in lane 4 or 5 and then stayed outside to play it safe. I made sure to give Kip a lot of room in the final. I wanted to make a good start. It was close to jumping, but *Valken* was also there with me. If I jumped, at least I was going to take someone with me!"



Karl Pearson photo



Karl Pearson photo



Karl Pearson photo

# STAT BOX

## SAN DIEGO THUNDERBOAT REGATTA

San Diego, California, September 17-18, 2011

2 1/2-mile course on Mission Bay

**QUALIFYING** (1) U-96 *Spirit of Qatar*, Dave Villwock, 164.759, 100 points; (2) U-1 *Oh Boy! Oberto*, Steve David, 163.312, 80; (3) *Valken.com*, Scott Liddycoat, 154.961, 70; (4) *Tapout*, Brian Perkins, 153.804, 60; (5) U-100, Greg Hopp, 152.907, 50; (6) *Degree Men*, J. Michael Kelly, 152.019, 40; (7) *Red Dot*, Kip Brown, 151.459; (8) *Formula*, N. Mark Evans, 149.920, 30; (9) *Graham Trucking*, Jeff Bernard, 147.388, 30; *Peters & May*, J.W. Myers, 138.738, 0 (Saturday qualifier).

**HEAT 1A** (1) *Oh Boy! Oberto* [2] 150.929, 400 points, 480 cumulative points; (2) *Red Dot* [4] 145.822, 300, 330; (3) U-100 [1] 140.327, 225, 275; (4) *Degree Men* [5] 131.346, 169, 209; *Formula* [3] DNF — fuel flow, 0, 30. Fast lap (1) *Oh Boy! Oberto* 154.506. **HEAT 1B** (1) *Spirit of Qatar* [5] 149.791, 400, 500; (2) *Valken.com* [1] 149.455, 300, 370; (3) *Graham Trucking* [2] 141.096, 225, 255; (4) *Tapout* [3] 134.958, 169, 229; (5) *Peters & May* DNF — compressor stall, 0, 0. Fast lap (3) *Spirit of Qatar* 155.424.

**HEAT 2A** (1) *Spirit of Qatar* [5] 149.947, 400, 900; (2) *Degree Men* [1] 146.788, 300, 509; (3) *Valken.com* [4] 145.258, 225, 595; (4) *Tapout* [3] 138.706; *Formula* [2] DNS — fuel flow, 0, 30. Fast lap (2) *Spirit of Qatar* 152.219. **HEAT 2B** (1) *Oh Boy! Oberto* [3] 151.088, 400, 880; (2) *Red Dot* [2] 148.811, 300, 630; (3) *Peters & May* [1] 137.001, 225, 225; (4) *Graham Trucking* [5] 133.601, 169, 424; (5) U-100 [4] 92.426, 127, 402. Fast lap (1) *Oh Boy! Oberto* 152.946.

**HEAT 3A** (1) *Oh Boy! Oberto* [3] 154.686, 400, 1280; (2) *Red Dot* [2] 149.145, 300, 930; (3) *Degree Men* [1] 148.990, 225, 734; *Peters & May* [5] DNF — , 0, 225; *Formula* [4] DNS — fuel flow, 0, 30. Fast lap (3) *Oh Boy! Oberto* 155.927. **HEAT 3B** (1) *Spirit of Qatar* [4] 151.925, 400, 1300; (2) *Valken.com* [1] 149.428, 300, 895; (3) *Graham Trucking* [2] 141.801, 225, 649; (4) *Tapout* [5] 141.072, 169, 567; (5) U-100 [3] 128.801, 127, 529. Fast lap (3) *Spirit of Qatar* 155.046.

**PROVISIONAL HEAT** (1) *Peters & May* [1] 149.210, 0, 225; (2) *Tapout* [2] 148.785, 0, 567. Fast lap (1) *Peters & May* 150.195.

**FINAL** (1) *Spirit of Qatar* [2] 153.551, 400, 1700; (2) *Red Dot* [1] 148.149, 300, 1230; (3) *Oh Boy! Oberto* [5] 146.951, 225, 1505; (4) *Valken.com* [3] 146.393, 169, 1064; (5) *Degree Men* [6] 140.597, 127, 861; (6) *Graham Trucking* [4] 139.968, 95, 744; (7) *Peters & May* [T] 119.586, 71, 296. Fast lap (3) *Spirit of Qatar* 152.258.

COMPILED BY ALLEN STILES

Owner Erik Ellstrom was proud of his family's accomplishments. "In my whole life I would have never thought that we would have the success that we have had. This sport has given me more accolades than I ever expected. This hull has been a winner almost from day one. Its first race was in 2001 in Tri-Cities. It was bright orange with Nate Brown driving. The next weekend in Seattle, it won its first race. Now it holds lots of records for wins, qualifying speeds, and competition lap speeds. We are proud that we built our boat and our parts. Either way, if we win or lose, it's because of what we do." When asked if a new boat was in the plan, Erik gave his usual answer, "Until someone starts beating this one, we don't need to."

With another random-lane, saltwater race ending this year's schedule, it may be safe to assume that the Ellstrom family won't need to build a new boat this winter.



San Diego's coveted Bill Muncy Cup ~ Karl Pearson photo

# Muddy Roostertails in D.C.

## I Waited over Thirty Years for This?

by Arthur H. Harding -- D.C. photos by Richard Berry

I should have known better than to have inflated expectations when the Washington D.C. exhibition received absolutely no promotion in the local media, despite my personal efforts to provide a “tip” to the *Washington Post*. Maybe I should have offered to meet the reporter in a parking garage. On top of the lack of publicity, the weather forecast was for unrelenting rain, with a possibility of thunderstorms and even flooding. No wonder the exhibition was attended primarily by crew members and Air National Guard representatives, with a smattering of die-hard fans (mostly, like me, with ties to the Seattle area), who must have learned of the event on the Internet.



After weeks of heavy rain, with predictions of flooding, the typical concern on the Potomac is the random debris that can wreak havoc on a race boat. But numerous patrol craft positioned around the abbreviated course appeared to be vigilant in their pursuit of destructive flotsam, despite the mountains of mud flowing downstream into the watershed. In fact, the issue initially was not too much water, but not enough. When the first attempt to lower a boat onto the course took place, it was low tide and the boat’s skid fin hit the mud. Before a real race can be conducted at this site, considerable modification to the make-shift pit area at the south end of the course would be necessary.

Alternatively, there was talk of moving the pits to the north end, but that area was unavailable due to National Harbor’s “Oktoberfest,” an event that apparently did not suffer from the same lack of publicity.

The National Harbor site has pluses and minuses. On the positive side, it is private property and thus not subject to the same morass of red tape that would be involved with a return to the East Potomac National Park site. And there is an open expanse of river south of the Woodrow Wilson bridge that should allow a regulation course to be established, although it may not be possible for the straight away to run parallel to the shoreline. In addition, there is a modest expanse of grassy river bank that, at least on a dry day, should provide an adequate venue for spectators, assuming that an actual race would receive a level of promotion likely to attract paying patrons. And there lies the rub — would a return of the President’s Cup rely on paid admissions, at least in part, to defray expenses? If so, the fact that access to National Harbor can be controlled is an advantage. But would the scores of restaurants and retail establishments agree to close down to outsiders while the race is in progress? The best approach might be to charge a few bucks for parking, but no admission fee, and hope that race attendees patronize the many bars and restaurants throughout the National Harbor complex.

At around 2 p.m., the Valken crew was able to launch their craft and bring it around to the dock at the marina near the middle of the course so Scott Liddycoat could climb on board without slogging through the muddy pits. The plan was for each of the four boats to do two laps, and then for several boats to parade around the course



When the boats were set in the water their skid fins touched bottom. Because of this they all had to be towed out before running.

together. *Valken* put on its show, spewing a roostertail noticeably brown with mud. *Oberto* followed, but only made it through the first turn before mechanical trouble forced David to shut down. Kelly and Bernard took their turns in *Degree Men* and *Graham Trucking*. But a mix of weather, water conditions, and cramped course layout precluded a multiple boat outing, so *Valken* did a few more laps and the show was over.

The next day, the coverage of the event in the sports pages of the *Washington Post* remained deafeningly silent, although video was posted on their website. The local NBC affiliate ran some footage on their early evening newscast on Friday (which was also posted on the NBC Channel 4 website), but the coverage was dropped by the eleven o'clock edition. The next day, there was no mention of the exhibition by the station, but their weather segment did run some footage shot the day before at National Harbor to illustrate the prevailing conditions. No race boats were visible, but you could see my wife pulling up the hood on her jacket in a fruitless attempt to stay dry.

If and when the hydros return to D.C., I hope the site and the media are better prepared, and I hope we don't have to wait another thirty years.

## If a Roostertail Falls on an Empty Potomac, Does it Still Make a Sound?

by Lon Erickson

Our Washington D.C. contributing photographer, Richard Berry, said the crowd on hand for the exhibition was very small, mostly because of the terrible weather. Of the few that showed up, only a handful knew the event was even going on. Others just saw the boats and came by to check them out. He said he looked in all the newspapers and on TV but found no pre-event PR. That could mean one of two things, either H1 did alert the media and none thought it warranted a story or H1 did nothing in advance.

Berry told us that during the rain delay H1 sent all their guests to a nearby restaurant (which was classy and expensive) for food - and said they would reimburse them later (The pizza seen in the photos was brought in by one of the race teams). Berry commented that, "Hopefully those folks do get their money back." It was sure not a way to impress potential sponsors and decision makers, though.

The area where they launched the boats is where the pits would be. According to Berry,





having a race is contingent upon that area being paved. It will also need to have that area dredged as well. There are serious concerns of where to lay out the racecourse. A sandbar is apparently right where the course would be laid out. He also said the sight lines for viewing aren't that good, or plentiful.



Berry said he was bothered that he didn't see many high ranking military folks there, only a captain, and it may have been Capt. Ron Perry of the ANG. The only H1 official seen was Sam Cole. Other unlimited hydroplane associated people seen were the crewmembers, drivers, and a few owners.

Berry spoke with the representative for the National Harbor and was told the contract had only been signed for the exhibition the day before (Thursday). That's why it wasn't listed on the National Harbor schedule and possible lack of promotion or signage about the event.

~ UNJ

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**E Lon Erickson**

With the teams putting their boats, haulers, and equipment on ships destined for the Middle East destinations of Abu Dhabi and Doha, Qatar, there is not a lot of race team news happening with regards to the actual boats. The expected arrival date of the ship in Doha is Nov.

4<sup>th</sup>, with the Oryx Cup/U.I.M. Championship taking place Nov. 17-19.

Some of the current unlimited drivers, **Jeff Bernard, Kip Brown, Brian Perkins, J. Michael Kelly, Greg Hopp, J.W. Myers, Jon Zimmerman**, along with some of the potential future drivers **Kayleigh Perkins-Mallory and Bianca Bononcini**, have been busy competing in some of the smaller classes at fall events.

One potential serious racing incident occurred involving Kip Brown when he blew over in the E-55

*Peters & May* sponsored 5 litre hydro on Lake Sammamish, that he shares driving duties with Jeff Bernard. Fortunately, no serious injuries and Kip was able to come back, race, and win the next day in the repaired E-55 hull.

**U-9.** The **Mike Jones** owned U-9 did not qualify to go to Doha and is back in the shop with work expected to begin on that hull over the winter. In a search to find more speed and steady the boat handling they will make some changes to some running surfaces and upgrade the cockpit for that boat. The search for sponsorship in 2012 has begun with hopes to run a full season next year. At this point, Jon Zimmerman is penciled in as the driver for the U-9.

**U-57.** Precision Performance Engineering LLC has announced that **Jimmy Shane** will drive the U-57 *Formula* at the Oryx Cup in Doha, Qatar. Shane has served as a back-up driver for the **Ted Porter** team in 2007-2008 and competed in San Diego in 2010. **N. Mark Evans** has a scheduling conflict and is not able to attend the event in Doha.

# 2011 Damage Report

by Michael Prophet

## Tri-Cities

Fortunately, there was not much damage in Pasco this season. Two boats, one damaged at Detroit, the other at Madison and missing Detroit, returned to race on the Columbia River. One front-runner suffered minor damage in the final.

### U-1 Oh Boy! Oberto

In Madison Steve David hit *Spirit of Qatar* at the strongest area of the boat. *Oberto*'s skid fin sliced through Villwock's's aluminum magnesium engine and gearbox, tearing up the Madison boat's bottom and sponsons. After 26 days of hard work by Mike Hanson and the Madison crew the hull was repaired and ready to race at Tri-Cities. The hull still needed a little paint when it reached the Lampson Pits.



Karl Pearson photo

Steve David was also pretty much healed ready to race. Talking about his injury he said, "They were non-displaced radial fractures of the lower left ribs. They were floaters, they weren't sticking out."

### U-57 Formula

The right sponson on Formula was repaired in Chelan at the Evan Brother's shop after problems arose in Detroit. As you can see in the photo at right, Mark Evans' boat still needed a little paint when it reached the Lampson pits, but was ready to run.



Karl Pearson photo



Evans ran into more problems during a preliminary heat. After 3C Mark Evans and *Formula* returned to the dock minus a part of the boat. UNJ's Allen Stiles said, "The left bull nose was missing and some marks were on the inside of the left sponson. Mitch and Mark Evans and crewmen repaired the bull nose and said the boat could run without it, but should be ready for the next heat."



In the Lampson pits Saturday, *UNJ* staffers Craig Fjarlie and Allen Stiles check out the new damage to *Formula*. ~U-57 *Formula* photos by Karl Pearson



## U-96 Spirit of Qatar

After hitting a large hole in the Columbia River during the final, Dave Villwock raced hard to catch Steve David and *Oh Boy! Oberto*. As they ran him down, *Spirit of Qatar* began to come apart. The engine cowling blew off and the rear wing was cracked in the middle, but they stayed in front to win the race.



Brad Drake photo

# Seattle

There was a lot more trouble at Seattle's Seafair than in Pasco. I believe the wonderful the new H1 starting procedure is to blame for just about all of them. There were many broken parts suffered throughout the race because of this. Instead of creeping around the north turn they started this on the front stretch and crawled around the south turn so slow it was embarrassing. Then they had to punch it to keep, or take, the lane of choice. The quick acceleration broke equipment. It wasn't only the big boats that suffered damage at Seafair. One UL went over spectacularly.

## U-9 Miss VisitTRI-CITIES

Jon Zimmerman ran, okay, plowed into trouble twice at Seattle. In their first collision of the day, 2B, Zimmerman and *Miss VisitTRI-CITIES* bumped into Matrix Systems (see U-22 below). The right side on the white boat was scrapped, but not seriously damaged. A little duct tape and it was good to go for 3A. *Matrix*. was not so lucky.



On the score up (the creep) during the rerun of 3A, Jon Zimmerman and *Miss VisitTRI-CITIES* moved out in the first turn and rear ended *Procraft Windows*, both came to a stop near the white outside course buoy. The boats were plowing around the turn and water washed over the windshield blurring Zimmerman's vision and damaging the left rear on Dr. Ken's boat (see U-25 below). *Miss VisitTRI-CITIES* quickly restarted and left the scene of the accident, but failed to start the heat. The collision had large punched a hole in their right sponson and knocked the canard off. Zimmerman was then grounded for the day.



## U-22 Matrix Systems

Before the start of 2B, Jon Zimmerman and *Miss VisitTRI-CITIES* collided with *Matrix Systems* in the south turn during the crawling period (score up) doing extensive damage to the left side of Mike Webster's boat. Webster said, "Just a racing accident," saying water came up of the windshield on both boats obscuring their vision. He said it would be hard to repair *Matrix Systems* in time for next heat and felt it was best to take the time and repair the boat right and race another day. Jon Zimmerman was penalized monetarily.



Lon Erickson photo

## U-25 Procraft Windows

In the re-run of 3A during the score up (the creep), *Miss VisitTRI-CITIES* moved outside in turn 1 and into *Procraft Windows*, both went dead near the outside course buoy. Dr. Ken Muscatel's boat got the worst of it, damaging the left rear of *Procraft*. *Miss VisitTRI-CITIES* quickly restarted and left the scene. Muscatel restarted *Procraft* after the boats had completed their first lap, but he lost the rear wing and right upright in the process. The left upright fell



Karl Pearson photo



Unlimited.net



Lon Erickson photo

over on the boat (top left). One of the damages uprights seen above. They finished the heat and returned for the Provisional, but ran without any tail feathers (at left).

## 88 Degree Men

In 2A, Kip Brown in *Red Dot* moved out in the first turn, not knowing anybody was there, and closed the door *Degree Men*. J. Michael Kelly got hosed down good and their cowling was knocked off, and then went they dead in the water. Kelly was upset to say the least and Brown was let know about it when he went by Kelly again. The broken piece of the cowling below (photo by Unlimiteds.net), and you can



Karl Pearson photo



see the damage to the left side on what's left of the cowling in photo at right.



Lon Erickson photo

After picking up the floating pieces of the engine cowling and hauling them back to the pits, the crew re-bent the frame, added some 200 mph tape, and strapped on a bungee cord to hold what was left of the engine cowling on for 3A. Kelly said they might have to add some 200 mph tape to hold on the Degree Men decal that was also washed off. He laughed, saying he loves duct tape, and uses it on everything.



Chris Denslow photo

At left, Kelly and the *Degree Men* leave the lagoon and head out for 3A. After winning the Provisional they added some glue to the cowling for added support and were ready to go for the final.

## U-96 *Spirit of Qatar*

*Spirit of Qatar* suffered strut problems after 3B. They had to replace the strut, re-bolt and glue it, and reinstall the propeller for the final. Would it run the same? They were still finishing up at 4 pm; final at 4:20 pm. In the final Villwock was out maneuvered by Steve David and Scott Liddycoat, but had problems with a leaking hatch and decided to settle for third for safety's sake.



The two strut photos and top right photo from Brad Drake. Erick Ellstrom working on new strut photo by Lon Erickson



## UL-72 *Foster Care*

Kayleigh Perkins-Mallory washed out, and then some, at Seattle but not for lack of effort. Mrs. Mallory did very well in the preliminaries, but had a poor start in the final. She was pushing *Foster Care* hard in the rough water and looked to be catching up in the straights. On the backchute heading into the north turn she had an, "Ohh... This Isn't Good!" moment. Air got under the sponsons lifting the red craft skyward. Her left sponson tip caught the water on the way around spinning the craft counter





clockwise, which caused the left rear corner of the boat to dig it and then she and the boat slammed hard onto the water upside down in a blast of spray and boat parts. They slid another 30' or so before coming to a stop on Lake Washington. Everyone on shore, and at home watching on TV went, "Ohh, (add expletive here)!" and held their breath waiting for Kayleigh to surface. About an hour later, or so it seemed, but was only a little over a minute, she popped up beside the overturned *Foster Care* and quickly snatched out of the water and pulled onto overturned hull, then brought to shore to the relief of her crew and cheering fans. Mrs. Mallory was unharmed and in good spirits, waving and smiling to the crowd on her return aboard a gurney. Photos of Kayleigh's flip are from Chris Denslow.



Tom Gordon talked to the perky Kayleigh after the flip and got a great photo, saying, "It came just after we'd talked and I was the only one nearby as she said, very sincerely, "I'm sorry boat," while she hugged it. Tom went on to say, "I watched her go through the three local news interviews after that and could tell that what had happened was starting to really sink in. She was a trooper, but I have a feeling it was a pretty tough night that night."



# San Diego

There wasn't much damage done in the salty water of Mission Bay this year. Only one team ran into minor structural problems. A couple others spent a lot of the weekend being towed in to shore, mostly due to the saltwater.

## U-96 Spirit of Qatar

Dave Villwock ran into trouble during testing Saturday before the preliminary heat began. Spirit of Qatar ran a little light on the front end Saturday morning and Villwock broke the skid fin bracket rods. The crew did a little cutting and welding to repair the rods. Photo from Chris Denslow



The crew also replaced the front canard with an orange one from when it ran as *Miss E-Lam Plus*. Photo from Unlimiteds.net



After the canard change nothing seemed to slow Dave Villwock and *Spirit of Qatar* down at all. They cleaned up in San Diego, winning the race and the National Championship. Photo from Chris Denslow



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