

AUGUST 2015



# Tri-Cities APBA Gold Cup *Oberto* Snatches Victory from the Jaws of Defeat

by **Bill Osborne**



**2015 APBA Gold Cup Champion: Oh Boy! Oberto**

“That’s why you should keep racing right to the very end,” Jimmy Shane said after capturing an improbable win in the 2015 APBA Gold Cup. “I wasn’t aware of the penalty on Jean Theoret, although I knew he had crossed into the DMZ prior to the start. He was trying to take lane 1, but it was too tight

I saw him cut the apex buoy, so I radioed it into Jeff and he relayed the information to H1. My focus was on J. Michael Jeff Bernard, my radioman, kept urging me to go after him. I knew it was close, so I ran as hard as I could and hoped for the best” ~ Bill Osborne photo

Jimmy Shane caught J. Michael Kelly and won by less than two seconds. On the water, Theoret was more than eight seconds ahead of Kelly and appeared to have won his second APBA Gold Cup until H1 officials reviewed the events surrounding the DMZ violation.



As the boats milled during the five-minute period, Jean Theoret cut through the DMZ, but the call was under review until post-race video was reviewed. Erick Ellstrom noted afterwards. “H1 played us the video and it showed clearly that Jean violated the DMZ. We dominated the weekend only to lose by a rookie mistake.” ~ Lon Erickson photo

For the fifth time in its fifty years of hosting unlimited hydroplane racing, the Tri Cities was awarded the rights to the APBA Gold Cup. “We wanted to celebrate our fiftieth race here by hosting the APBA Gold Cup,” Tri Cities’ Cathy Powell noted afterwards. Our goal was to make this our best-ever event” Record crowds, perfect weather, and great racing made the race one to remember. ~ Above, Lon Erickson photos

Thirteen boats made their way to the Columbia River for the race. Included in the mix was Greg O’Farrell’s rebuilt Go Fast Turn Left hull and Ed Cooper’s turbocharged Allison-powered boat. “We stayed away from the circuit until H1 made the changes we felt were needed to guarantee an event that would be run fairly. Once H1 made the changes we wanted, we came back. You know what we thought should happen, so there is no need to discuss the issues further.”

Barb Cooper laughed when asked what Ed has been doing for the last five years. “Ed goes to the shop every day and tinkers. He has been building engines and parts during his time away from the sport. He now has twelve engines built up and a whole bunch of spare parts ready to go. All we needed was a bigger truck to bring them all here. It would have made quite a sight!” ~ Karl Pearson



## Qualifying

Jean Theoret collected the 100 points awarded to the top qualifier; recording the top speed of 160.509 mph. Erick Ellstrom was pleased, but not totally satisfied. "We could go even faster if we had the new gears we are building. This is really Jean's first time racing the boat. Although he raced in Doha last year, the boat wasn't right and the conditions were so bad we couldn't learn much about the boat" ~ Karl Pearson photo

All eyes were on Jimmy King when he took the Cooper entry out to qualify. King's speed of 152.344 disappointed



some who were hoping for a 160+ speed, but Jimmy explained the strategy. "There was no need to risk equipment during qualifying, so we ran as hard we needed, but not so hard as to break."

Jimmy Shane drove *Oberto* to second, posting 157.387 mph, narrowly edging out J. Michael Kelly's *Graham Trucking* in at 156.518 mph. The biggest surprise of the qualification session came from Cal Phipps who drove the Wiggins Racing hull to a solid 155.386 mph. Everything about the Wiggins effort looked great. Charley Wiggins beamed after his boat qualified. "We came here to race and wanted to look good every time out and I think we

succeeded." Indeed. The boat came to Tri Cities sporting a spectacular point job, engines were prepared, and his crew looked professional. ~ Karl Pearson photo

## Heat 1

The first round of heats provided few surprises and lackluster racing. Theoret made a clean start in 1A and led wire-to-wire beating Jimmy King by almost five miles per hour. On the water, Jesse Robertson appeared to be close to Theoret, but he was racing with a one-lap penalty for jumping the gun. The biggest disappointment in the first heat came from Scott Liddycoat who finished a distant fourth and was assessed a \$250 fine for bearing out and not leaving a lane for Tom Thompson who finished fifth.

In 1B, the race between Shane and Kelly never materialized as J. Michael was



Chris Denslow photo

penalized for violating the 80 mph minimum speed while preparing for the start. With Kelly a non factor, Shane's main concern was Cal Phipps in Charley Wiggins' *Dalton Industries*.

Entering the east turn, Mike Webster's *PayneWest* hit a hole, hooked and missed the apex buoy. Because he entered the DMZ, Webster was disqualified. Steve Webster was not happy. "Mike didn't gain any advantage by entering the DMZ and he certainly didn't do it intentionally. Disqualification seems pretty harsh for a racing incident, but there is no appeal, so we will just keep working," ~ Karl Pearson photo above



After the first round, the wind came up and the rest of the day was blown out. There were periods when the wind laid down and the heats could have been run, but only if the boats had been held over the water and dropped in when conditions permitted. H1 officials decided not to gamble, rescheduling heat 2A to Sunday morning at 8:30 am.

## Heat 2

Heat 2A looked like a final heat lineup, pitting H1's top three, *Graham Trucking*, *Oberto*, and *ELAM Plus*, along with Jimmy King in the Cooper U-3 entry. Prior to the start, Jimmy King was disqualified for entering the DMZ. Upon hearing the news, King brought *Ace Hardware* back to the pits. J. Michael Kelly, as he often does, cut the course and secured lane one. Jimmy Shane in *Oberto* and Jean Theoret in *ELAM Plus* took lanes 2 and 3 respectively. ~ Karl Pearson photos below



The three big dogs hit the line and full speed and for the first time all weekend, it looked like a Gold Cup. *Graham Trucking* entered the turn, followed closely by *Oberto* and *ELAM Plus*. There was no doubt the Theoret had the fastest boat, but passing Shane and Kelly was a tall task. As the three exited the turn, Theoret tightened up his arc, leaving Shane a tight lane. At that point as Jimmy said, "It was really tight and I decided not to press the issue. If I had tried to race them, I could have lost my lane and then bad things happen, so I settled back, collected my 225 points and lived to race later in the day." Above, King and the U-3 head to the pits. At right, the three lined up. ~ Karl Pearson photos

For the next four and a half laps, Theoret kept the pressure on Kelly, but JMK never blinked. *Graham Trucking* averaged 151.194 followed closely by *ELAM Plus*, posting a speed of 150.947. Ted

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Porter was ecstatic afterwards. "That's why we wanted J. Michael as our driver. He is tough at getting lane 1 and he always competes. We know how fast Erick's boat is, but we have proven that we are able to beat him. The rest of the day should be fun!"

Mike Webster finished a distant fourth, prompting Steve Webster to question the heat draws. "We must have angered someone at H1 because we are getting very tough draws."

Scott Liddycoat and Cal Phipps led the field into the first turn in Heat 2B. Once they cleared the first turn, the race essentially over. By the end of lap one, Liddycoat's lead was almost four seconds. Tom Thompson had a good run and finished a solid third, followed by Brian Perkins, Jesse Robertson, and Kevin Eacret. Despite bringing up the rear, rookie driver Kevin Eacret had a great attitude. "No one wants to finish last but, I'm not about to do anything stupid. This is my first race in this boat, so I am just trying to learn the boat." *Peters & May* damaged their right upright (seen above), in the race. It was patched up for the next round of heats. ~ Chris Denslow photo



### Heat 3

Cal Phipps hit the line at full speed and raced away from the rest of the field in Heat 3A. Brian Perkins and Tom Thompson were paired up again, but this time, Perky was able to beat Thompson to the finish. Afterwards, Perkins said, "We needed a better finish this time to have any hope of making the final. We still need a good result in the next round, but we're not in a must-win situation now." ~ Karl Pearson photo

Things got a little wild before the start of 3B. In the last turn before the start, J. Michael Kelly and Jean Theoret got tangled up. According to Kelly, "My lane closed out and suddenly all I could see was water." From the pits, Kelly's crew gasped as they could see top of the boat as it landed on edge before flattening out. Somehow, Kelly righted his steed then raced hard towards the starting line. Unfortunately, Kelly hit the line too early and was penalized a lap for jumping the gun. ~Lon Erickson photo

With Kelly out of contention, Theoret powered *ELAM Plus* to an easy victory over Jimmy Shane's *Oberto*. Once again,



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the Jones boat wasn't competitive. According to Mike Campbell, "We tried to give Scott a better ride, but in fact, it's worse. The boat keeps reacting to the water. Every time it hits hard, we lose speed."

#### Heat 4

Jimmy Shane punched his ticket to final, outpacing the hard-charging Cal Phipps by less than two seconds in taking Heat 4A. Brian Perkins collected third, assuring his place in the final as well.



The race between J. Michael Kelly and Jean Theoret in 4B never materialized as the *ELAM Plus* driver was penalized for not maintaining the 80 mph minimum during the five-minute period prior to the start. Kelly drove *Graham Trucking* to a decisive win over Scott Liddycoat's *Les Schwab/Red DOT*. Mike Webster managed to stay ahead of Theoret to finish third while Tom Thompson finished last after jumping the gun. ~ Above and below are Lon Erickson photos



#### Final

Jean Theoret made a perfect start in the final and was never challenged during the heat. He finished with a nine-second advantage over the second and third place boats on the water. The real drama came from Jimmy Shane in *Oberto* who kept pressing JMK's *Graham Trucking*. "Because I was inside of J. Michael, I was able to keep close enough to him that he couldn't move over on me. As I entered the last turn Jeff Bernard kept pushing me so I turned as hard as I could at full speed. The boat responded and I knew it was close."

Within minutes H1 officials reviewed the video and confirmed that Theoret had entered the DMZ and the APBA Gold Cup was awarded to Jimmy Shane and the *Oberto* team. Despite the disappointment for Theoret and the *ELAM Plus* team, something seemed right about *Oberto* winning.



Above a shot at the line-up. *Oberto* on inside with *E-Lam Plus* in lane 2, *Dalton Industries* 3, *Les Schwab/Red DOT* 4, *Graham Trucking* in 5, and *Fasteners* lane 6. At right *Fasteners* chases *Les Schwab/Red DOT* who has a broken rear wing. ~ Karl Pearson photo; Below left Jimmy Shane and J. Michael Kelly battle up the backstretch with *Dalton Industries* running down the front straightaway. At lower right, the last lap of the final, *Oberto* and *Graham Trucking* both going for the gold. ~ All are photos from Lon Erickson



After forty years of unlimited sponsorship, this was Art Oberto's last APBA Gold Cup. As always, Art was gracious, heaping praise on his entire team. "Knowing that this is our last Gold Cup, this one means so much to me. I know Dorothy is watching from heaven and that means so much to me. In the years that I have been involved in the sport, I have to say that these people are the best I can't begin to thank them enough." ~ Above are Lon Erickson photos

J. Michael Kelly finished second followed by Cal Phipps who added a third place in the final to three seconds and a win in 3A to cap off an excellent weekend of racing. "I think we got their attention today," Phipps said afterwards. "We are going to be tough to beat this season."

Brian Perkins drove Greg O'Farrell's U-21 *Fasteners* to a steady fourth, followed by Scott Liddycoat's *Les Schwab/Red DOT* and Tom Thompson's *Peters & May* to sixth place.

The fiftieth Tri Cities race was conducted with an extremely high level of professionalism. Blessed by an amazing venue, the Tri Cities Water Follies conducted a near-perfect event. Fans were treated to some excellent racing, and most-importantly, every boat left the Tri Cities without suffering any major damage.

There is no doubt that *Oberto* is a champion, but they face fierce competition from J. Michael Kelly's *Graham Trucking* and the new challenger, Jean Theoret's *ELAM Plus*. The rest of the season should be quite interesting!



Above left Jimmy Shane hold the APBA Gold Cup with team manager Charlie Grooms standing beside him please with their accomplishment. At right Jimmy Shane with the Gold Cup and Art and Larry Oberto, all giving a thumbs up. Congratulations Oberto. ~ Karl Pearson photos

Below and top of next page the very happy Oberto/Miss Madison Team standing on the winning boat with the APBA Gold Cup. ~ Below and top of next page are Karl Pearson photos







## Yes! There were other unlimiteds at Tri-Cities.

Below are the four of the unlimiteds that I didn't show a photo of, or not a good one. The U-18 *Bucket List*, below right, tested, but never raced. The others, U-12 *DiJulio* driven by Dave Warren, U-21 *Fasteners* driven by Brian Perkins, and U-100 *CARSTARS Body Repair Experts* driven by Kevin Eacret, were not as competitive as the rest.

Karl Pearson photos



Karl Pearson photos



# STAT BOX

## A.P.B.A. Gold Cup

Tri-Cities, Washington; July 25-26, 2015  
2.5-mile course on the Columbia River

**QUALIFYING** (1) U-96 *ELAM Plus*, Jean Theoret, 160.212, 100 points; (2) U-1 *Oberto*, Jimmy Shane, 157.391, 80 points; (3) U-5 *Graham Trucking*, J. Michael Kelly, 156.517, 70; (4) *Dalton Industries*, Cal Phipps, 155.357, 60; (5) U-9 *Les Schwab/Red DOT*, Scott Liddycoat, 154.690, 50; (6) U-3 *Griggs Presents Ace Hardware*, Jimmy King, 152.342, 40; (7) U-7 *Graham Trucking II*, Jesse Robertson, 150.474, 30; (8) U-21 *Fasteners*, Brian Perkins, 149.575, 30; (9) U-22 *PayneWest Insurance*, Mike Webster, 145.595, 30; (10) U-11 *Peters & May*, Tom Thompson, 144.711, 30; (11) U-100 *Miss CARSTAR*, Kevin Eacret, DNQ, 0 (used test speed 136.905 to enter race); U-12 *Miss DiJulio*, Patrick Sankuer, DNQ, 0; U-12 *Miss DiJulio*, N. Mark Evans, DNQ, 0 (used test speed 136.791 on Sunday to enter the race); U-18 *Snuskitush*, Kelly Stocklin, DNQ, 0.

**HEAT 1A** (1) *ELAM Plus* 141.697, 400 points, 500 cumulative points; (2) *ACE Hardware* 136.872, 300, 340; (3) *Miss CARSTAR* 119.087, 225, 225; (4) *Les Schwab/Red Dot* 110.636 (penalized one minute for encroaching on U-11, 169, 219; (5) *Graham Trucking II* 104.533 (penalized one lap for jumping the gun), 127, 157; (6) *Peters & May* 101.063, 95, 125. Fast lap (1) *ELAM Plus* 145.539. **HEAT 1B** (1) *Oberto* 143.441, 400, 480; (2) *Dalton Industries* 138.682, 300, 360; (3) *Fasteners* 134.112, 225, 255; (4) *Graham Trucking* 113.892 (penalized one lap for going under 80 mph), 169, 239; *PayneWest Insurance* DSQ — DMZ violation, 0, 0. Fast lap (1) *Oberto* 145.983.

**HEAT 2A** (1) *Graham Trucking* 151.194, 400, 639; (2) *ELAM Plus* 150.947, 300, 800; (3) *Oberto* 141.862, 225, 705; (4) *PayneWest Insurance* 132.877, 169, 199; *ACE Hardware* DSQ — DMZ violation, 0, 340. Fast lap (1) *ELAM Plus* 152.824. **HEAT 2B** (1) *Les Schwab/Red DOT* 144.763, 400, 619; (2) *Dalton Industries* 142.634, 300, 660; (3) *Peters & May* 137.615, 225, 350; (4) *Fasteners* 133.122, 169, 424; (5) *Graham Trucking II* 127.327, 127, 284; (6) *Miss CARSTAR* 124.308, 95, 320. Fast lap (2) *Les Schwab/Red DOT* 148.079.

**HEAT 3A** (1) *Dalton Industries* 142.899, 400, 1060; (2) *Fasteners* 136.371, 300, 724; (3) *Peters & May* 133.956, 225, 575; (4) *ACE Hardware* 123.656, 169, 509; *Graham Trucking* DNF — (penalized one lap for destroying exit buoy lap 4, turn 2), 0, 284; *Miss DiJulio* DSQ — DMZ violation, 0, 0. Fast lap (2) *Dalton Industries* 145.907. **HEAT 3B** (1) *Ellstrom ELAM Plus* 148.129 (Level II penalty for veering prior to the start, 50 point deduction and \$250 fine), 350, 1150; (2) *Oberto* 145.225, 300, 1005; (3) *Les Schwab/Red DOT* 130.191, 225, 844; (4) *PayneWest Insurance* 128.664, 169, 368; (5) *Miss CARSTAR* 123.453, 127, 447; (6) *Graham Trucking* 115.090 (penalized one lap for jumping the gun), 95, 734. Fast lap (2) *ELAM Plus* 148.129.

**HEAT 4A** (1) *Oberto* 144.999, 400, 1405; (2) *Dalton Industries* 144.148, 300, 1360; (3) *Fasteners* 137.092, 225, 949; (4) *Miss DiJulio* 122.054, 169, 169; (5) *Graham Trucking II* 104.259 (penalized one lap for going under 80 mph), 127, 411. Fast lap (1) *Oberto* 147.323. **HEAT 4B** (1) *Graham Trucking* 145.018, 400, 1134; (2) *Les Schwab/Red DOT* 135.705, 300, 1144; (3) *PayneWest Insurance* 134.011, 225, 593; (4) *ELAM Plus* 112.955 (penalized one lap for going under 80 mph), 112.955, 169, 1319; (5) *Peters & May* 98.707 (penalized one lap for jumping the gun), 127, 702. Fast lap (1) *ELAM Plus* 153.029.

**FINAL** (1) *Oberto* 145.756, 400, 1805; (2) *Graham Trucking* 145.088, 300, 1434; (3) *Dalton Industries* 135.122, 225, 1585; (4) *Fasteners* 132.970, 169, 1118; (5) *Les Schwab/Red DOT* 130.754, 127, 1271; (6) *Peters & May* 117.464, 95, 797; *ELAM Plus* DSQ — DMZ violation, 0, 1319. Fast lap (1) *Graham Trucking* 146.864.

COMPILED BY ALLEN STILES

# Vintage Thunder at Tri-Cities

The Hydroplane & Raceboat Museum brought four vintage hydroplanes to Tri-Cities this year to the fans delight. It's good to see the old boats run to let us remember the thunder we heard roar many years ago. On hand were the U-40 *Miss Bardahl* (3), U-60 *Miss Thriftway* (2) replica, U-1 *Miss Budweiser* (12), and the U-1 *Atlas Van Lines* (9). At bottom the boats racing on the Columbia River. ~ Karl Pearson photos



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## Book Review: *Doug Ford's* **The “Wizards” of Speed on Water**

Many Raceboat designers have created fast racing boats, but only a few achieved milestone advancements in the technological state-of –the art.

Three generations of the Jones family, Ted, Ron, and Ron Jr. have done just that.

**Author: Doug Ford, Copyright 2015 by Doug Ford**

**ISBN 10: 0984758941**

**ISBN 13: 978-0-9847589-4-4**

**Published by Doug Ford Engineering, LLC**

**Price: \$29.95, Available at the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum**

*The “Wizards” of Speed on Water* is author Doug Ford’s 5<sup>th</sup> book on boat racing. Other titles include *What Were They Thinking*, *The Risk Takers*, *Record Breakers*, *Fatal Pursuit*, and *Unstoppable*.

This book covers the various design innovations we have seen and enjoyed through the years. The first two chapters deal with the runabout and single step hulls.

In chapter three we meet Ted Jones and some of his early designs while working at Boeing. Then in Chapter four he describes the chance meeting between Ted and Stanley Sayres. The boat formerly named *Tops III* became *Slo-mo-Shun II*. Then Ted’s early collaborations with Anchor Jensen and the building of *Slo-mo-Shun III*, a state-of-the-art 225 class limited craft. There are good photos of *Slo-mo II* and *III*.

*Slo-mo-Shun IV* comes to us in chapter five. Photos and text of early tests without, then with tailfin are shown. Then in the next chapter Doug writes about the first mile trial and going for that record. Then *Slo-mo-Shun V* comes along with its first win in the 1951 gold Cup in Seattle. As Ted Jones design history is recapped; enter Ron Jones and his marvelous creations and the emergence of his cabover boats.

The 1966 *Miss Bardahl* is introduced, and then wrecked taking the life of Ron Musson, and a low point in Ron’s career. But his designs moved ahead with the culmination of the Griffon *Miss Budweiser* boats and the second, becoming the “Juggernaut”. And maybe his biggest contribution; the introduction of the F-16 canopy.

Later in the book, in chapter 27, Ron Jones Jr. and his creations are discussed, beginning with *Circus Circus*. Theories and accomplishments of the Jones family are discussed toward the end.

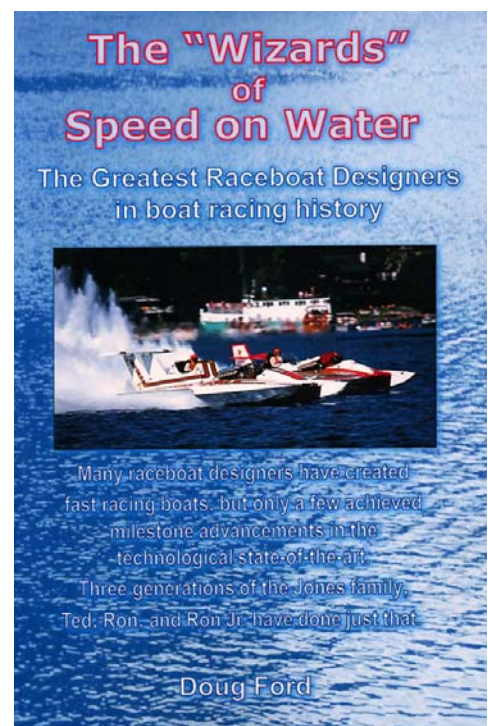
At the end of this volume, Doug has a chapter on who really designed the *Slo-mo-Shuns*. This is the definitive answer!

Appendix B is a glossary of terms a must for the hydroplane novice.

There is something for everyone in this book. Buy it as a gift or just to add to your hydro library. It could be Doug Ford’s best book to date on the sport of Unlimited Hydroplane racing.

**231 pages, 184 b&w and color photos.**

**Review by Kirk Pagel, Special Projects Editor for the Unlimited NewsJournal**





**HydroFile**  
**Lon Erickson**

We have a few teams showing off their salt waterscoop installations in preparation for Mission Bay San Diego. ~ Tyler Hanson facebook page photo



Below left is the U-11 *Peters & May* in their shop. ~ U-11 facebook page photo; At right, the new *Dalton Industries* on their trailer in the shop back east. U-27 facebook page photo



The tentative roster, as of this week, for 2015 Bayfair looks like this:

- U-1 *Oberto*, Jimmy Shane
- U-3 *Miss HomeStreet Bank*, Jimmy King
- U-5 *Graham Trucking*, J. Michael Kelly
- U-7 *Graham Trucking II*, Jesse Robertson
- U-9 811 Call before you dig/*Les Schwab/Red Dot*, Scott Liddycoat
- U-11 *Peters & May*, Tom Thompson
- U-12 Red Roof Inn presents *Miss DiJulio*, Patrick Sankuer, Jr.
- U-18 *Bucket List Racing*, Kelly Stocklin
- U-21 *All Access Rentals*, Brian Perkins
- U-27 *Dalton Industries*, Cal Phipps
- U-100 *CARSTAR Auto Body Repair Experts*, Kevin Eacret

\* The two boat teams obviously missing are the U-22 Webster Racing and the Ellstrom's U-96 *ELAM Plus*

**U-3:** The *Homestreet Bank* sponsorship continues heading into San Diego for Ed Cooper and the Go3 Racing team. Here is the latest from the Go3 shop in Indiana. ~ Mike Fetcher photo



**[HomeStreet] Bank®**

**U-9:** 811 Call before you dig signs on for Bayfair with Jones Racing. 811 call before you dig/Les Schwab/Red Dot. ~ U-9 facebook page photo

**U-12:** Centurion Racing adds Red Roof Inns and Suites for Bayfair . Red Roof Inns presents U-12 *Miss DiJulio*.



**U-18:** Kelly Stocklin reports they discovered problems on the dyno, with their primary T-53 engine which led to some disappointing results so far in 2015. They headed to Whispering Turbines and are now set up with a second T-53 turbine for San Diego. ~ U-18 facebook page photo

**U-21:** Go Fast Turn Left Racing will have All Access Rentals as a sponsor for San Diego. This is the same group that was the primary team sponsor on this hull back in 2007 & 2010 when Brian Perkins stepped in as driver.



Karl Pearson photo

After the accident in Detroit where the skidfin, hardware, and mounting was torn from *ELAM Plus*, Ellstrom Racing has been busy working on recovery of the hardware from the bottom of the Detroit River. Divers have located and recovered the missing parts; they are in transit to Seattle. Tuesday Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>, With regard to San Diego; Erick Ellstrom says, “We are certainly running short of time. We still don’t have the skid fin and brackets back from Detroit. They are on a truck somewhere and we don’t know what they look like. Hopefully we will see them soon and we can decide if we want to try and make it.”



Chris Denslow photo

**U-22:** Webster Racing has made the decision to not run in San Diego due to gearbox issues that they have not been able to solve.



Karl Pearson photo



Alain Verreasult facebook page



# GRAHAM TRUCKING WINS THIRD STRAIGHT SEAFAIR TROPHY

by Ben Keller



Above, the victorious Graham Trucking team all on the winning boat posing with the 2015 Seattle Seafair Trophy. ~ Chris Denslow photo

An exciting if controversial finish to the 2015 Albert Lee Cup at Seafair marked a day of intense side-by-side competition under a high overcast that burned off with resulting 88 degree temperature and beautiful weather. A larger crowd than in recent memory enjoyed Boats, Blues, and Bikinis on the shores of Lake Washington. It marked the third straight race win in Seattle for the *Graham Trucking* – Ted Porter’s T6 roaring combo.

One of the best rule changes in years is the new 80 mph rule. Each boat has been fit with a gps unit and strobe to monitor boat speed. If speed drops below 80 mph the first violation is a warning. The second infraction results in a one minute penalty. Gone are the “park-and-start” or “trawling-and-crawling” starts of the recent past

It is significant that every unlimited finished every heat on both days!

## Vintage

Two round-nosed open cockpit vintage unlimiteds, immaculately prepared by the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum in Kent, made fan-pleasing nostalgic runs. The 1975 *Oh Boy! Oberto* and 1957 *Miss Wahoo* (replica) both powered by Allison 1710 V-12 engines ran Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Art Oberto, 88, got his first-ever ride in an unlimited on Friday, timely since it has been announced



Karl Pearson photos



Above left is Art Oberto and David Williams in the Hydroplane & Raceboat Museum's U-8 *Oh Boy!* *Oberto*. At right is the U-77 *Miss Wahoo* who ran on Lake Washington with the U-8 on Friday.

that Oberto corporate has decided to end its sponsorship after the 2015 season and 40 years. See page 22 for photos of Art Oberto's ride.

### Grand Prix West

**Final Heat:** GP-12 *Fox Plumbing* (Greg Hopp), GP-15 *Overturf VW-Audi-Kia* (Jerry Hopp), GP-19 D's *Wicked Cider/Sahara Pizza* (David Warren), GP-55 *Whispering Turbines/Cabo Marine* (Dustin Echols), GP-3 *The Hard Charger* (Chris Grant). 55 started in lane 1, the 12 had lane 2, the 15 lane 3. All were side-by-side for 2 laps but Greg Hopp pulled away for the win. Order: 12, 15, 55, 19 DNS, 3 DNF. The Hopps followed with their signature parade lap with canopies open. ~ Below, Lon Erickson photos



Above left is the winning Greg Hopp in the GP-12 *Fox Plumbing*. At right is Dad Jerry Hopp in the second place GP-15 *Overturf VW/Audi/Kia*. Notice the background; what are the odds. Jerry and son Greg Hopp always seem to go head-to-head and finish first and second. At right the Hopps in there traditional finishing run with canopies open. ~ Ben Keller photo



## FI Tunnel

The 12-lap final heat was won by Tim Seebold in *NGK Sparkplugs*, coming back from a rollover and broken fuel line on Saturday to outrun 2nd place Terry Rinker in *AMSOIL/Graham Trucking* and 3rd place Chris Fairchild. Seebold clinches the Formula One series championship. ~ Karl Pearson photos



Above the two top qualifiers, at left Jean Theoret in the U-96 *ELAM Plus*. On right Jimmy Shane in the U-1 *Oberto*. ~ Chris Denslow photos

## Qualifying

Jean Theoret and U-96 *ELAM Plus* was top qualifier at 150.583. The U-1 *Oberto*, driven by Jimmy Shane, was next at 148.880. The Jones' U-9 *Les Schwab/RedDOT* followed at 147.643 and Cal Phipps, driving the U-27 *Dalton Industries* was 4<sup>th</sup> fastest qualifier at 146.890. Allison-powered U-3 *Miss Homestreet Bank* and Jimmy King were next at 146.056. Team Porter claimed the next two places with J. Michael Kelly in U-5 *Graham Trucking* at 145.825 and Jesse Robertson in the U-7 *Graham Trucking II* at 143.486. Checking in with a speed of 142.011 was Brian Perkins in the U-21 *Miss Albert Lee Appliance*, followed by Tom Thompson driving the U-11 *Miss Peters & May* at a speed of 137.116. Kevin Eacret drove the U-100 *Miss CARSTAR* to 133.856, with U-22 *Roostertail* piloted by Mike Webster at 120.568. Jay Leckrone's U-12 *Miss DiJulio* managed a speed of 116.550 with Patrick Sankuer driving. Although in the pits, and Kelly Stocklin's U-18 *Snuskitush Enterprises*, powered by a Lycoming T-53 turbine, failed to qualify.

## Heat 1A

Officials decided on three four-boat sections for heat one on Saturday. *Oberto* nailed the start and led into turn 1 from lane 3. The U-27 had lane 2, and the U-11 lane 1. Cal Phipps and *Dalton Industries*

pressured *Oberto* throughout, but Jimmy Shane had superior boat speed. Tom Thompson out-dueled rookie Kevin Eacret. "We made some really big changes over the last two days during testing and qualifying and we're really happy with the boat setup right now" stated *Oberto* driver Shane. Order of finish: 1, 27, 11, 100. Below, the race for the start. The U-7 is out of sight ~ Lon Erickson photo



### Heat 1B

The Cooper crew replaced the U-3's turbocharger and water pump prior to the heat. *Les Schwab/RedDOT* led the field across the line from lane 3 but out of the first turn *Miss Homestreet Bank* led up the backstretch along with the U-9 in lane 3, the U-7 *Graham Trucking II* in lane 2 and the U-21 outside. By end of lap 2 Jimmy King had a commanding full roostertail lead. Order of finish: 3, 9, 7, and 21, who suffered a 1 minute penalty-jumped the gun. The piston-packer made a strong statement



Above the U-3, U-7, and U-9. Missing is the U-21 behind the roostertails. ~ Karl Pearson photo

### Heat 1C

Jean Theoret and *ELAM Plus* were first across the starting line from lane 2 with the U-5 *Graham Trucking* in 1 right behind. The U-22 and U-12 trailed. Theoret led in the chutes but Kelly gained ground in the corners. Kelly took over the lead in south turn of lap 2 but Theoret out-accelerated J. Michael Kelly up the backstretch in an exciting duel. In lap 3 Kelly, having the inside, nipped Theoret at the finish. Order of finish: U-5, U-96, U-22, who incurred a fuel flow violation and \$100 penalty, and the U-12.



Above, the *Formula* inside with *Les Schwab/RedDOT*, and *Boitano Homes* outside. *Miss DiJulio* is just rounding the corner behind the roostertails. ~ Karl Pearson photo

## Heat 2A

Back to two sections of six boats each for heats two and three. During the score up, Jean Theoret in *ELAM Plus* destroyed a buoy and also violated the DMZ, thereby receiving a one lap penalty. *ELAM Plus* in lane 1 and *Oberto* in lane 2 lead the way into the first turn. The U-1 led at end of lap 1. Unable to maintain control in lane 1, Theoret hit two more buoys during the heat. *Oberto*, with superior boat speed, stretched it out to win the heat easily. The U-7 *Graham Trucking II* finished second, followed by the U-21, U-11, U-100, and U-96, who won a one lap penalty for dislodging buoys. Not cornering as well as *Graham Trucking II* or *Oberto*, *ELAM Plus* had now been beaten twice by being squeezed in lane 1 by boats in lane 2, in spite of superior chute speed.



Above, *ELAM Plus* on the inside lane with the *Oberto*, *Peters & May*, *Carstar*, and *Graham Trucking II* running outside all heading for the starting line for 2A. ~ Karl Pearson photo

## Heat 2B

Jimmy King crossed the line in lane 1 but Cal Phipps was first up the backstretch in lane 2 after making a perfect start. The U-3, U-9, and U-5 duelled for second with *Les Schwab/RedDOT* and *Graham Trucking* in lanes 3 and 4 respectively. *Miss Homestreet Bank* and *Miss DiJulio* trailed. The U-3 was penalized for dropping under the 80 mph limit during the score up. Order of finish: U-27, U-5, U-9, U-22, U-12, and U-3 suffering a one minute penalty for going under 80 mph.

### Heat 3A

Six boats answered the call for heat 3A. The U-9 on the inside and U-1 in lane 2 led the field to the first turn. Jesse Robertson in lane 3 was a close third. *Oberto* pulled *Les Schwab/RedDOT* up the back chute and into the corner, but Liddycoat hangs in gamely from lane 1. *Miss Homestreet Bank* is fourth followed *Les Schwab/RedDOT* and *Miss DiJulio*. *Graham Trucking II* gains on the U-9 in lap 3 but can't manage to overtake him from the outside. *Oberto* wins and now has a perfect day heading into the final. Afterward, *Les Schwab/RedDOT* driver Scott Liddycoat stated, "The boats are really even so the inside lane will be a big deal for the final". Order of finish: U-1, U-9, U-7, U-3, U-11, and U-12 who incurred a one minute penalty for running under 80 mph. ~ Chris Denslow photo



### Heat 3B

With their backs against the wall and needing a win to ensure a place in the final, *ELAM Plus* started in lane 3 and led the way into the first turn. J Michael Kelly was in lane 2 was second up the backstretch. By the end of lap 1 Cal Phipps moved to the outside from lane 1, having no place to go entering the north turn. By the end of lap 2 Theoret had a roostertail-plus lead and went on to win convincingly. In his best heat of the day, Brian Perkins finished third. J. Michael Kelly, noticing the damaged rear wing on *Graham Trucking*, expressed frustration with Jean Theoret's driving, but the officials called no penalty. Order of finish: U-96, U-5, U-21,U-100, U-22, and U-27 who suffered a one lap penalty for jumping the gun.



Above, *Boitano Homes* on the outside with *ELAM Plus* next and *Graham Trucking* leading from the inside lane in 3B. ~ Karl Pearson photo



Above, Jessie Robertson in *Graham Trucking II* leads teammate J. Michael Kelly in *Graham Trucking* and *Oberto* to the line. Behind them in the roostertail, *Homestreet Bank* is rounding the turn. ~ Karl Pearson photo



Above left, *Oberto* and *Graham Trucking* in the air battling for the lead. Above right *Graham Trucking* is coming out of the turn minus the rear wing. At right *Oberto* bumps into *Graham Trucking* heading for the finish line. Above photos are Karl Pearson's. At right a photo from Lon Erickson.

### **Final Heat**

There was a six-boat front line (U-1, U-5, U-9, U-27, U-7, and U-96), with the U-3 as the trailer comprised the final heat field for the Albert Lee Cup at Seafair. Although in lane 1, the Jessie Robertson jumped the gun by a wide margin, but everyone else was legal with Shane and the *Oberto* just about perfectly timed from lane 4. J. Michael Kelly had lane 3 and the *Les Schwab/RedDOT* lane 2. Through the north turn, the U-5, U-1, and U-9 were very close. Robertson stayed on the buoy line and became a factor even with the one-lap penalty, by forcing the others farther out. In lap 2 Theoret overhauled Liddycoat from the outside to take over third place. Kelly and Shane hooked up in a tremendous duel for first and second place. In lap 4 the newly-replaced wing on *Graham Trucking* broke off, changing the handling of the boat and allowing Jimmy Shane to get closer. Going into the south turn of the final lap the *Oberto* and *Graham*



*Trucking* collided. Depending on interpretation of the incident, either *Oberto* came in or *Graham Trucking* bore out, but the intense deck-to-deck action continued. On the water *Oberto* won by about two boat lengths. However, the officials ruled against *Oberto*, assessing a one-minute penalty and awarding the heat and race win to *Graham Trucking*. Order of finish: U-5 *Formula*, U-96 *ELAM Plus*, U-9 *Les Schwab/Red DOT*, U-3 *Homestreet Bank*, U-27 *Dalton Industries*, U-1 *Oberto*, who was awarded a one minute penalty for encroachment, and the U-7 *Graham Trucking II*, who got a one lap penalty for jumping the gun. "They said I pinched him a little too tight I didn't agree with it I felt it was just good, tight racing," said Jimmy Shane after the race.



[J. Michael Kelly had the right-of-way because he had the inside lane and controlled the turning radius. - Ed]

Going into Detroit, For High Points, *Oberto* leads the U-5 *Graham Trucking* 3180 points to 2874 points. Photo at right is from Chris Denslow



Above photos are the damage *Graham Trucking* and *Oberto* suffered in the bump on the last lap of the final. At left a photo from Lon Erickson. At right a photo from Ben Keller. Below, *Graham Trucking* in pits without rear wing. At right, *Miss Homestreet Bank* also suffered a little damage. ~ Lon Erickson photos



## Note:

*Graham Trucking II* driver Jesse Robertson started his racing career driving R/C boats in 2006, finishing third in season high points from a field of 37 drivers and winning five races in ERCU with the 1960 *Miss Thriftway*. Several other unlimited team members have R/C connections including Jeff and Mike Campbell, Gary Hansen, referee Doug Brow, and Nelson Holmberg, among others,

David Warren did double duty, driving the U-12 *Miss DiJulio* in H1 and the GP-19 *D's Wicked Cider/Sahara Pizza* in GPW. ~ Michael Prophet photo



## STAT BOX

### ALBERT LEE APPLIANCE SEAFAIR CUP

Seattle, Washington, August 1-2, 2015

2-mile course on Lake Washington

**QUALIFICATION** (1) U-96 *ELAM Plus*, Jean Theoret, 150.583, 100 points; (2) U-1 *Oberto*, Jimmy Shane, 148.880, 80; (3) U-9 *Les Schwab/RedDOT*, Scott Liddycoat, 147.643, 70; (4) U-27 *Dalton Industries* Cal Phipps, 146.890; 60; (5) U-3 *Miss Homestreet Bank* 146.056, 50; (6) U-5 *Graham Trucking*, J. Michael Kelly, 145.825; (7) U-7 *Graham Trucking II*, Jesse Robertson, 143.466, 30; (8) U-21 *Albert Lee Appliance* 142.011, 30; (9) U-11 *Peters & May* 137.116, 30; (10) U-100 *CARSTAR* 133.856, 30; U-22 *Boitano Homes*, Mike Webster, DNQ (used test speed to enter race), 0; U-12 *Miss DiJulio*, Patrick Sankuer, David Warren, DNQ — unable to attain qualifying speed, Chairman's Option; U-18 *Snuskitush*, Kelly Stocklin, DNQ —

**HEAT 1A** (1) *Oberto* 142.390, 400 points, 480 cumulative points; (2) *Dalton Industries* 140.668, 300, 360; (3) *Peters & May* 126.551, 225, 255; (4) *CARSTAR* 125.644, 169, 169. Fast lap (3) *Oberto* 145.000. **HEAT 1B** (1) *Miss Homestreet Bank* 138.309, 400, 450; (2) *Les Schwab/RedDOT* 134.362, 300, 370; (3) *Graham Trucking II* 130.734, 225, 255; (4) *Albert Lee Appliance* 94.183 (penalized one minute for jumping the gun), 169, 199. Fast lap (1) *Homestreet Bank* 140.370. **HEAT 1C** (1) *Graham Trucking* 142.435, 400, 440; (2) *ELAM Plus* 141.000, 300, 400; (3) *Boitano Homes* 120.758, 225, 225; (4) *Miss DiJulio* 114.383, 169, 169. Fast Lap (2) *Graham Trucking* 146.938.

**HEAT 2A** (1) *Oberto* 139.831, 400, 880; (2) *Graham Trucking II* 129.935, 300, 555; (3) *Albert Lee Appliance* 126.517, 225, 324; (4) U-11 *Peters & May* 125.224, 169, 424; (5) *CARSTAR* 113.408, 127, 296; (6) *ELAM Plus* 98.045 (penalized one lap for destroying a buoy), 95, 495. Fast lap (1) *Oberto* 142.979. **HEAT 2B** (1) *Dalton Industries* 136.548, 400, 760; (2) *Graham Trucking* 134.336, 300, 740; (3) *Les Schwab/RedDOT* 125.656, 225, 595; (4) *Boitano Homes* 115.451, 169, 394; (5) *Miss DiJulio* 113.139, 127, 296; (6) *Miss Homestreet Bank* 96.333 (penalized one minute for going under 80 mph), 95, 545. Fast lap (1) *Dalton Industries* 139.394.

**HEAT 3A** (1) *Oberto* 134.939, 400, 1280; (2) *Les Schwab/RedDOT* 132.778, 300, 895; (3) *Graham Trucking II* 131.441, 225, 780; (4) *Miss Home Street Bank* 129.997, 169, 724; (5) *Peters & May* 115.586, 127, 551; (6) *Miss DiJulio* 83.139 (penalized one lap for going under 80 mph), 95, 391. Fast lap (1) *Oberto* 138.642. **HEAT 3B** (1) *ELAM Plus* 139.198, 400, 895; (2) *Graham Trucking* 131.854, 300, 1040; (3) *Albert Lee Appliance* 127.672, 225, 549; (4) *CARSTAR* 119.075, 169, 465; (5) *Boitano Homes* 113.121, 127, 521; (6) *Dalton Industries* 91.044 (penalized one lap for jumping the gun), 95, 855. Fast lap (2) *ELAM Plus* 141.270.

**FINAL** (1) *Graham Trucking* 136.516, 400, 1140; (2) *ELAM Plus* 131.761, 300, 1195; (3) *Les Schwab/RedDOT* 122.215, 225, 1020; (4) *Miss Homestreet Bank* 122.415, 169, 893; (5) *Dalton Industries* 120.254, 127, 982; (6) *Oberto* 111.583 (Level III penalty one minute for encroaching on U-5, lap 5, turn 1), 111.583, 95, 1375; (7) *Graham Trucking II* 101.125 (penalized one lap for jumping the gun), 101.125,

COMPILED BY ALLEN STILES



# Art Oberto's Ride in the U-8 Oh Boy! Oberto

Art Oberto took his first ride in a hydroplane. The Hydroplane & Raceboat Museum's Dave Williams gave Art a ride in the U-8 *Oh Boy! Oberto* (former U-33 *Miss Lumberville*) Friday. Art said he would like to go as fast as his age, 88. Dave ran the boat to 130 mph. Art loved the ride. He left with a smile and came back with a smile. Below and at right are shots of Art Oberto's ride from Lon Erickson, except where noted.



Bill Osborne photo



Karl Pearson photos



Chris Denslow photo



**Around the Circuit  
with Chris Tracy**

## Tri-Cities Gold Cup & Seattle Seafair

There was a lot of excitement when the H1 Unlimited Series headed to Washington State. First up was the Gold Cup in Tri-Cities. The Tri-City (Kennewick, Pasco, Richland) Water Follies and their sponsor HAPO (Hanford Atomic Products Operations Community Credit Union) were excited, maybe even a little giddy, to be hosting the Gold Cup in conjunction with their 50th anniversary of unlimited racing at the Eastern Washington venue. The Tri-Cities, combined population of about 250,000, have been coined Hydro Town and they lived up to their nickname. To celebrate their 50th anniversary of racing, a historical exhibit was put together at the Hanford Reach Interpretive Center Museum that chronicled the 50 years of unlimited racing; it included photographs, videos and memorabilia. The Water Follies also sponsored a banquet a week before the race to commemorate the anniversary. KNDU, a NBC affiliate, covered the race on live TV. KONA radio covered the three day event live on radio.

I attended the annual party at the media coordinator's home and spoke with H1's Steve David. He stressed that his administration's goals included much more transparency and better financial accounting for the series. He indicated that he hoped to vacate his leadership role in the fall as he hoped H1 would transition to a new leader, as he has a full-time, successful, real estate business.

Saturday night before the HAPO Gold Cup was the annual ROTT (Royal Order of the Turbine) banquet and auction to support the HARM (Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum), held at the Country Gentleman's Restaurant in Kennewick. Two awards were presented. Chip Hanauer received the perpetual trophy for his accomplishments in unlimited hydroplane racing; Steve Montgomery presented the trophy. The Potted Palm, the award given to a fan that has supported unlimited hydroplane racing, was presented to Allen Stiles. Stiles is the *Unlimited NewsJournal's* statistician and a race reporter. Craig Fjarlie presented the award to Stiles.

In Seattle, the annual Seafair press conference was held at a Seattle Sounders soccer team building in Pioneer Square. Unlimited race sponsor, Albert Lee III, co-owner of Albert Lee Appliances spoke and thanked Seafair's Beth Knox for her leadership and direction over the past many years. Knox recently announced that she will retire from Seafair the end of August; a national search is ongoing to hire a replacement for Knox. Oberto's driver, Jimmy Shane, spoke for the unlimited drivers and was passionate and impressive. Internally, the Albert Lee Appliance Cup race had some relatively late change-ups. Three veteran volunteer race leaders, including one from Tri-Cities, were called in with about 6 weeks' notice to run the race logistics and they easily met the challenge. Items like authorizing hot pit passes for media were not handled well by Seafair; Madison, Tri-Cities, Detroit, and San Diego appear to understand the process and procedures dealing with media, but not Seattle. *UNJ* contacts report the pit reporter for the live radio coverage of the Albert Lee Appliance Cup had some problems getting a hot pit credential and getting hot pit credentials for some *UNJ* staff required H1 intervention. Seafair needs to address this as it has been a weakness for two years in a row. KIRO TV provided wire to wire coverage of the race on Sunday.

Thursday night before the Albert Lee Appliance Cup was the annual Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum's gala dinner and fundraiser, held at the Meydenbauer Convention Center in Bellevue, Wash. This year the late "Smiling" George Henley was honored. Henley, the former *Pay 'n Pak* driver, passed away in 2009. Most of Henley's immediate family attended the banquet. Open bar, great silent auction items and an impressive live auction were highlights for about 300 people that attended.

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## NEXT MONTH: Detroit Race Report

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Letters may be edited for clarity and space.

**Next Meeting of  
Unlimiteds Unanimous  
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Redmond, 98052**

**-everyone welcome!-  
Sunday, September 13th  
UNJ 2 pm -- UU 2:30 pm**

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