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UNLIMITED

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A Chronicle of Speed

2010 Damage Report

Part 1

by Michael Prophet



Fortunately, this was about the only damage the Madison team suffered. It was another great season for Steve David, Art and Larry Oberto, and the hard working Madison team. They won their second straight National Championship.

U-1 Oh Boy! Oberto

The Madison team, Steve David, and *Oh Boy!* began the 2010 season the right way, by winning the **Madison** Governor's Cup. They discovered minor hull damage Sunday following heat 1A. The damage was spotted inside *Oberto's* left sponson and the boat spent the night on barrels (at right) while the crew made repairs. They said it didn't hit any debris in the water, and thought the damage may have been left over from last year's Middle East race.

At **Detroit**, the Oberto team spent Friday afternoon changing propellers and gearboxes. David had trouble getting the turbine lit for 1C Saturday, but made it out with less than two minutes before the start.

Radio trouble and nearly missing the final were about the only problems they had at **Tri-Cities**. *Oh Boy! Oberto* died five minutes before the start of the final, but finally re-fired. David didn't know he had won the race until reaching the pits.

Steve David didn't run into any trouble at **Seattle, San Diego**, or in the Middle East. In **Qatar** the team captured another National Championship.



Karl Pearson photo



Karl Pearson photo

U-3 Go3 Go Racing

Madison was the first and only race the Cooper boat showed up for in 2010. The U-3 ran one full lap during qualifying before losing power and going dead in the water. Jimmy King burnt a piston in the turbo-Allison and Ed Cooper withdrew the unsponsored boat from the race. He also failed to pay the APBA membership fee in a dispute with H1 (Sam Cole). Ed Cooper said, "We have no issue with the APBA, but we do have an issue with the way the H1 Unlimited rules are being administered by the H1 Chairman and Chief Referee." The team left for home after the first heat section.

Will the Cooper team return to unlimited racing in 2011? Will Sam Cole still be running H1?

U-5 FormulaBoats.com

Trouble surfaced for Jeff Bernard and the Formula team Sunday at **Madison** in 1A. Bernard said *Formula* never had any real power during the heat and he "took it easy throughout the race; finishing just to get points." After crossing



Jim Simpson photo

Karl Pearson photo



the finish line, he quickly shut down and waited for a tow back to the pits. He said the boat was not handling very well either.

About the only trouble they had at **Detroit** was when Bernard nearly spun out *Formula* in 2A. They weren't so lucky in **Tri-Cities**. In 1A Saturday the propeller sheared off *Formula*. It ripped through the rear wing, chopped a hole in the deck, and caused them to blow a hot end. After they were towed back to the dock, the team worked late into

the night to repair the damage to the wing and deck, and replace the turbine.

They got a break at **Seattle** damage-wise, then in **San Diego** the team had battery trouble and *Formula* failed to start 3A. They had no major problems over in **Qatar**, unlike last year.

U-7 FormulaBoats.com

The U-7 team and J. Michael Kelly didn't suffer any major damage in the first four races, which had to please owner Ted Porter and the crew. Though Kelly did break the rear wing on *Graham Trucking* during the final at **Detroit**, they finished the race.

At **San Diego**, the team raced as *Air Guard*. It was a complete paint scheme change as you can see in bottom photo. They didn't run into any major trouble until the final heat in California. In a battle to catch *Spirit of Qatar* and *Oberto*, Michael J. Kelly lost part of the rear stabilizer off *Air Guard*.

After the race the boat was repainted red and sent to Florida for the long trip to the Middle East, where they ran as *Graham Trucking* at **Qatar**. J. Michael Kelly and the team didn't run into any serious problems there.



Karl Pearson photo



Karl Pearson photo

U-13 Spirit of Detroit

After sitting out the 2009 season, Dave Bartush began the 2010 season at **Madison** with a rookie driver, Cal Phipps, in the trailer position. The oldest boat on the circuit, running here as *Miss DYC*, went dead in the water during 3A and failed to finish. *Miss DYC* broke a propeller entering turn 2, tossing a blade through the rear wing, leaving

a gaping hole and gouging the right rear deck. The strut was also slightly damaged. Phipps went out of control momentarily when the propeller broke and hosed down *Albert Lee*. ~~ Photos below by Matt Ruhlen



They had no damage at **Detroit**, but had problems out west. In 3A at **Tri-Cities**, Cal Phipps and *Miss DYC* went dead on the first lap in turn 2. The engine cowling had been ripped off the boat. Phipps was charging into the turn, got pinched tightly by boats on both sides and a roostertail knocked the cowling off. “When the water hits it that hard, it’s just like rocks being thrown at it,” Scott Allen said. Unfortunately, the Spirit of Detroit team had to watch the finals from the pits. They were tied with the U-5 team in points, but the damage to the cowling was too great for them to continue.

At **Seattle**, Cal Phipps and *Miss Jillian’s* had problems all day long with the old boat. Bartush withdrew them from the race late in the day Sunday to save their dwindling equipment for San Diego.

In **San Diego**, Bartush’s *Alternative Automotive Technologies* did not make it off the trailer until 3A, and then Phipps committed an infraction and was disqualified.

The Spirit of Detroit team had the points to go to **Qatar**, but not the equipment, while the Superior Racing team didn’t have the points, so Dave Bartush and Ken Muscatel made a deal and combined teams. Bartush sent three crewmen along with some equipment to the Middle East with Muscatel.



Karl Pearson photo



Lon Erickson photo

U-17 Our Gang Racing

Nate Brown’s boat began the 2010 season in **Madison** running as *O’Brian Law* with nephew Kip Brown behind the wheel. The team quickly ran into trouble during 1C. While leading *Miss Peter’s & May* by a roostertail and battling hard to keep in front, Brown blew the gearbox at the start/finish line beginning lap 2. *O’Brian Law* was towed

Karl Pearson photo



in and was done for the weekend. They had a backup gearbox available, but Nate Brown didn't want to chance breaking it, though he said he would have changed it if Madison needed another boat.

Detroit was trouble free. Nate Brown was driving the boat as *Red Dot* in place of his nephew. At **Tri-Cities**, the team began testing out a new rear stabilizer, seen at left. No major problems.

Seattle was also trouble free, but not **San Diego**. On the first lap

in 2B, Kip Brown and *Red Dot* died after ingesting saltwater coming out of turn 2, then the stiff wind blew the boat onto the beach. Tow boats struggled to pull *Red Dot* off the beach, taking great care to avoid damaging the hull. This ended their day, as they withdrew from the race.

In Doha, **Qatar**, other than continuing engine trouble, overheating and fuel issues (they changed fuel control, which didn't help), they suffered no serious damage.

U-21 Go Fast Turn Left Racing

Greg O'Farrell began the 2010 season at **Madison** with a, well, sort of new boat (it has been sitting idle for two years), running as *Albert Lee*. Brian Perkins last drove this boat, then brand new, in competition as the U-21 *All Access* in 2007. After finishing second in 1B he said, "It's getting faster every time out."

By time the race ended, the rear of *Albert Lee* looked like it was molting. The paint was peeling off the shoes. A source said he saw it begin peeling at the final spring test session at Seattle on Lake Washington.

In **Detroit**, Brian Perkins lost the engine cowling in 1A but still finished third. He and *Albert Lee* were unable to start 2B on Saturday because of igniter problems.

No damage or trouble at **Tri-Cities** or at **Seattle**, but in **San Diego** during the first lap of 3B, *Go Fast Turn Left* showed a high exhaust gas temperature reading, so Perkins returned to the pits. Brian Perkins and *Go Fast Turn Left* suffered no major damage in **Qatar**.



Karl Pearson photo



Karl Pearson photo



E Lon Erickson

U-1. The *Oh Boy! Oberto/Miss Madison* display boat has been on display in Louisville and coming up in Indianapolis. Recently, the U-6 back-up hull #8806 has been getting some attention in the Madison shop along with a few updates. The primary U-1 hull

(#0706) is back in Madison. Winter hull maintenance is underway and engines are being evaluated.

U-5. **Ted Porter's** PPE, LLC team display boats, #9299, and #9399, are hitting the U.S. Boat Show circuit, representing Formulaboats.com, AirGuard, Peters & May Racing, and H1 Unlimited. They are appearing at boat shows throughout the months of Jan., Feb., and March. The U-5 *Formula* hull is back from Doha and off-season work to prep for the 2011 season begins.

U-7. With the return of the U-7 race boat along with the U-5 hull from Doha, the PPE team begins to work on the three-boat race team from Precision Performance Engineering. **Ted Porter** has named a new driver for 2011 in the U-7. **Scott Liddycoat**, a well established inboard racer from Virginia, joins the driver lineup for PPE Racing. Liddycoat is a 19-year veteran of inboard racing, with several championships along the way. Using his experience from time with **Jon Staudacher**, **Carter Parrish**, and **Henry Lauterbach**, he has also designed and built record-setting hydroplanes for himself and other drivers. Scott brings a wealth of knowledge from inboard racing and boat tuning to the team. Liddycoat joins U-5 driver **Jeff Bernard**, winner of three unlimited races, the 2010 National High Points Champion in 2.5 Litre Stock and National Modified classes, and **Mark Evans**, winner of ten unlimited races who is returning to pilot the U-57.

U-9. **Mike Jones/Jones Racing** is having updates done and making plans to race the U-9 hull #9210 at Tri-Cities and Seattle. They are working on sponsorship arrangements and a driver is yet to be determined. The U-9 team last ran at Seafair in 2009 with **Dave Williams** driving.

U-11. The biggest development of this winter came with the formation of a new racing team, the U-11 Unlimited Racing Group (URG). The Raney/Myers group continues to develop new sponsorship and

marketing partners for the upcoming season. Having Peters & May Racing already on board as title sponsor and several major associate sponsors, **Scott Raney** says they are excited about the work ahead getting ready for 2011. Their new "state of the art" race shop facility, located in the Edmonds area of North Seattle is now the new home of the former U-25 race boat, recently acquired from **Dr. Ken Muscatel** and Superior Racing. The hauler, trailer, race boat, and equipment arrived in early March and now are being gone through by the U-11 crew in anticipation of the upcoming season.

U-13. After San Diego and choosing not to compete in Doha, the Detroit Unlimited Racing team has been very quiet, but now they report a "stir in the shop." The team has begun working on some decisions of hull adjustments and updates, replacing equipment, and some engine modifications. Some consideration is being given to which hull to concentrate their 2011 efforts on, the current U-13 hull #8700 or the former *Trendwest/Graham Trucking* hull #9601 which last raced in 2006 as the U-2.25.

U-17. **Nate Brown** and Our Gang Racing has started back into their routine of weekly crew night(s), cleaning up the U-17 hull and equipment after two races in the saltwater environment of San Diego and Doha. They have acquired components to build a new turbine and work is being completed on the new motor by the team and at Competition Specialties, aka Turbine Warehouse. The Red Dot Corp. has signed on again as an associate sponsor for 2011. Other off season plans consists of fabricating a new horizontal stabilizer and some hull repairs.

U-22. Webster Racing has been busy during the off-season re-building a SST Formula class tunnel hull to be sponsored by Peters & May and compete in the APR Superleague Circuit. **Mike Webster** recently competed in the SST tunnel hull, racing in Florida. Now that the U-22 hull is back from Doha, attention turns to preparing the race boat for 2011.

U-25. The Superior Racing team hull #0925 and equipment has now been acquired by the U-11 Unlimited Racing Group. At this point, the future plans of **Dr Ken Muscatel** and his team personnel have not been disclosed.

U-37. Billy Schumacher Racing has announced that **J. Michael Kelly** will drive the Schumacher Racing entry in 2011. Kelly has driven the U-7 hull for PPE over the last two seasons. **Billy** and **Jane Schumacher** attended the H1 Annual meetings in Las Vegas, also in attendance was **Ernie Hoover-**

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U-22 Webster Racing

Mike Webster and the Webster Racing Team began the season at **Madison** with a new gearbox. He said, “The gearbox runs quiet, unlike last year’s,” which made a *terrible* growling noise. This gearbox came from Fred Leland. Running at *Matrix Systems* again this season, the team had no major trouble at the Governor’s Cup.

They didn’t have any trouble in **Detroit**, but at **Tri-Cities**, driver conflicts arose. Mike Webster said Friday that he was driving, but needed to have a backup wheelman. “I am a school teacher and there may be times that I am not available, especially if we have multiple overseas races. We wanted Al (Carstenson) to get in some laps. He is a crewmember, and we competed against each other in the Lights,” he said. The boat was called “Great Scott” by just about everybody, but the sponsors still carried “Matrix Systems.”

The Webster team had no major problems in **Seattle**, but at **San Diego** *Matrix Systems* headed for the pits at the end of the first backstretch of 3B, then

Webster shut down at the outside course marker because of serious vibration. He thought he had broken a propeller, but it turned out to be a serious case of rudder flutter.

The team finished the 2010 season in **Qatar** without doing any serious damage to *Matrix Systems*. Rookie Al Carstensen drove the boat in 1A and 2A and then Mike Webster finished out the race.

U-25 Superior Racing

Jon Zimmerman started the 2010 season driving *Boyland Nissan* at **Madison** for owner Dr. Ken Muscatel. He is a 5 litre world record holder and had tested the boat on Lake Washington before the season, running without the rear stabilizer and using a *very* low profile engine cowling. Muscatel said, “Running without the rear wing has less drag.” The new low profile cowling has been modified since testing. It has a raised ridge along each side now, probably to help keep out water.

Zimmerman started 1B and 2A as the trailer, being a rookie driver. Following 2A, the Boyland crew discovered a broken doubler on the bottom. The boat was then withdrawn from further competition.



Karl Pearson photo



Ron Harsin photo



Karl Pearson photo

At **Detroit**, Ken Muscatel drove *Boyland Nissan*. They also had no major trouble. At **Tri-Cities**, backup driver Jon Zimmerman began driving for the Peter's & May team after J.W. Myers was injured at Detroit. The unsponsored U-25 also began using their normal engine cowling and rear wing assembly. At Detroit, Ken Muscatel drove *Boyland Nissan*. They also had no major trouble.

Running in rough water in 1B, Muscatel hit a roller then a deep hole entering the first turn ("Blue Bridge turn"), on lap 3. The boat hooked sharply and did a hard 180, rocking side-to-side, but staying right side up. The escape hatch opened during the incident and blasted water into the cockpit and Muscatel. Billowing spray and boat parts flew through the air as the boat spun out and disappeared from sight. Flares fired and the heat was stopped, and then called complete because two laps had been completed. The boat was seriously damaged, as you can see in the photos above. This was the same hole Jon Zimmerman (now driving the U-37) hit the lap before. Unlike *Peter's & May*, who landed pointing in the right direction, Dr. Ken bounced out of the hole then twisted to land sideways. He was fortunate the boat did not to roll over. Muscatel was checked out by medical personnel but he declared himself okay. It was better than in 2002, when he broke his boat in half.

Ken Muscatel was forced to withdraw from the Columbia Cup. The boat damage was beyond weekend repairs. The team planned to have the boat repaired in time for Seattle. "It sucks," said Dr. Ken Muscatel after hooking his boat. It could have knocked the boat out the rest of the year. "A wreck in the first heat sucks even more," he added. The team purchased one sponson from the Schumacher team (off their under-construction boat), and repaired the other. They also said they would have Ron Jones build them a new sponson. ~~ Photos below by Karl Pearson



Muscatel had the boat, running as *Car Pros*, mostly repainted for **Seattle**, but the team was still working hard in the pits. They failed to finish in time to qualify or make 1B and Muscatel took a Commissioner Option. Muscatel and CarPro's did make it into 2B. During 3A, Muscatel punched a hole in their newly repaired left sponson. The crew worked hard to plug the hole for the provisional, but Muscatel and *Car Pros* failed to make the heat.

There was a big sponsor change for **San Diego**. The U-37, which was *Miss Peters & May* up north, became *Degree for Men* and Ken Muscatel's U-25 became *Peter's & May* (seen in Middle East photo on following page). The team suffered no major damage on Mission Bay for a welcome change. In the final heat, Muscatel hooked *Peter's & May* before the start then returned to the pits receiving a DNS.

Dr. Muscatel and *Spirit of Detroit* owner Dave Bartush partnered up for the Middle East race. Bartush didn't have the money and Muscatel needed equipment, so it all worked



Karl Pearson photo

out for both. The boat continued running as *Peters & May*. Other than a blown engine in **Qatar**, the team suffered no major hull damage.

Next month in Part 2 of the 2010 Damage Report, we will finish up with the demise of one unlimited, the return of another hydroplane and driver, and the damage to one in the final race of the 2010 season.



Karl Pearson photo

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Unilever/Degree Men representative. Mr. Hoover made an interesting comment possibly hinting at some sponsorship developments to come with Degree Men, regarding the U-37 or should it be the U-88?? Work has now resumed on the new partially completed hull, which is underway at **Ron Jones Jr.** shop, as plans continue to develop for 2011. **Jim Harvey** has joined the project to help complete the new hull, with plans to be ready for the season opener July 4th weekend at Madison. Also noted recently was a comment made on behalf of the owners saying that their website is down temporarily, because it is being completely revamped by a newly contracted web developer. The new site will debut in conjunction with upcoming announcements.

U-57. N. Mark Evans returns for the 2011 season in the 3rd PPE racing entry U-57 (#9010). More news coming from the **Ted Porter** camp in 2011, U-5 Racing is also creating a New Driver Development Program. The NDDP is patterned after successful development programs in other forms of motorsport. The first member of the U-5 NDDP as back-up driver is **Bianca Bononcini**. Growing up in a boat racing family, she began her driving career in 2008 and is a strong competitor in APBA inboards. Bianca will shadow the U-5, U-7, and U-57 racing operations during the year and will possibly see the opportunity to test, qualify, and race the U-57 under the guidance of Mark Evans, at certain events.

U-100. Leland Racing reports that work continues on the automotive power project, using the former 2005 U-60 hull #9810. The former turbine *Miss Thriftway* hull has now been painted all white with no U# or other markings. Last year's U-100 race hull (#9899) was delayed returning from Florida, due to mechanical issues with the hauler. The hull is expected back soon and will be undergoing cleaning and off-season maintenance. **Greg Hopp** is expected to return for 2011. The hull **Fred Leland** leased to the U-37 team (#0010) is currently at the Schumacher shop in Ballard and will probably remain there until they assess their need for a hull to start the 2011 season.

Recently announced was the Canadian Motorsport's induction of **Jean Theoret** into their Hall Of Fame. This will take place on April 23rd, at the Motorsport's Annual Gala in Toronto. The 2006 APBA Gold Cup winner won six times on the ABRA/H1 Unlimited Hydroplane circuit driving **Bill Wurster's** U-8 *LLumar* and **Billy Schumacher's** U-37 *Beacon Plumbing*. Prior to his unlimited experience, Theoret gained fame in the Grand Prix class, winning the GP National Championship race six times, and also competed in other smaller classes of inboard hydroplanes.

10 Questions & 10 Minutes with Jim Sharkey

Recently the *Unlimited NewsJournal's* Lon Erickson had the opportunity to sit down and talk with Jim Sharkey, Author of *Hydro's Who's Who*, hydroplane historian, and H1 official.

Here's what we talked about . . .



1. How long have you been following the sport of hydroplane racing? How did you first get started?

I started watching the races on T.V. when I was seven or eight years old in Seattle.

2. What was your first race? Limited and/or unlimited?

The first race I can remember was the 1958 Gold Cup with Muncey sinking the Coast Guard Cutter. I probably saw races before that, but this one sticks out in my mind.

3. Best and worst racing memory?

a) **Best race?** *The '89 Seafair, 2010 Seafair, and the 2006 San Diego races*

b) **Worst race or memory?** *The 1982 Tri-Cities when Dean Chenoweth died and the 2000 San Diego race when George Stratton was killed. I was timing Stratton on the tower.*

4. What made you get involved with Hydro's Who's Who? *I was doing pit tours in Tri-Cities and Seattle, and I was trying to get competent data on the boats and drivers. Most of the data out there was full of misinformation. I met Fred Farley and David Greene. I got copies of the A.P.B.A. records from them and I computerized these records. Once I had the records computerized, Farley put me on his Historical Committee.*

5. How did the book start? And when? *My book is an offshoot of Lloyd Collins' original book. Back in the early 1980s I got a copy of Lloyd's book and I used his hull ID numbering on my original data base on an Apple IIe. I printed out a copy of what I came up with and what he had, and there were discrepancies. Lloyd wanted to get out of the business of doing his book, so he asked me if I would take over. I was thrilled that he thought of me capable of continuing his work, and I agreed to take up where he left off. I think I first self-published my book in 1983 or '84 and I have had several printings since.*

6. What do you do now with the sport? For how long? How did you get started doing what you do? *Other than working on my book, I act as a backup timer on the West Coast races. I used to watch the races in San Diego from Vacation Isle. Farley had*

been bugging me to come over to Fiesta Island and watch the race from there. In 1989 I joined Farley at the tower on Fiesta Island, and I volunteered to call out the boats when they crossed the start/finish line for the scorers and timers that first year. I also ended up timing the boats with a stop watch. The Pattons were the official timers/scorer at that time. I told them if they needed any extra help in Tri-Cities or Seattle, just give me a call and I would help them. The next year I got a call before the Tri-Cities race and I have been helping them ever since.

7. What is your "regular" job? (when you aren't working on your book or following the hydros) **How long have been doing your "regular" job?** *My regular job is being a high school math teacher. I have been at this profession since 1978 and I have two more years before I retire at the age of 62.*

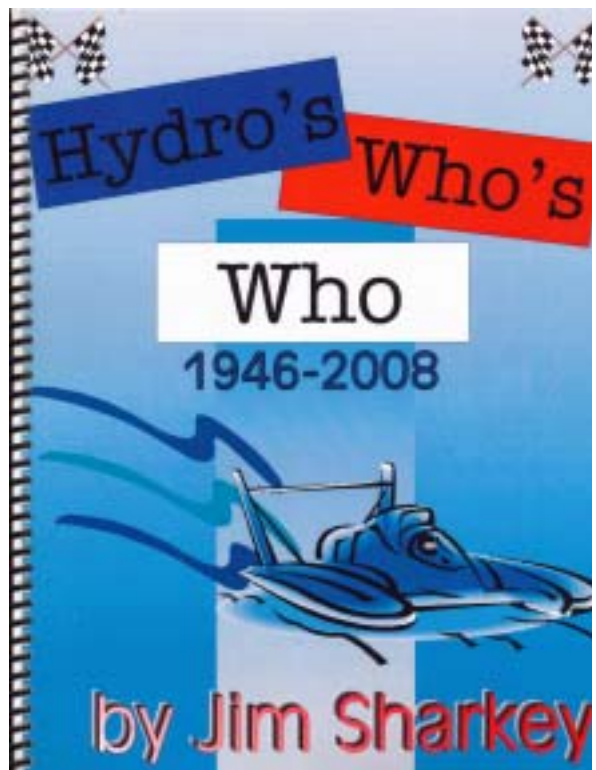
8. Outside of hydroplane racing, what are your other interests/hobbies? *My hobbies and interest? Fishing, fishing, and more fishing. Camping, traveling, reading, photography, and being a good husband and father.*

9. Where do you call home? Family? Children? *I live in Anaheim, Calif. during the school year, and I have a trailer up in Gold Bar, Wash. for my summers. I have been married to my beautiful wife, Teresa, since 1972 and we have one son, Eric. I am waiting to become a grandfather one of these days.*

10. Any other thoughts you want to share with NewsJournal readers? *Dreams can come true. Back in my ninth grade, 1965, I wrote to several owners trying to get information on their boats. I told them that someday I was going to write a book about hydroplanes. It took a while, but I finally did it. Now I am living a Walter Mitty life. I have been able to do what I set out to do, and I am very much involved with the sport. I am not just an armchair quarterback, watching what is going on. I am doing something that matters. All of you ,if you want to get involved with this sport you can, in some degree or another. You have to get out and volunteer and with a lot of hard work you might be able to live your dream also.*

Thanks Jim, for your time and sharing your story with us. That's exactly what it takes to make this sport what it is. People like Jim and many, many others that love the sport, contribute, and volunteer to make it all happen.

For more information about his book, a great reference tool on Unlimiteds, check out "**Hydro's Who's Who**" by Jim Sharkey available exclusively through the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum in Kent, Wash. or go to www.thunderboats.org All the proceeds from this book benefit the museum and all the great work they do in keeping the thunder alive.



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