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UNLIMITED NEWSJOURNAL

A Chronicle of Speed

Andrew Tate takes two.

The swing through the Pacific Northwest by the H1 Unlimited Racing Series proved marvelous for the U-9 *Les Schwab Tires*, and horrible for the defending national champion U-1 *Miss HomeStreet* racing team.

Andrew Tate in the *Les Schwab Tires* came away from the races in the Tri-Cities and Seattle with two race victories, accomplished in very different ways, but netting him a sizeable lead in the national points race.

For Jimmy Shane in the *Miss HomeStreet*, there was much less to brag about. Though the team did finally introduce their brand-new and very impressive boat, the two races were marred by penalties and disqualifications.

The HAPO Columbia Cup was especially hard on the *HomeStreet* team. The boat was disqualified from Heat 2B with a flagrant fuel violation, disqualified again from Heat 4A with a flagrant N2 violation, and disqualified a third time from the final heat for encroaching on the U-11 before the start. Although it won its two other heats and was the fastest qualifier, it left



Chris Denslow

Andrew Tate flies to victory at the HAPO Columbia Cup in the Tri-Cities.

the Tri-Cities with only 600 points. Meanwhile, the U-9 had collected 2,080 points.

Things seemed much better when they ran the new *HomeStreet* boat in Seattle. Shane was again the fastest qualifier and won each of his preliminary heats. But, in preparing to start the final, he dropped below 80 mph and was assessed a one-minute penalty. Though Shane crossed the finish line first, the penalty gave Tate another victory.

The H1 Unlimited fleet left

Seattle with the *Les Schwab Tires* having accumulated a total of 6,785 points, giving it a significant 1,998-point lead over the *Miss HomeStreet* with only two races remaining. Third in the standings was the U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* and in fourth place was the U-21 *Darrell Strong presents Miss PayneWest Insurance*.

Inside, you'll find much more detail in the race reports for both Pacific Northwest events. ❖

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Tate wins Columbia Cup.

Andrew Tate cruises to an easy win in the final heat while Jimmy Shane is disqualified three different times.

BY DAN LOPEZ

The nine-boat field at this year's HAPO Columbia Cup, although small by historic standards, may very well be the largest of the 2018 season. All three days were typical Tri Cities hot with high temperatures around the century mark. Additionally, there was little or no wind.

The single qualifying session on Friday saw seven of the nine entries qualify. The fastest was the U-1 *Miss HomeStreet*, which recorded a speed of 163.471 mph, just short of the course record of 165.579 mph seat by Dave Villwock in the *Spirit of Qatar* in 2010. The crew of the CARSTAR powers *Miss Rock* was still working on getting their boat ready



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From the left, the U-21, U-11, and U-1 compete in Friday's annual Dash For Cash event on the Columbia River.

and the Griggs *Miss Ace Hardware's* crew was working to clean the engine compartment and replace the engine that had blown in the morning test session.

Along with the modern unlimited, five vintage boats were on hand for the show: the replica *Wahoo*, replica 1955 *Miss Thriftway*, the 1958-61 and 1962-65 *Miss Bardahls*, and *Blue Chip*. Unfortunately, *Wahoo* blew an oil filter on Friday and had to be towed back to hydro museum in Kent. In addition to running with the other vintage hulls each day, Dixon Smith brought his *Miss Bardahl* out for a several lap "race" against the Lucas Oil Pitts biplane piloted by Michael Wiskus.

During the afternoon test period, both U-99.9 *Miss Rock* and the U-3 *Miss Ace Hardware* were able to complete laps in the mid 140s. The *HomeStreet* team had hoped to launch their new boat during the session, but couldn't get it ready by



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The brand-new *Miss HomeStreet* was christened and made its debut at the Tri-Cities event.

the time the course closed. They did get the boat christened, however.

Friday afternoon, the Dash for Cash event was held for the top four boats in high points. It was a great show for the fans. *HomeStreet* started inside with U-9 *Les Schwab Tires* in lane two, the U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* in three, and the U-21 *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance* on the outside. All four ran side by side, trading the lead several times until the final turn, when *HomeStreet* pulled away for the victory over *Les Schwab*, *J&D's*, and *PayneWest*, in that order.

Saturday

The *HomeStreet* team launched their new boat on Saturday morning. Largely unnoticed, this came thirty years to the day after the *Miss Madison* team had launched its new Ron Jones hull.

The race format was the Gold Cup plan, with four preliminary sections of four laps each and a five-lap final. In Heat 1A, Brian Perkins in *PayneWest Insurance* grabbed lane one with Andrew Tate in *Les Schwab Tires* in lane two, then Cal Phipps in the *Oberto*. The U-12 *Graham Trucking*, with J. Michael Kelly driving, died about a lap and a half before the start. Kelly got it restarted, caught the field with the compressor stalling and crossed the line only to have the engine let go before turn one.

Dustin Echols in the *Bucket List Racing* led to the first turn, but naturally came out last. Tate took the lead out of the first turn followed by *Oberto* and *PayneWest*. Perkins used the inside to keep the pressure on the leaders, taking second from *Oberto* entering turn two of lap two. Tate went on to victory over Perkins, with Phipps third, and Echols finished fourth over a lap behind. Kelly got the DNF.



Lon Erickson



Chris Denslow



Lon Erickson

[Top] The Allison-powered U-3 *Griggs Miss Ace Hardware* made its first appearance of the 2018 season. [Middle] The crew of the U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* guides one of the boat's engines as it is being lifted by a crane. [Above] The start of Heat 1A. The U-1918 *Oberto* is closest to the camera, with the U-9 *Les Schwab Tires* and the U-21 *Darrell Strong presents Miss PayneWest Insurance* behind.

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In Heat 1B, Jimmy King in *Miss Ace Hardware* cut off Jimmy Shane in the *Miss HomeStreet* before the start, got a fine, and was docked 150 points. *HomeStreet* restarted, got lane one, took the lead at the start, and went on to the win. *J&D's* was second as the only other finisher. *Ace Hardware* blew an engine entering turn one and, with the penalty, ended up losing 150 points. *Miss Rock* missed the heat with electrical problems.

Three boats answered the starting gun for Heat 2A. *Oberto* in lane two took the lead at the start, *Graham Trucking* started inside, but couldn't stay with *Oberto*. Echols ran third, but scored a second-place finish after *Graham* was disqualified for a fuel-flow violation.

In Heat 2B, *J&D's* couldn't get on plane and returned to the pits. *Les Schwab* took lane one beside *HomeStreet*, with *PayneWest* on the outside. Shane grabbed the lead and never looked back. Despite being on the inside, Tate couldn't catch *HomeStreet*. Perkins followed the other two to a third place finish. Later it was announced that *HomeStreet* was disqualified for an N2 violation.

[Top] Jimmy Shane in the U-1 *Miss HomeStreet* rounds the turn ahead of the U-9 *Les Schwab Tires* during Heat 2B. [Middle] The start of Heat 3A with the J.Michael Kelly in the U-12 *Graham Trucking* on the inside lane, Jimmy King in the U-3 *Griggs Miss Ace Hardware* on the outside, and Tom Thompson in the U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* between them. [Above] The 1962-65 *Miss Bardahl* races the Lucas Oil Pitts biplane.

Sunday

On Sunday in Heat 3A, *Graham* had the inside at the start with *J&D's* beside it, then *Les Schwab*, *Ace Hardware* in lane four, and *Miss Rock* on the outside. King led to the first turn, but *Graham* came out in first, followed by *J&D's*, then *Les Schwab*, *Ace Hardware*, and *Miss Rock*. Tate took over the lead after one lap as Thompson fell back some. In the end, it was Tate, with Kelly close behind, Thompson narrowly held off King for third and Salmon finished in 5th, but got disqualified for a fuel violation.

In Heat 3B, Perkins had lane one, *HomeStreet* was in two, with *Oberto* in three. Echols, naturally, was on the outside. *HomeStreet* grabbed the lead at the start, Perkins kept the pressure on, but couldn't catch Shane. *Oberto* fell back to finish third and the reliable 440 got fourth.

Heat 4A saw *Ace Hardware* take the inside, next to *Graham Trucking*, then *Les Schwab Tires*, *Miss Rock*,



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[Top] Dustin Echols in the U-440 *Bucket List Racing* and Cal Phipps in the U-1918 *Oberto* race during Heat 3B. [Middle] Andrew Tate in the U-9 *Les Schwab Tires* passes Aaron Salmon in the U-99.9 *CARSTAR* powers *Miss Rock* during action in Heat 4A. [Above] Four boats leave the dock for the start of a heat.

and the 440 on the outside. King in *Ace Hardware* led across at the start, but had jumped the gun. Tate in *Les Schwab Tires* passed King out of the turn and led the rest of the way, Kelly in the *Graham* couldn't catch King, but with the penalty got second anyway. Then came *Miss Rock* and the 440.

In Heat 4B, *PayneWest* didn't start because of shaft problems. *Oberto* started in lane one, but *HomeStreet*, on the outside took over the lead at the start and led the whole way. *J&D's* ran second and *Oberto* fell back to finish third. Incredibly, *HomeStreet* incurred another N2 penalty and a second disqualification.

Before the final heat, Thompson made a beeline for lane one and looked like he had a lock on it. Somehow he lost it and ended up in lane three. Tate, meanwhile, waited at the dock a little later than usual to keep his opponents guessing where he was, which enabled him to claim lane two outside of Perkins. Shane was also looking for an inside lane and came up beside Tate, but moved in front of Thompson, dousing the latter's fire. This all happened on the backstretch before the start. Tate came out of turn one behind Shane, he passed the *Miss HomeStreet* before the first lap was over, and went on to the victory.

Shane crossed the finish line second, but was disqualified and lost 200 points for what had happened to the *J&D's* before the start. That gave *Oberto* an official second-place finish, while *Graham Trucking* had passed enough boats for third. *Payne West* hit a buoy in turn two and incurred a one-minute penalty, ending up in fourth place. *J&D's* restarted and passed 440 for fifth and the 440 held on for sixth place.

After the race, Shane apologized to the U-11 team. ❖

STATBOX

HAPO Columbia Cup

Tri-Cities, Washington; July 28-29, 2018
2.5-mile course on the Columbia River; 52.5 mile race

QUALIFYING (1) U-1 *Miss HomeStreet* (0706), Jimmy Shane, 163.431, 100 points; (2) U-9 *Les Schwab Tires*, Andrew Tate, 159.413, 80; (3) U-12 *Graham Trucking*, J. Michael Kelly, 156.260, 70; (4) U-1918 *Oberto*, Cal Phipps, 154.876, 60; (5) U-21 *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance*, Brian Perkins, 152.905, 50; (6) U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's*, Tom Thompson, 152.302, 40; (7) U-440 *Bucket List Racing*, Dustin Echols, 139.556, 30; U-1 *Miss HomeStreet* (1801), Jimmy Shane, DNQ – did not attempt, tested only, 0; U-3 *Griggs Miss Ace Hardware*, Jimmy King, DNQ – under 130.000, 0 (used test speed 145.834 to enter the race); U-99.9 *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock*, Aaron Salmon, DNQ – did not attempt, 0 (used test speed 144.374 to enter the race).

HEAT 1A (1) *Les Schwab Tires* 147.314, 400 points, 480 cumulative points; (2) *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance* 146.185, 300, 350; (3) *Oberto* 143.736, 225, 285; (4) *Bucket List Racing* 102.141, 169, 199; *Graham Trucking* DNF – blew engine, 0, 70. Fast lap (3) *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance* 148.880.

HEAT 1B (1) *Miss HomeStreet* 144.284, 400, 500; (2) *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* 142.616, 300, 340; *Griggs Miss Ace Hardware* DNF – blew engine (Level II penalty for encroachment on U-1 prior to the start, \$300 fine, 150 point deduction, -150, -150; *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock* DNS – starter relay failure, 0, 0. Fast lap (1) *Miss HomeStreet* 151.263.

HEAT 2A (1) *Oberto* 146.929, 400, 685; (2) *Bucket List Racing* 119.210, 300, 499; *Graham Trucking* DSQ – flagrant fuel violation, 0, 70; *Griggs Miss Ace Hardware* DNS – changing equipment, 0, 0; *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock* DNS – electrical relay, 0, 0. Fast lap (2) *Oberto Beef Jerky* 150.748.

HEAT 2B (1) *Les Schwab Tires* 152.856, 400, 880; (2) *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance* 138.674, 300, 650; *Miss HomeStreet* DSQ – flagrant N2 violation, 0, 500; *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* DNS – fuel control failure, 0, 340. Fast lap (2) *Les Schwab Tires* 155.504.

HEAT 3A (1) *Les Schwab Tires* 148.489, 400, 1280; (2) *Graham Trucking* 147.597, 300, 370; (3) *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* 142.063, 225, 565; (4) *Griggs Miss Ace Hardware* 140.497, 169, 19; *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock* DSQ – flagrant fuel violation, 0, 0. Fast lap (2) *Les Schwab Tires* 149.965.

HEAT 3B (1) *Miss HomeStreet* 146.361, 400, 900; (2) *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance* 144.157, 300, 950; (3) *Oberto* 138.225, 225, 910; (4) *Bucket List Racing* 121.751, 169, 668. Fast lap (1) *Miss HomeStreet* 148.576.

HEAT 4A (1) *Les Schwab Tires* 143.467, 400, 1680; (2) *Graham Trucking* 139.799, 300, 670; (3) *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock* 129.754, 225, 225; (4) *Bucket List Racing* 119.247, 169, 837; (5) *Griggs Miss Ace Hardware* 113.750 (penalized one minute for jumping the gun), 127, 146. Fast lap (1) *Les Schwab Tires* 148.421.

HEAT 4B (1) *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* 147.682, 400, 965; (2) *Oberto* 143.682, 300, 1210; *Miss HomeStreet* DSQ – Flagrant N2 Violation, 0, 900; *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance* DNS – propeller shaft problem, 0, 950. Fast lap (1) *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* 150.945.

FINAL (1) *Les Schwab Tires* 145.385, 400, 2080; (2) *Oberto* 137.610, 300, 1510; (3) *Graham Trucking* 128.455, 225, 895; (4) *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance* 116.775, 169, 1119; (5) *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* 116.230, 127, 1092; (6) *Bucket List Racing* 104.898, 95, 932; *Miss HomeStreet* DSQ – encroached on U-11 prior to the start, Level V penalty, 300 point deduction, \$500 fine, probation for two races), 0, 600. Fast lap (1) *Les Schwab Tires* 147.890.

COMPILED BY ALLEN STILES

Penalty helps Tate win Seattle.

A penalty in the final heat ruins an otherwise perfect weekend for Miss HomeStreet.

BY ANDY MUNTZ

A year ago, the fate of the 2017 national championship may have hinged on an incident that occurred just before the start of the final heat in Seattle. While scoring up for the start, Andrew Tate plowed into a buoy and sent it flying into the air. Although he would cross the finish line first, the resulting penalty not only gave Jimmy Shane the victory in the race, but also a lead in the national points race that couldn't be overcome.

The story for this year's Albert Lee Appliance Cup race on Lake Washington was almost exactly the same, but the roles were reversed. This year, it was Shane who received the penalty and Tate the recipient of the first-place trophy and a sizeable lead in national points.

Nine boats (along with four vintage unlimiteds, four grand prix boats, and a collection of Formula One tunnel boats) were gathered in the Stan Sayres Memorial Pits on Friday morning when the course opened for testing. Andrew Tate in the U-9 *Les Schwab Tires* was the first onto the course and the highlight during the testing period were five laps at over 150 mph by the brand-new *Miss HomeStreet* that had been launched the week before in the Tri-Cities. The team's older boat, by the way, the winner of



Andrew Tate celebrates with his team when he returns to the pits.

Chris Denstow

eight national titles in its 11 seasons of competition, would never leave its trailer all weekend.

Another incident of note occurred to the U-1918 *Oberto*, so numbered to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Oberto brand. The boat threw a propeller in the north turn that took a chunk out of its horizontal stabilizer on its way to the heavens.

Scheduling turned out to be a major controversy among the unlimited race teams, as things turned out. The organizers at Seafair seemed intent on granting the hydroplanes as little exposure as they could get away with, scheduling the action in such a way that the boats only appeared around the margins at the beginning and end of each day's activities.

And, so it was on Friday. After

the course was closed for testing shortly after noon, the attention turned to an air show over the race-course while the race teams waited for qualifying to begin five hours later.

When the course was finally reopened, the gray skies of the morning were replaced with sunshine and the qualifying attempts were made in the inverse order of the current national standings. The U-99.9 *CARSTAR* powers *Miss Rock* with Aaron Salmon at the helm started with a cloud of smoke and was the first to go round the buoys.

Taking into account an N2 violation by the U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool* presents *J&D's* and the disqualification of a second attempt by the U-12 *Graham Trucking* because of a fuel flow violation, the result ended with the new *Miss HomeStreet* being

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Lon Erickson



[Top] Among the boats from the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum at the Seattle race were the "Winged Wonder" Pay 'n Pak of 1973 and the "Blue Blaster" AtlasVan Lines, the boat driven by Bill Muncey. [Middle] The new Miss HomeStreet drifts to the dock after a run on Lake Washington. [Above] The U-9 crew work on their boat's engine.

the fastest qualifier with a mark of 153.846 mph. Les Schwab Tires was second at 150.630 mph.

Saturday

The unlimited hydros were allowed back onto Lake Washington for about an hour on Saturday morning, during which time J. Michael Kelly in the *Graham Trucking* took his boat around the course four times to an average speed exceeding 146 mph. The *Oberto* also got some attention when it again went dead in the water at nearly the same spot where it had lost its prop the day before. This time, it was purposeful. The engine had been damaged when the prop went away, was repaired during an all-night session the night before at the Bucket List Racing shop in Sammamish, and during the test run was shut down by driver Cal Phipps when he saw an oil pressure warning light suddenly go on.

Larry Oberto, who arranged to lend his family name to the Charley Wiggins race team and conceived of the boat's stunning paint job, said it was great to be back and that he had forgotten how much work it is to operate an unlimited. "Corporate [the Oberto marketing department] is happy with what we did last weekend and what we're doing this weekend," he said. "The fans are really engaged with the Oberto Beef Jerky social media."

With the testing period wrapped up at about 11 o'clock, the race teams again went into waiting mode for almost seven hours as the fans were instead entertained by the tunnel boats, the vintage boats, wakeboarding, a BMX stunt show, and demonstrations by the Blue Angels, an A-10 Warthog, a PBY Catalina, and various other airplanes doing loop-de-loops over the lake.



Andrew Tate pilots the U-9 *Les Schwab Tires* around the north turn on Lake Washington.

Chris Denslow

First Heats

Shortly after 5:30 p.m., under sunny skies and with temperatures in the upper 70s, the unlimited race teams emerged from hibernation to take part in real race action.

First up were the boats drawn into Heat 1A: the U-1 *Miss HomeStreet* with Jimmy Shane driving, the U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* with Tom Thompson in the cockpit, the U-99.9 *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock* driven by Aaron Salmon, and the U-1918 *Oberto* with Cal Phipps at the helm.

With about a minute and a half before the start, Shane was heading down the front stretch toward the south turn when Thompson cut across the course to follow behind. Coming harder on the outside of those two, however, was Phipps. As the three entered the turn and the one-minute mark passed, Thompson found himself caught between the other two and got hosed. The result left him stranded in the turn as the others made their run for the start.

With Shane on the inside, Phipps right beside him, and Salmon far to the outside, the three

made a good start across the line. Phipps was ahead going into the first turn, but Shane had the advantage on the inside, and powered ahead coming off the exit pin. The *Oberto*, meanwhile, went dead in the water momentarily, and by the time Phipps got it restarted, the result was established. Shane went on to an easy victory averaging 133.738 mph.

"It was a great race for the new *Miss HomeStreet* boat," Shane said afterward. "One for one with the new boat with heat wins, so to be

top qualifier and win the first heat with the new boat is a great start to Seafair weekend."

Heat 1B would feature the other four: the U-9 *Les Schwab Tires* with Andrew Tate driving, the U-12 *Graham Trucking* with J. Michael Kelly at the controls, the U-21 *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance* with Brian Perkins in the cockpit, and the U-440 *Bucket List Racing* driven by Dustin Echols.

Both Kelly and Perkins were determined to grab the inside two lanes throughout the score-up peri-



Chris Denslow

One of the features of the Seafair event was a race just off the pits of J Stock hydros piloted by youngsters, including some who are the sons and daughters of the unlimited competitors.



The unlimited drivers and some J Stock drivers meet the race fans during an autograph session.

od, with Kelly in lane one, but they also found themselves way ahead of the clock as they were heading down the backstretch with less than a minute to go. Tate was further behind, which gave him the benefit of being able to run faster than the other two as they rounded the north turn. Tate swung wide and hit the line at full speed while the other two were accelerating across the starting line.

Kelly had the advantage of the inside lane, though, so as the boats emerged from the first turn, he took the lead with Tate right beside him and slightly behind going down the backstretch. Perkins, meanwhile, was falling behind. By the end of the second lap, Kelly had increased his lead to a roostertail length and maintained that margin to the end.

"It's something that's a pretty good accomplishment for our team, *Graham Trucking*," Kelly said when he returned to the pits. "I mean, we had a rough week in the Tri-Cities and to go out and win our first heat of the weekend here at Seafair is special for me and especially for the crew. They've been putting a lot of hours into this thing to try to get it dialed in and it's definitely paying off."

Earlier in the day, during an exhibition event where youngsters

competed in J Stock outboards just off of the pit area. One of the winners was Kelly's son. "My son just turned nine and just started racing a couple weekends ago, then won his first heat today, that's pretty neat," Kelly said. "It was a pretty good day for *Graham Trucking*."

The day would soon turn sour, however. When race officials reviewed the data from the race during the night, they determined that Kelly had pushed the *Graham Trucking's* engine too hard. The rules say the boat will be assessed a penalty of the rpm on the N2 stage

of the turbine exceeds a certain percentage of its rating for a certain number of seconds. Kelly pushed it to 118 percent, so was disqualified, giving the heat victory to Andrew Tate and the *Les Schwab Tires*.

Second Heats

Sunday arrived with a light overcast of smoke high in the air that had drifted in from wildfires in Northern California, but with temperatures that would eventually climb into the lower 80s. The boats were allotted about an hour for testing at 8:30, then the fans lining the shore were treated to a parade of vintage boats from the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum. Featured this year were the *Miss Wahoo* of 1956, the *Miss Bardahl* of 1958, the "Winged Wonder" *Pay 'n Pak* of 1973, and the "Blue Blaster" *Atlas Van Lines* of 1977.

As they prepared for the final day of racing, the two drivers with the best chance of winning took stock of their chances. Jimmy Shane said he was getting comfortable with the new boat. The team had been testing several engines and the boat has performed very well. He



Five-time defending national champion Jimmy Shane discusses the ride of the new *Miss HomeStreet* with the team's crew chief, Cindy Shirley.

was especially impressed by how well it carries over rough water. As for Andrew Tate, he said the *Les Schwab Tires* was going about as fast as it could. “That’s about all the speed we’ve got,” he said. “We’re always about this speed in Seattle.”

The draw for the second round of preliminary heats put Tate, Thompson, Kelly, and Phipps in Heat 2A and Shane, Perkins, Salmon, and Echols in Heat 2B.

The first of those races featured one of the most unusual starts in memory. As he emerged from the north turn with about a minute and 50 seconds before the start, Kelly found himself well in front of the other boats and about 20 seconds too early for his run to the starting line. His only option, he figured, was to scrub time by steering to lane one, then veering to the right to lane six or seven, then back to one, and so on, zigzagging back and forth down the straightaway. By the time he reached the south turn, he was in lane one, the one-minute mark had arrived, and the others had caught up with him.

Running in lane three, Thompson led the field across the starting line and into the first turn, but Tate passed him on his left going through the turn and surged into the lead going down the backstretch with Kelly trying hard to keep pace to his inside. Phipps in the *Oberto*, meanwhile, was caught between the others in the north turn and fell behind. By the end of the second lap, Tate was a roostertail ahead of Kelly, who then fell into a side-by-side battle for second place with Thompson.

Tate won with an average speed of 140.597 mph and in the process, turned a lap of 143.959 mph the second time around, which turned out to be the fastest competition lap of the event. Kelly won the battle with Thompson for second. The U-11 team was initially assessed



Lon Erickson



Chris Denslow



Chris Denslow

[Top] Andrew Tate drives the U-9 *Les Schwab Tires* onto the racecourse. [Middle] Jimmy Shane in the U-1 *Miss HomeStreet* and, in back, Tom Thompson in the U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's*. [Above] Dustin Echols drives the U-440 *Bucket List Racing* (left) beside Aaron Salmon in the U-99.9 *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock*.

Chris Denslow



Chris Denslow



Lon Erickson



[Top] The Miss HomeStreet on the outside of Brian Perkins in the U-21 Darrell Strong presents Miss PayneWest Insurance. [Middle] The Reliable Diamond Tool Presents J&D's on the hip of J. Michael Kelly in U-12 Graham Trucking. [Above] The start of Heat 3B, from the left, Miss Rock, Oberto, and Miss PayneWest Insurance.

six penalties for fuel flow violations, but those penalties were later rescinded.

In Heat 2B, Perkins tried from the outset of the scoring-up period to claim the inside lane, camping there and not budging an inch. Salmon cut across the course to claim lane two, while Shane was content with the outside. He wanted to stay clean and away from the others, he would explain later, and wanted to see how the boat did compared with the others in an outside lane.

Shane nailed the start exactly, pulled away from the others coming out of the first turn, and was never challenged. Perkins finished second, Salmon was third, and Echols was fourth. "The boat is amazing," Shane said when it was over. "It was flying over the rough water really nice, performing just as we expected."

Third Heats

The Seafair event schedule called for a delay of about four and a half hours between the second and third round of preliminary heats. During that time, the *Bucket List Racing* team decided to call it a day. Earlier, driver Dustin Echols admitted that rough water is harder on his boat than for the others and that in order to compensate for that disadvantage, he tries to fly over the chop without falling into the holes. Although the water conditions on Lake Washington were calmer this year than usual, owner Kelly Stocklin still decided to pull his boat from the third preliminary.

"Seattle got me again," he explained. "I never do well in Seattle. It's an electrical issue. The engine will start, but it won't pick up speed."

Meanwhile, the anticipation of race fans focused on Heat 3A, which would feature the first

meeting of the event between the two front-runners: Shane and Tate.

Shane's strategy going in was to stay to the inside of Tate to see how he could compete. It worked like a charm. Thompson was intent on grabbing the inside lane so, with about a minute and a half before the start and as Shane stayed to the inside of Tate cruising down the front straightaway, Thompson cut across the course from the backside to the front and camped himself next to the buoy line. Kelly followed him across and was planning to slide into lane two just as Shane and Tate approached faster from behind him and to his right. But, in the process, he plowed through the roostertail of the U-11 and his engine sputtered to a stop.

In making their run to the start down the backstretch, Thompson was in lane one and Shane was still inside of Tate and grabbed lane two. Kelly got his boat restarted and was way behind the others as they neared the north turn, but being so far behind, he also had the fortune of speed on his side. As the other three rounded the turn before the start, Kelly came blasting around the turn on the outside. Shane was first across the starting line, but Kelly beat him to the first turn.

Having the inside lane was the greater advantage, though. Shane came out of the turn in the lead and pulled away down the backstretch. Thompson and Tate had one of the day's best battles as they contested for second place behind the *Miss HomeStreet* and Kelly was close enough behind them that he was never able to pull to the inside and claim a shorter route around the course. Thompson and Tate had a drag race to the finish line that was won by a whisker by the U-11 boat. Stuck in the outside lane, Kelly finished fourth.

In Heat 3B, while the others found themselves too early for the

STATBOX

Albert Lee Appliance Cup

Seattle, Washington; August 4-5, 2018
2-mile course on Lake Washington; 28 mile race

QUALIFYING (1) U-1 *Miss HomeStreet*, Jimmy Shane, 153.846, 100 points; (2) U-9 *Les Schwab Tires*, Andrew Tate, 150.630, 80; (3) U-11 *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's*, Tom Thompson 148.071, 70; (4) U-12 *Graham Trucking*, J. Michael Kelly, 146.890, 60; (5) U-21 *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance*, Brian Perkins, 143.200, 50; (6) U-1918 *Oberto*, Cal Phipps, 141.835, 40; (7) U-99.9 *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock*, Aaron Salmon, 137.116, 30; (8) *Bucket List Racing*, Dustin Echols, 130.673, 30.

HEAT 1A (1) *Miss HomeStreet* 133.378, 400, 500; (2) *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock* 128.585, 300, 330; (3) *Oberto* 120.202, 225, 265; (4) *Reliable Diamond Tool presents Miss J&D's* 112.032, 169, 239. Fast lap (1) *Miss HomeStreet* 137.077.

HEAT 1B (1) *Les Schwab Tires* 138.571, 400, 480; (2) *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance* 126.390, 300, 350; (3) *Bucket List Racing* 112.213, 225, 255; *Graham Trucking* DSQ – flagrant N2 violation, 0, 60. Fast lap (3) *Les Schwab Tires* 141.057.

HEAT 2A (1) *Les Schwab Tires* 140.597, 400, 880; (2) *Graham Trucking* 137.048, 300, 360; (3) *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* 135.732, 225, 464; (4) *Oberto* 129.729, 169, 434. Fast lap (2) *Les Schwab Tires* 143.959.

HEAT 2B (1) *Miss HomeStreet* 137.089, 400, 900; (2) *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance* 135.891, 300, 650; (3) *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock* 129.487, 225, 555; (4) *Bucket List Racing* 113.622, 169, 424. Fast lap (2) *Miss HomeStreet* 138.227

HEAT 3A (1) *Miss HomeStreet* 140.583, 400, 1300; (2) *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* 138.502, 300, 764; (3) *Les Schwab Tires* 138.156, 225, 1105; (4) *Graham Trucking* 127.625, 169, 529. Fast lap (1) *Miss HomeStreet* 143.646.

HEAT 3B (1) *Oberto* 137.035, 400, 834; (2) *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance* 131.591, 300, 950; (3) *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock* 127.191, 225, 780; *Bucket List Racing* DNS – electrical problem, 0, 424. Fast lap (2) *Oberto* 140.712

FINAL (Rerun) (1) *Les Schwab Tires* 136.073, 400, 1505; (2) *Graham Trucking* 132.343, 300, 829; (3) *Darrell Strong presents PayneWest Insurance* 131.927, 225, 1175; (4) *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock* 123.458, 169, 949; (5) *Miss HomeStreet* 111.362, 127, 1427; *Reliable Diamond Tool presents J&D's* DSQ – encroachment on U-1918, Class V penalty, 300 point deduction, \$500 fine, 0, 464; *Oberto* DSQ – flipped in first running stopping the heat, 0, 834. Fast lap (1) *Miss HomeStreet* 141.790.

COMPILED BY ALLEN STILES

start and had to go wide around the turn to scrub time before their run to the line, Perkins was well behind them and camped in lane one. Crossing the starting line together, it was Perkins on the inside, Phipps in lane two, and Salmon on the outside, but Phipps took the lead in the first turn, pinched Perkins tight into lane one through the turns, and pulled away to an easy victory.

Back at the dock, Phipps gave credit to Art Oberto, who had given him a lucky \$2 bill. "I put it in my pocket," he said as he waved the bill to reporters. "So as long as they allow me to wear the *Oberto* suit, this will be in my pocket." But, the bill's luck wouldn't last the day.

Final Heat

With the full schedule of Seafair events, the final heat wasn't scheduled to begin until 5:30 p.m. Delays along the way meant that it actually didn't get underway until after 5:45, less than 15 minutes before the live broadcast of the races was scheduled to end. But, thanks to understanding producers at KING5 Media Group and at KONG-TV, the show was allowed to continue. There was no way they could know, of course, what a commitment



Chris Denslow

The U-9 *Les Schwab Tires* and the U-1 *Miss HomeStreet* head out onto Lake Washington to compete in the event's final heat.

that would eventually become, for once it was finally over, twilight was beginning to descend on Lake Washington.

Eight boats had qualified for the Albert Lee Appliance Cup and seven of them could be accommodated in the final heat: six starters and a trailer boat. The odd boat out was the *Bucket List Racing*, which had dropped out of the event, and the trailer would be the *Graham Trucking*, which had managed to collect only 529 points because of its disqualification from Heat 1B. When it came time to head onto the course, however, the *Graham Trucking* remained floating near its

dock, having not attempted to start.

Phipps grabbed the inside lane at the start, with Thompson to his right, Shane in lane three, and Tate outside of him. Salmon, who tried to grab the inside lane, was left behind by the others and Perkins was on the far outside. Tate took the lead heading down the backstretch with Shane right beside him. About a roostertail length behind the leaders, Thompson was third in lane two and Phipps was close behind him hugging the buoy line.

As the four boats rounded the north turn, the *Oberto* ran into the skid fin blast from the U-11, shot high into the air, did a pirouette, and landed miraculously on the other side of the U-11's roostertail and right side up. Red flags were immediately waved and the boats came to a stop as Phipps popped open the hatch over his boat's cockpit, climbed onto the deck, and waved his hands over his head to indicate that he was okay.

The boats returned to the pits and were hoisted back onto their trailers to be refueled while the *Oberto* was towed from the course, showing some damage to its wing but otherwise looking remarkably intact considering the calamity it had been through. Damage to the inside of the hull would not be



H1 Unlimited

The *Oberto* just as it comes in contact with the skid-fin spray of the U-11 and is launched into the air. Note how little room remains ahead between the U-11 and the turn buoy.

known until the team returned to their shop in Alabama.

Meanwhile, race officials reviewed the video recordings to determine what had caused the accident. By the time a decision was made, all of the boats were already back in the water, the race teams were anxious to get going, and dusk was approaching.

Shortly after 7 o'clock, the U-11 was hoisted back onto its trailer having been disqualified, assessed a \$500 fine, and penalized 300 points for encroaching on the *Oberto*. The five remaining—the *Miss HomeStreet*, the *Les Schwab Tires*, the *Graham Trucking*, the *PayneWest Insurance*, and the *CARSTAR powers Miss Rock*—then made their way back onto the racecourse once the five-minute warning was given.

In maneuvering for the start, Kelly crossed the course twice, front to back and then from back to front, in a valiant attempt to grab the inside lane, but he ended up too far ahead of the others, had to cross again to the front stretch in order to scrub time, then fell dead in the water near the entrance to the south turn. Meanwhile, in an effort to also grab the inside, Shane dropped below 80 mph and was warned by officials to pick up his speed. He managed to get the coveted position, however, while Tate was beside him in lane two and Perkins was in lane three. Kelly got his boat restarted and was on the outside.

As he had done all day, Shane hit the starting line on the nose, led the field into the first turn, and pulled away going down the backstretch with Tate giving chase. But, as the boats were rounding the course for the second time, word came down from the official tower that Shane would be given a one-minute penalty for going too slow before the start. Though the position of the boats didn't change,



Lon Erickson

The damaged Oberto after the flip as it is being towed back to the pits.

that put Tate in first place while Kelly and Perkins battled behind him for second place.

Tate drove the *Les Schwab Tires* across the finish line about a roostertail's length behind the *Miss HomeStreet*, but took the checkered flag. Kelly and his *Graham Trucking* pulled about three boat lengths ahead of the *PayneWest Insurance* to claim second-place honors.

The controversial ending provided grist for commentators on Facebook for many days following. For his part, Shane simply commented the next morning that he will keep his opinion to himself

and that "we're not happy."

But, on a positive note, the ratings from the broadcast on KONG-TV indicated that there is still considerable interest in the sport. The telecast received a 4.4 rating and a 12.1 share, meaning 4.4 percent of all possible TV households in the Seattle market were watching the race and, of those TVs being watched at the time, 12.1 percent were tuned to the race. It was the highest rated TV program in the Seattle market that day, attracting an estimated 228,000 viewers. ❖

LATE-BREAKING NEWS: Tate wins the Gold Cup.

Andrew Tate drove the U-9 *Delta Realtrac* to victory at the 102nd running of the Gold Cup race. He powered in front of Jimmy Shane in the *Miss HomeStreet* at the start of the final heat and never lost the lead. With the victory, Tate becomes the first son of a Gold Cup winner to win the prestigious trophy for himself. His father, Mark Tate, won the Gold Cup in 1991 and 1994. With the win, Tate also clinched the 2018 H1 Unlimited Racing Series national championship. We will have more details in the October issue of the *Unlimited NewsJournal*.

Around the Circuit

Race Site News



Chris Tracy

The largest fleet of unlimited boats this season arrived the last weekend of July in Tri-Cities, Washington (Richland, Kennewick and Pasco) for the HAPO Columbia Cup. And the festivities started early, with the Hydros at the Mall event on Wednesday afternoon in Kennewick. Several boats were on display for fans to get up close, including the U-3, U-9, U-11, U-21, and the U-1918. Fans also got a taste of what was to come as it was hot—very hot.

Saturday night of the Tri-Cities hydro weekend was the annual Royal Order of the Turbine (ROTT) banquet and auction to benefit the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum. Each year ROTT awards two trophies at the banquet. Chip Hanauer gave a heartfelt speech when he introduced this year's recipient of the Achievement Award, John Walters. Walters seemed touched and sincerely appreciative of the award.

Each year a Fan Award is given, named the Potted Palm, and was passed from last year's award winner Bill Moore to this year's award recipient, Lon Erickson. Erickson will need to add something to the Potted Palm from this season before it is passed along to another deserving fan next year.

The Gold Cup format was used again at the HAPO Columbia Cup with more racing and more heats.

Wonderful.

Not so wonderful was the officiating. Penalties were sometimes called well after heats were run. Up-to-date information from H1 was not easily obtained. Temperatures topped 100 degrees. The crowd was large, but a little smaller than previous races when temperatures were cooler. There was live TV from KNDU on Sunday. KONA Radio provided play-by-play all weekend.

The next weekend, the first

weekend in August, was the Albert Lee Cup race at Seattle's Seafair. The Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum's annual gala—including dinner, silent and live auction—was held Thursday night before the race at the posh Meydenbauer Convention Center in Bellevue.

The theme was around Mira Slovak and Miss Wahoo, including promoting David William's new book about Slovak's life.

There were two important announcements made at the fundraising gala. First, the museum is attempting to raise needed funds to expand into the other part of the building it currently occupies, which will soon be available. Second, next year's gala will not precede the unlimited race in Seattle, but likely be the Saturday after the race. The goal is to spread all of the museum's work over a longer period of time, as it is a handful to run boats in Tri-Cities, have the gala the following Thursday, and run vintage boats at Seafair the next three days after the gala.

The museum leadership believes the new date may also attract more attendees, like boat crewmembers who are too busy working on their boats to attend the gala event right before

Seattle's unlimited race. The flip side is that fans who are in town for the Seattle race, but live out of the state, likely will not attend when not it's in conjunction with the Seattle race. That factor includes five of the 10 people who participated in the Tiara Contest at this year's gala.

Seafair tried a new unlimited



Chris Denslow

The crowd that lined the shore of the Columbia River at the Tri-Cities for the HAPO Columbia Cup. The fans endured temperatures that climbed to about 100 degrees during the weekend.



Chris Denslow



Chris Denslow

[Top] The Seattle crowd in the grandstand on the shore of Lake Washington and [Above] roaming among the concessions and exhibitors that filled the lower portion of Genesee Park near the hydro pits.

hydroplane schedule at the Albert Lee Cup this year and it was not successful. Many hydro fans called it “dawn and dusk” racing, with much of the unlimited activity very early in the morning and very late in the afternoon. Racing during or after the evening TV news is not good for race publicity and much of the crowd left before the “first” final heat of the unlimited hydro race.

Most fans described the event as mainly an air show, due to the odd schedule when the unlimiteds generally tested, qualified, or raced.

It was just weird.

Even the press box didn’t have many press there. One has to wonder whether Seafair even invited the press to cover the race. One fan commented, “Is Seafair intentionally trying to kill off the unlimited race” with the odd schedule?

The KNDU-TV crew from Tri-Cities took the lead and helped KONG-TV produce live coverage in Seattle. The race was live from 3 p.m. through the final heat on Sunday; KONG-TV coverage was

good.

Attendance was good on Friday and Saturday. Many noticed that lots of younger people attended and the crowd well represented the diversity of Seattle. Beach attendance appeared a bit lighter than usual on Sunday, but the log boom looked full.

The race itself, was plagued with mishaps: officiating calls made well after heats, information not easily or quickly accessible or communicated by H1. (Also, Seafair closed and locked the press box right after the last unlimited heat on Saturday, but before final results were sorted out.)

One has to wonder, “Who’s on first?” with H1. Bluntly, someone at H1 needs to be in charge as it appears that there is no one at H1 coordinating or managing the various H1 entities.

H1, are you listening? ❖

Unlimiteds will go to Alabama again in 2019.

The Marshall County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau has announced that the Guntersville Lake HydroFest will return to the H1 Unlimited Racing Series in 2019. The event will be held from June 28 to 30.

“Despite weather delays, HydroFest 2018 was a huge success with more than 11,000 through the gates on Sunday and close to 20,000 over the three-day event,” said Katy Norton of the visitor’s bureau. “We’re looking forward to next year’s race weekend and are already planning fun and exciting additions for 2019.”

HydroFile

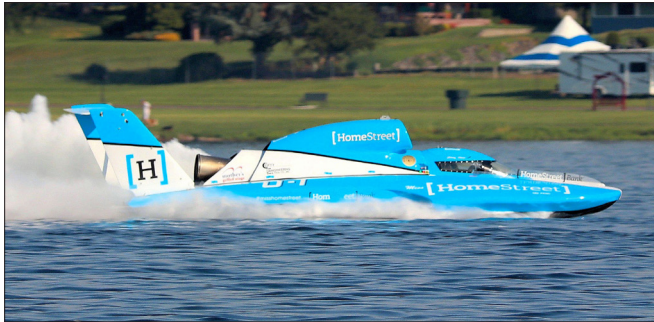
Race Team News



Lon Erickson

U-1 HomeStreet Racing

The HomeStreet Racing/Miss Madison team debuted its new race boat at the Tri-Cities Columbia Cup in July. Jimmy Shane tested the boat (bottom one below), immediately liked the new hull, clicked off laps in the 153 mph range, and plans were put into place to race it in Seattle the next week.



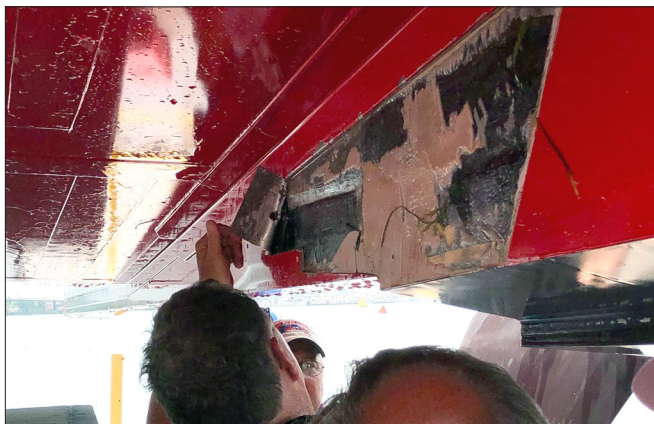
Lon Erickson



Lon Erickson

Go3 Racing

Ed Cooper picked up sponsorship from the Roostertail Restaurant for the Gold Cup in Detroit and ran as The Roostertail – 60 Years of Parties. The hull suffered damage to the left air trap in Heat 3B and was forced to withdraw for the weekend.



Go3 Racing

U-7 Spirit of Detroit

The Dave Bartush-owned Spirit of Detroit made its season debut at the 2018 Metro Chevy Dealers APBA Gold Cup in Detroit. Jeff Bernard tested the rebuilt hull, ran the first heat in the U-7, and then turned the driving over to Bert Henderson for the balance of the weekend.



Lon Erickson

U-9 Jones Racing

Mike and Lori Jones' U-9 (hull #9202) celebrated its 26th year at Seattle for the Albert Lee Appliance Cup. The hull debuted at Seattle in 1992 as the Coors Dry and remains as one the top competitive hulls on the circuit today.



Lon Erickson



Jones Racing

U-11 Reliable Diamond Tool presents J & D's

The U-11 suffered damage in the final heat in Detroit, destroying the front canard and associated hardware. The boat is headed back to the U-11 shop in Edmonds for repairs and preparation for San Diego.



Lon Erickson



Unlimited Racing Group

U-12 Racing/Graham Trucking

Rob Graham's team competed at Tri-Cities and Seattle, but he has chosen to run only the two Northwest races this year.

U-16 Ellstrom Racing

Only sighting of the U-16 unlimited was on display at Seafair's Genesee Park at Seattle. The Ellstrom Racing family continues to compete in the Turbo UTV Class of the Best In The Desert Off-Road Racing Series.



Lon Erickson

U-21/48 Go Fast Turn Left Racing

The absence of sponsorship in Detroit led the team to make the decision not to compete at the Gold Cup in Detroit, but they do have plans to race the U-21 hull at San Diego Bayfair. In July, they ran out of time to get the new U-48 hull finished for Seafair. There was a plan in place to have Kevin Eacret as a second driver, however. He took some laps in the U-21 PayneWest in Tri-Cities to be prepared if the new hull did come together, but that didn't happen.



Lon Erickson

U-27 Wiggins Racing

After the crash during the final heat in Seattle, it has been determined that the hull will need major repairs and is through for the 2018 season.



Wiggins Racing



Wiggins Racing

My \$0.02 Worth

Editorial Comment



Andy
Muntz

The dictionary defines a team as a group of people who work together to accomplish a common goal. We all know how it applies on sports teams, for example. Everybody has a specific job to do, and if everybody does their job successfully, the team stands a good chance of winning.

The other thing about teams is that each member has a specific task and doesn't get in the way of a teammate trying to do their job. A shortstop doesn't pitch, a left guard doesn't run pass routes, and a wide receiver doesn't kick field goals.

The same is true in unlimited hydroplane racing. Boat owners provide the hydroplanes that the fans want to see, race organizers provide the racecourse where the boats compete, and officials from H1 Unlimited provide an overall authority that brings consistency and uniformity to every race. None of the three could survive without

the other two.

Last month, I wrote about how the sport is harmed when some boat owners choose not to enter their boat in a race. But, it's also true that those boat owners aren't entering some races because of the way they are treated by the race organizers. I've heard many stories about how some of the race sites are so focused on themselves that they seem to have lost sight of what is best for the overall sport.

I'm told about the organizers at one event who jacked up the price of fuel to the point that the boat owners are subsidizing their own prize money. Another signed an exclusive deal with a local company that prevented H1 Unlimited from doing part of its job, and another that killed a deal that could have put the entire racing series on national television.

One of the most blatant examples came at Seattle this year when

an official from Seafair issued a decree declaring that the name of the U-9 boat should henceforth be known as the Jones Racing, rather than the name its sponsors gave it: Les Schwab Tires. Since when does Seafair have the authority to tell a boat owner what he or she can name their own boat?

For this sport to have any chance of surviving, the different factions within the sport must understand that they all need each other. The boat owners need H1 Unlimited to provide the resources necessary to run a racing series, for example, and the race organizers need the boats so that there is something for their fans to watch.

All three must work together as a team and fully comprehend the fact that if one does something to undermine the work of another, it ultimately will mean that their own efforts will be wasted. ❖

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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, September 9, 2018

Renton Public Library, 100 Mill Ave. S., Renton, Washington 98057