



January/February 2016

# UNLIMITED NEWSJOURNAL

A Chronicle of Speed

## Jim Hendrick: The Voice of the Unlimiteds.

An interview by Craig Fjarlie

*His voice was instantly recognizable. For over 40 years, Jim Hendrick was the voice of unlimited hydroplane racing, calling the action on radio, television, and public address systems. A native of Detroit, Hendrick's career also included the broadcast of action at offshore races, SCCA TransAm car races, and for the Detroit Tigers. Craig Fjarlie conducted the following interview on July 10, 2014, just a few weeks before the broadcaster's 80th birthday, as the two sat on the second level of the Dodge pit tower adjacent to the Detroit racecourse.*

**When you were in school, were you interested in radio right away?**

No, not really. I was writing an article for the *Eastside Shopper* in Detroit, a weekly paper, doing sports. Had a little byline. So I decided, really, the print business first. Then I became a batboy for the Detroit Tigers. I was with the Tigers in '51, '52, and '53. Then I went to radio.

**Did you have a degree in college?**

No, but I went to college. I did a non-matriculated course, broadcast workshop, radio screens, etc. And, I got a part-time job right away.

**What college did you attend?**

Wayne State, here in Detroit. In fact, Al Kaline lent me the money to enroll. I paid him back, of course. Al's first year was my last year as a batboy. We traveled around in my 1947 Mercury convertible. Went over to Belle Isle. You know, he was just an 18-year-old kid. He's the same age I am. And he's now assistant to the president for the Tigers. Always, been in the Tiger organization all his life.

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# My \$0.02 Worth

By Andy Muntz, Editor

**D**o you notice anything different about this issue of the *Unlimited Newsjournal*? There has been a transition in the editorship of the publication and, with that change, the introduction of a new look that might have caught your attention.

I must tell you that I am humbled and bit apprehensive about taking the helm of the *Newsjournal* because I well know its history and take seriously the responsibility that I'm assuming and the legacy that I must now uphold. I was there in the basement of Patrick Fahey's home (or, more accurately, his parent's home) on Queen Anne Hill in Seattle on a Sunday afternoon in 1973 when the members of our hydroplane fan club, called Unlimiteds Unanimous, decided it would be a good idea to start producing a monthly newsletter about our favorite sport.

Spurred on by the club's most avid member, E.K. Muller, the first issue rolled off the presses in November 1973 under the direction of David Speer. That first issue contained what has been a fundamental component of each issue since, a



news-and-rumors section, as well as an article by Bill Osborne about what it is like to drive an unlimited hydro and a look back at the past by Brent Kellogg.

The *Newsjournal* has grown a lot since that first issue and editing it has passed through many hands, including Craig Fjarlie, David Peterson, Ben Keller, Tony Sepanski, Gary Clouse, Jeff Meyer, Kirk Pagel, and Dick Sanders. There also was a period of time in the 1980s when a committee shared the chore of editing the publication, with a different member taking charge each month.

Michael Prophet took the helm beginning in 2005. His buddies at Unlimiteds Unanimous told him at the time that it would only be a temporary post, as they would do their hardest to find someone to take the job permanently. He laughs about that now. Eleven years later, he has more than earned the right to finally step aside from monthly editing. As Editor Emeritus, Michael will instead be in charge of some comprehensive stories.

During Michael's tenure, the *Newsjournal* has gone through some major shifts. It evolved from a publication that was printed and mailed to paying subscribers to a publication that became full color and is available free on the Internet. Through it all, he created a publication that has a focus on photography. The *Newsjournal* has never had more photos than during Michael's years at the post. And, that didn't come easily, for he would spend many hours with each publication in pursuit of the ideal photographs.

That may be partly the source of some of my trepidation, to be honest, for I am a words guy. My degree is in journalism and my career has been in public relations. While David Speer, Craig Fjarlie,

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**ASSOCIATE EDITORS:** Craig Fjarlie, Chris Tracy, Dick Sanders

**HYDROFILE EDITOR/WEBMASTER:** Lon Erickson **HISTORIAN:** Bob Greenhow

**SPECIAL PROJECTS:** Kirk Pagel **EDITORIAL BOARD:** Clint Newman II, Bob Senior

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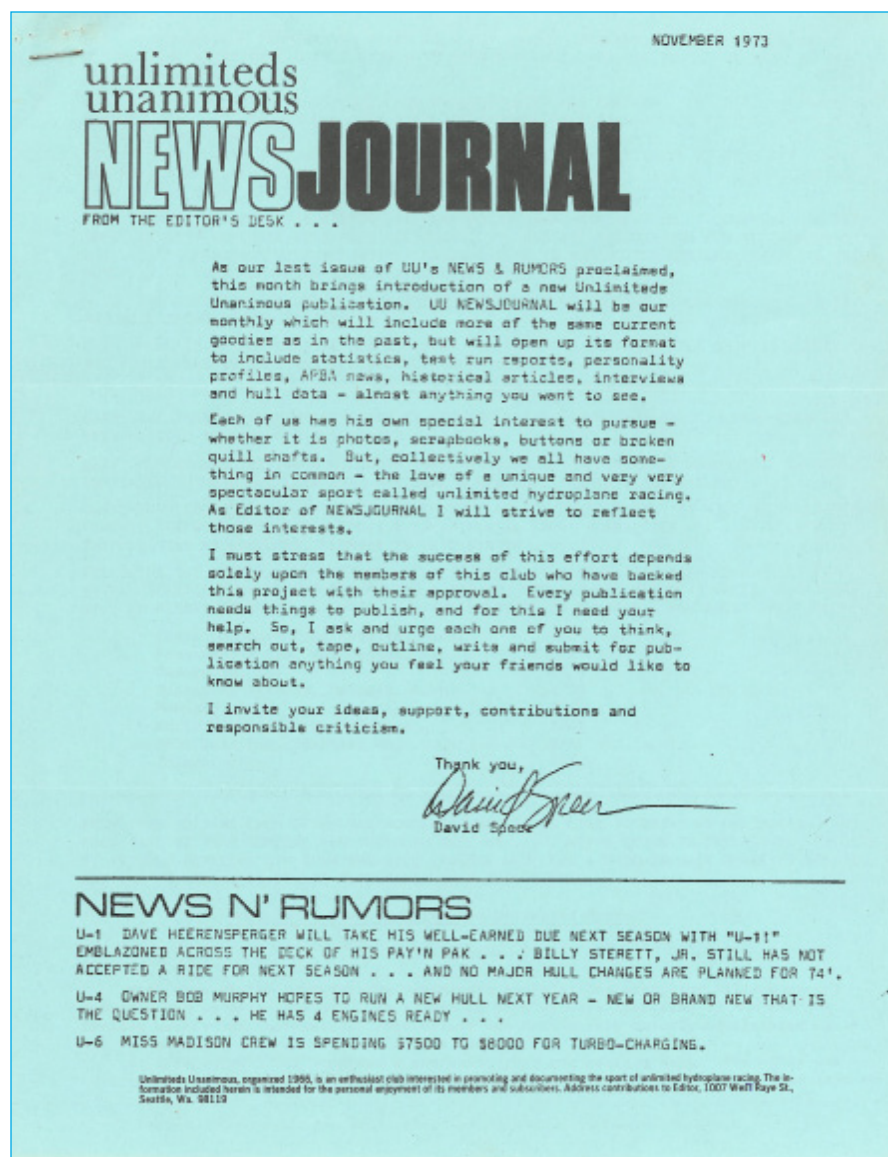
Dick Sanders, Michael Prophet, and the others toiled away on the *Unlimited Newsjournal*, my work was focused on communications for electric utilities and public schools.

I wasn't entirely out of the loop when it comes to hydroplanes, however. I did have a brief stint as director of public relations for Seafair back in the late '70s and, during the 1980s, Wil Muncey and I tried to make a go of a publication that we called *Boatracng Magazine*. More recently, I've written a few articles for the *Newsjournal*, give pit tours when the boats come to town each summer, and wrote a book about the history of the sport that is titled *At the Ragged Edge*. (It's available on Amazon.)

Now, I find myself in the thick of things like never before.

In the very first issue of the *Newsjournal* more than 42 years ago, David Speer talked about how the publication would serve the people who loved the unique and spectacular sport called unlimited hydroplane racing. He said the success of the effort would depend on the club members who started it, because every publication needs things to publish. He asked his fellow hydroplane fans to think, search out, write and submit for publication anything they felt their friends would like to see.

As the newest editor of the *Newsjournal*, I face the same challenge, yet also will be covering a sport that is in a much different place than it was when this publication first reported on races in 1974. There were 12 races on the schedule and a total of 22 entrants that season, compared with five scheduled events and 13 different boats entered last year.



The first issue of the Unlimited Newsjournal was published by Unlimiteds Unanimous in November 1973.

As such, I'd like the publication to not only be the nation's best source of information about current racing activities and to be a digest of historical information, but to also be a forum of ideas about the sport.

Among the readers of this publication are the people who are most involved in racing: owners, drivers, sponsors, race organizers, and officials. Accordingly, my first request as editor is to hear from you. We want this to be your source of information. Please let me know

what you'd like to see on future pages of the *Newsjournal*. Write a letter of opinion about something that you've read in the publication recently or that is going on in the sport. Or, maybe you'd like to write an in-depth article about an aspect of the sport that might interest other readers like you?

The bottom line is, it all begins with you: the reader. My email and post office addresses are provided at the bottom of Page 2.

Please don't be shy about using them.



# Jim Hendrick: Voice of the Unlimiteds

Continued from page 1.

**So you started out doing the Tigers before you got into hydroplanes.**

As a batboy, yeah.

**Were you interested in hydroplanes way back?**

Oh, yeah, definitely. My first race was 1948. I was a 14-year-old kid. Bert Robb, an attorney who was on the committee locally, put me on the submarine *Tambor*, the old submarine down by the first turn, with a big headset. I called the first turn and he was at the second one. 1948, oh my God!

**Was this with a radio station?**

Naw, it was the PA. We were PA announcers. And a lot of people heard me that knew me because they could wire it to Belle Isle and everything, which was something else.



A young Jim Hendrick interviews Lou Fageol.

**That was quite a race.**

Yeah, I don't remember even who won. (*Miss Great Lakes* – Ed.) I was so excited, calling the first turn, you know. This racecourse, Bill Muncey once said, you never beat the Detroit River. You only survive it.

**Yeah.**

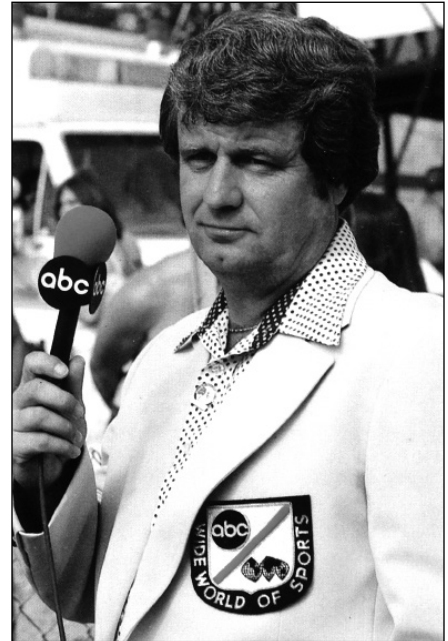
And he was that kind of guy. He was from Detroit, you know...

**Right.**

So we used to have the pits down by the Whittier Hotel. People that gave me this ring built the center pit we're sitting in now, the Dodge family. But every time you come out on the Detroit River it changes. The back chute is the smoothest because it dissipates on the shore of the beach. But all these sea walls here, boy. Everytime you come around... That's what I tell people. Try and set a groove. Boat racing changes every lap, every wave. You've got to read that water.

**Yeah.**

And I remember my worst day in the sport, Washington, D.C., 1966. I was live on radio. We lost three drivers in that race. And we came here and one of the guys that was helping me on my broadcast that year was Chuck Thompson. Chuck's boat had been banged up in Tampa, but he helped me on the radio. He came here and resumed his driving and was killed in this race. And I'm live on television with Fred Wolf and Dave Diles and



myself, for ABC. Like KIRO does in Seattle, these guys at that time did here.

**They broadcast it live.**

And then I saw that happen. (Pauses.) I've spoken in a lot of eulogies, a lot of eulogies, too many. But those guys, it happens so quick they don't know what happened. They're still racing. That's what I tell people. Well, why don't we quit? Why didn't he quit two weeks ago and he'd still be alive? Then what, he died for nothing? No, they liked this sport. They wanted this sport. This sport continues. A guy by the name of Bernie Little was very instrumental, and Buddy Byers, to keep this sport going.

**So, when you started putting together the radio network, you had experience covering for local stations.**

**Right.**

**How did you get to that point?  
You were working with Phil Cole  
for a while...**

Yeah, and a guy named Wally Reed, with KIRO, was the station manager for KORD and KIRO and wanted to know if I would come out and help them with their broadcasts. And I said to him, and the same with Madison, WORX. And I said to those two guys, "why don't I feed you a half-hour show on a class C line? You carry the final heat live." He said, "You'll do that?" I said, "Yeah. Then when I'm in your town, you can carry me live on that station." So that's how the network started.

**OK.**

Phil Cole said, "Look." Well, he was good, very good.

**You worked together a lot.**

Oh, yeah. If I fought a sneeze, Phil would say *gesundheit*. But, again, a quick story. I'm doing a commercial for Parco O-Ring. Remember the *Parco O-Ring Miss*?

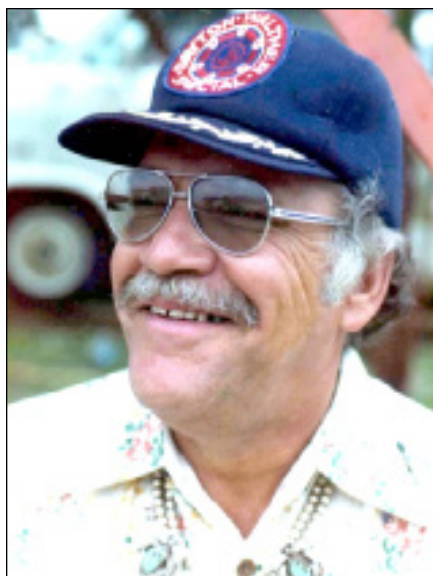
**Yeah.**

And Phil, I'm live now, he notices Parco spelled backwards is o crap. (Laughter.) That was funny.

**Now, when you set up the radio network, what process did you go through to get stations on line to agree to carry it?**

Well, I...

**Some cities it was easier than others, probably?**



Phil Cole

*Sandy Ross*

Oh, yes. But like I say, Madison wanted it, WORX. So did KORD with Wally Reed in Tri-Cities, in Pasco. Now we had three. That season when I did those, they played, note, also added KJR, from Seattle. And then we added KXLY in Spokane. And we kept addin' people. The world was not ready for five hours of splashing water on radio. So what we did was, we did three five-minute shows. Pre-five

minutes, five-minute show for the first heat, five-minute show for the second heat, and we added next whatever was the third heat. About three minutes of content, they got their commercials in, and we put 'em on the line and my engineer, Eddie Bush, fed 'em. The three stations.

Later, when we had an open line through the satellites they just kept repeating. They'd go on and get it. Made Eddie's life a lot easier. But we got 'em down, narrowed the fastest race boats, and I had to explain the points get you there, but after that, forget the points it's first, second, third, fourth, fifth, down in the final. Winner-take-all final, and we'll have that. So when we opened up the half-hour show, first 10 minutes was recapping what happened. Now we're at the five-minute gun. Now we're at the one-minute gun. Phil Cole, or whoever was working with me at that time, Dick Crippen was also with me a lot, "Phil Cole, why don't you take them off that final turn



Hendrick interviews driver Mark Evans (back to camera) while on the broadcast tower for the race at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in 1997. Looking on at right is engineer Eddie Bush.



and bring 'em down for the start?" "OK, Jim, you catch 'em in the first turn." And the boats were gone. But it was a half-hour show, live. And the people got to hear the championship heat.

**When you had a new race site, how did you get a station on board for that?**

I talked to local people. Who are you working with, the voices in radio, to promote your sport? Who is the manager and I'd like to get his number. And I'd call and say, "This is Jim Hendrick. This is what we have to offer. This will give you... Promote three or four races before your race goes, and you can use this to come up to your event." And then you're gonna help 'em make fans, and afterwards follow it for a season. You're only talking five minutes on Friday, five minutes on Saturday, three five minutes on Sunday, and the half-hour. And they did it.

**Now, sometimes when a race site dropped off the circuit, you'd lose the radio as well?**

Sometimes not, sometimes not.

**We understand you had a lot to do with bringing in contingency sponsors.**

Yeah...

**Who were some of those that you brought in?**

Uh, Penske.

**OK.**

Roger Penske came in. Chrysler Corporation came in. Chrysler car dealers came in. I helped this local team get in the Chrysler-Jeep people together. Uh, who else? Well, we had Budweiser nationally, but we also got some local wholesalers involved with the local people, give them a little extra money and they'd get extra signage.



Julie and Mark Hooton

Hendrick interviews the future H1 Chairman Steve David in 1996.

**Did they get extra advertising time on the radio?**

No, they didn't get any extra time on mine. But their PA system, I mean, if they're gonna give you \$25-\$30,000, give them a few spots on PA. Give 'em an extra place for a sign. That's the way we did that.

**How about recruiting advertisers for the radio network. Did you do some of that?**

Didn't have to do too much for that because Budweiser was big. Bernie knew so many people. The head of RC Cola, that's a friend of Bernie, was at that time. So we had RC Cola on television, we had RC Cola on radio. Even on some of the spots locally. Heerensperger would buy the spots, did spots out west for his stores. But, the whole world didn't hear 'em. But when I said, "We'll be back after this word from your local sponsor," Heerensperger's Pay 'n Pak was on a lot of the stations that way. So were car dealers.



Jim Hendrick, Lee Schoenith and the Budweiser Clydesdales.



Hendrick and owner of the Budweiser race team, Bernie Little.

**The local engineers flipped a switch and ran the local ad?**

Yeah, well, we timed it for 62 seconds. He'd bring it up, you hear the crane noise for two seconds, "Back here on the Detroit River..." You know, that kind of deal.

**You worked with different commissioners. You worked with Lee Schoenith, Buddy Byers...**

Lee Schoenith, Buddy Byers, Erv Steiner...

**How would you describe some of their ways of doing things?**

Well, Lee was the Czar. No doubt about it. He was hardcore, you know. In fact, Lee invited me to join Phil Cole on this race on PA also, and to do some things...

OK.

I mean, the Schoenith family. Of course, Joe and Millie are gone, and Lee's gone. But, uh, I liked working with Don Jones. And I liked work-

ing with Freddie Alter. Worked with a lot of commissioners. They all had their own idiosyncrasies, but they all meant well. And then we had meetings and, you know, they'd get on my butt and I'd say, "Wait a minute, did we talk in the bus?" You know?

Yeah.

One thing you never did with Bernie... I'd deal with Bernie, too. I would not get in above Bernie. Go in the bus, shut the door. I'd go, "We

have a problem?" "Yup, but it's just you and me," and we'd talk. He liked that. I don't want people hearing Bernie's announcer, everything, if you had an argument.

**Some of the later people who ran the sport, did they have the same ideas? Were they easy enough to work with?**

Well, one was Heerensperger's buddy...

**Bill Doner?**

Bill Doner. Bill's the president of a sunglass company. I talk to him every once in awhile. He tried to get me kicked out. He tried to get me two or three times. Bernie said, "No, you're not." And when Bernie came up with that money for them to buy it, I was protected by Bernie. I mean, there was no doubt about it.

**How about Gary Garbrecht, how was he to work with?**

I liked Gary. I thought Gary was trying. He tried very hard. He tried to do everything he could.



Hendrick visits with former commissioner and driver Fred Alter.

Ron Harsin



**How did you feel about going from the clock starts to the flag starts, things like that?**

(Pauses) Well...

**It wasn't Garbrecht that started that.**

No, who started it?

**It was Doner.**

Was it Doner? Well, the flag start, I don't know. I mean, all these guys timing up on a flag start. It's OK for cars, but I like the timed start where they have to hit that line when the (claps his hands) clock goes zero.

**Or the difference of fighting for lanes versus having them assigned?**

That was fun for a while.

**How about some of the officials you worked with. How do you remember Bill Newton?**

Let's see here, uh, everybody kind of said Newton was buddies with Bernie. He was buddies with Heerenspeerger, too.

**Yeah.**

Basically it's the same way. But he'd call... Oh, I remember him telling Bernie Little. Bernie came up to him one time. A call came in on Budweiser and I'm standing there. He said, "One step and it's gonna cost you 500 bucks and maybe more. I don't want to talk about it now, Bernie, later." And Bernie went oops, right back down. Yeah, Newton was, could be tough.



Ron Harbin

**Did you have much opportunity to talk to the officials between heats or something?**

Sometimes, sometimes. You know, not through the half-hour show. All I'd say is, I need the five-minute gun at 4:05. I need to bring the start at 4:10. I need to get all the heats in, to be about 4:20. I get commercials in from 4:20 to the winning driver interview, to call the show. Said please, guys. Think now, think.

**So the schedule was really driven by the radio network.**

It was, but it made sense. Mike Noonan used to, he finally came around, but he'd go, "What the hell's different if we start at 4:00?" And Buddy Byers even stuck up for him. I said, "Hold it, you guys. OK, let's say it's a 1:00 start. And all of a sudden everybody's waiting. You got your pop poured, let's just say. How 'bout if it's the Super Bowl?" And Buddy loved the Super Bowl. I say it's gonna be, you know, lookin', 1:00 start. You're sittin' down, all of a sudden, "Hello everybody, here's the kickoff." No pre, no set-up, who the hell knows what... Now I'm

gonna go, "And here they come." What, who's coming? (Laughter.) I can't straighten out five or six races, with trailers, or whatever you want to do. No, you gotta give me a 10-minute set-up. I can go five-minute gun, the one-minute gun, get a couple of spots in and get some stories and re-cap it. "Here's the final five. And I see Bill Muncy's really down past the Rooster-tail..." Bad start, yeah (chuckles). And you watch for things like that.

**Were there some drivers you found easier to interview than others?**

Yes.

**Bill Muncy must've been one of the best.**

Muncy was very good. So was Reynolds. Steve was very, very good.

**Chip Hanauer was maybe not quite as easy?**

Ah, Chip was OK. He was OK. You see, I can see he was drivin' Miller and I was a Budweiser guy. I think



that got way out of proportion. I don't think he still thinks that now 'cause he came and drove for Bernie. Uh, I thought Walter Kade was slow and easy. He was a good guy. So was Red Loomis. And I drove *Savair's Mist* in Tampa.

**We were wanting to ask you about that. Tell us a little bit about that opportunity. What happened?**

Well, I wanted to... I thought about driving, being from Detroit and all. And we got into Tampa, and I did some dual time with Walt Kade. And I thought the watch was OK. And the average, the minimum speed to read, required, was 95. So I got out there, I made two laps, cut in the infield. I'm ready, came on down and hit the start again. The faster I went the lower the nose came, the better I could see. And I watched the speedometer coming. That was 140 miles an hour in the straightaway in that boat. And I thought, work it through there. And when you set up for the first turn just cock it a little bit and... Have you ever seen an airplane crabbing in the wind?

**Yeah.**

That's what the boats will do. You

set it up and you sit there, and how do I get out of it 'cause I don't want the nose dropping. And you sit there and you decide, and then nitrous, and stab it this way (gestures) and it should come out. You had to average three laps.

**Yeah, in those days.**

I was 97.2. And Walt Kade comes to me, he said, "Pretty good, son. What would you have done if you'd, you know, took it all lap?" I said, "I had the foot to the pedal, down." "Aw, I don't think so." Jumped in the boat, came back, he says, "Crazy bastard, he did have the boat..." I figured he went more than 140 in the straightaway. Change that engine. That was the deal.

**Had you ever driven any other race boats?**

No. Bill Muncey took me to dinner, he says, "You're crazy but you've got guts and now you'll have a better insight into your announcing." So Bill took me to dinner. I remember that. That was something else. It was a big deal.

**What year was that in Tampa?**

I think it was 1966. Next race we lost guys.



**Yeah, the next race.**

And then I said, "I'm not driving, forget that." We lost three guys in one race in one year. I had never straightened out at the end of the season, the emotional. I made sure I said hello to everybody. You know, Jim Ranger, he and I roomed together. He was a good guy. And his wife, Yvonne Dodge. And, uh, yeah, I'll never forget that, ever. Bad day. And then I had to broadcast. Donnie Wilson was driving Bernie's boat.

**Right.**

And he said, my dad listens in Dearborn. It's Father's Day, wish him a



The *Savair's Mist*. Hendrick drove the boat in a test run in Tampa.

happy Father's Day. Let him know I'll call him right after the race. He didn't make it after the race. Now, I go to a commercial and the director says, "What's happening?" I said, "I'm not sure, we had an announcement." I knew he was dead, but I'm not gonna tell a man sittin' there, "Happy," you know, "your son's dead." I knew he was listening. Let the wire services take it. I told Ronnie Musson was dead and I told 'em Rex Manchester. I was driving Rex Manchester's motorcycle back and forth from the pit area. That was a terrible day. Terrible day.



Tony Bugeja

Interviewing Miss Budweiser driver Dean Chenoweth in 1979.

**Of course, you had the issue in Tampa the following year when Bill Brow was killed.**

I think it was the very first lap.

**Right out of the first turn.**

Came off the exit pin, he got airborne, flew out of the boat and hit his head on the tail. Boom.

**Ah, that's what happened.**

Came right out and hit his head on the tail. Now I'm going, I just reached over, took a tranquilizer, Diet Coke, and kept going. And boy, had more phone calls. "Are you all right, are you all right?" 'Cause I mean, I went through hell after we lost those four guys the previous year. And I was dating Noonie Brow.

**Oh.**

And she's the sweetest thing. Whole Brow family I liked.

**And then they lost Warner Gardner here the next year.**

Warner went out here. He rolled it. I watched it. My announcer position is right down here on the corner. It hooked. The boat went sideways. I can, every accident, you know. Bill Muncey, I saw Muncey lookin' back in the final heat at Acapulco, and he'd had a terrible day, and all the press from, uh...

**Atlas?**

Atlas Van Lines was there. And this is the World Championship race. First foreign race. He could save his whole season with a win. Got out front and he was lookin' for Dean. Dean was tryin' to chase him. And he's lookin' like this (turns his head to the left). And you see a roller comin' at him. He launched off that roller. Went right over backwards. Slap. Well, that was it. I went there. I saw him. He was still alive, but they had him on the thing to keep him alive. Fran wasn't there. I got back to the hotel, Fran called me, she said, "I heard your broadcast from the San Diego radio station. We were out in the desert. Can we talk?" I said, "Of course, Fran, we

can talk." That was, there were a lot of tough times.

**Now, when Dean went over he basically had the same kind of accident. The boat landed on top of him.**

That's right, yeah. I got to the hospital, 'cause I came from the hotel. I heard it on the radio, local. I went right to the hospital and they tell me. Bernie was outside and he goes, "Jim." And he looked at me and I knew it. I walked in and talked with the widow. She didn't know she was a widow until I walked in there. I took her and I said, "Honey, he's gone." Oh...

**The enclosed cockpits have saved a lot of guys.**

Yes, they have, they really have. They've saved a lot of lives. I feel a lot better about it. But every time I've stood there and watched... (gasps). But I kept going.

**That's part of being professional. Well, to kind of shift gears a little bit, how do you feel about the future of the sport now?**

I'm worried about it.

**What do you see?**

I'm worried about it. I am really worried about it. They don't have a national TV package, although I'm working very hard to make that happen again. I'm going to a special meeting on the West Coast. We get these sponsors that sponsor some of the race sites and they'll put money into television. I have to come out of retirement. I work with Steve Montgomery and we'll have, you know, a veteran crew. But, uh, that would help. But right now, well, you see it. You've been around.

**You see eight boats and that's not a very big field.**

And it's a Gold Cup. Now, how do you figure eight boats in a Gold Cup?

**Yeah, that's not real good.**

So now you're gonna have four and four if they...

**Probably, yeah.**

1A, 1B. They've got to race 60 miles. So we have one, two, three, four heats. A and B, in four heats, that's eight, and then you go into the final. And it's a three-mile course, so that would give you your... The thing is, Seattle, great job. Always puts on a good event. This race, they bust their ass. Madison busts their ass, but you don't get... San Diego does a good job. Jim Kidrick is back and running that place and they have a nice race out there. They have more boats, too. Of course, the West Coast boats...

**They'll come down...**

Yeah, I miss it. I miss it. But it was time. We had to step aside. Everybody wanted me out of here. (Laughs.) Not everybody, but there were more guys trying

to get my job. Once I stepped aside, nobody picked it up.

**That's what happened.**

Nothing. It died. If I knew that was gonna happen I probably would've stayed on.

**You've been out for, what, three years now?**

More than that. I think it's four.

**Yeah. Not long after Budweiser left.**

Well, Budweiser left. He (Bernie) died and then August let Joe Little race in honor of his dad for two more years, and then closed the doors and that's it. And Joe won both years.

**Yeah, he did as good job in that regard.**

He had to quit.

**The money...**

August said, "Hey, when your dad raced he had you and your brother, Bernie, Jr. You guys did a good job. Who have you got to take your place if you go boat racing? One boy's in school, he's too little. Your future's here." And sure, they make a lot of money.

**Well, one thing, and this is not really boat racing, sometimes there were famous games of Hearts on Bernie's bus. Do you have any insight into that?**

(Laughs.) We used to do that on Bernie's yacht! We used to do that on Bernie's boat. Now airplane. 'Cause Lee Schoenith would come



Ron Harsin

Hendrick has a discussion with Bob Hughes (far right) of the Oh Boy! Oberto race team.



in from Sarasota, and myself, he'd fill up his airplane. We'd go all the way to Tri-Cities and the pilots would fly out. Actually, we landed in Seattle, picked up some cars from the auto dealers, and we were out there for both races. Then the crew would fly back in and get us. But Hearts, yeah. We played a lot of Hearts. You're talking Buddy Byers. You're talking Bernie Little. You're talking Lee Schoenith. You're talking...

**Steve Woomer?**

Woomer. You're looking at Pay 'n Pak people.

**Heerensperger?**

Yeah, Heerensperger. Yup.

**You say you miss it. Do you still follow it?**

Yeah, but I don't want to stay for the race. I'm just here today. I'm here for the luncheon tomorrow with the legends. The only reason I'm a legend is I'm so old. And then my son and I will head back to Florida. I drove. And then in two weeks I do have to fly back here for four days because of the Bardahl situation. (Ole Bardahl was being inducted into the Motorsports Hall of Fame – Ed.) Yeah, there's a lot of people. Mike Wolfbauer, he ran two boats, the *Savair's Probe* and the *Savair's Mist*. And he wasn't a real, real rich man, but he ran 'em.

**Yeah, kept 'em going.**

He kept them going. Good to see Jim Harvey. I'm glad to see him. He did a header, 'bout two years ago, off the boat, but he looks good. If it



Hendrick Facebook page

works out and I get something, I'll come back. The radio stations, you can go. I'd come back if they want me to resurrect the radio network. I could do that, too. And then we'll see, the TV. The guy in Qatar, the Sheikh, when he was a little boy growing up in his country, was educated. He loved the boats and he heard my voice.

**Looking back, how do you feel about where your career has taken you?**

Well, I did have a lot of fun, except for the guys getting' killed and just tearing me up. I lived that. It's been, I've been very lucky. Very lucky. But I had a lot of fun, I really did. But a lot of people thought I was

high and mighty and stuck up. I wasn't. When I walk through the pits, a million things on my mind about the radio. An issue here, like I'm brushing people off, we gotta stop that. But I did that. And people say...

**You were focused on other things.**

Well, they didn't know that and I should've said, "I can't do it now, I'm too busy." But we had a lot of good times.

**All right, well, we've covered a lot. Thank you.**

You're very welcome.

# HydroFile

## Race Team News

**Lon Erickson**



### U-1 MISS MADISON

As winter work continues in the Madison shop with parts maintenance and stripping down the boat, the former Oberto sponsorship color scheme is now gone from the hull. The expectation is that a new primary sponsor will be named soon and the color scheme will reflect the new sponsor.



All three photos from Madison Came Running

### U-22 WEBSTER RACING

Steve and Mike Webster have announced the U-22 team is for sale. They chose not to race in the last event of the 2015 season at San Diego Bayfair. There was discussion about a lack of resources and that has led to a decision to put the team is up for sale. The announcement details a complete turnkey racing operation, including the 2012-13 rebuilt and updated hull (right), trailer, two turbine motors and gearboxes, and additional parts. Other equipment is also available: motorhome, race shop, hauler and parts. Serious buyers should contact Steve Webster at [swebsterU22@verizon.net](mailto:swebsterU22@verizon.net).

(Left) There goes the old color scheme. Larry Hanson scrapes off the Oberto colors to make way for something new. (Top) Richard Dunn cleaning parts in the U-1 shop in Madison, Indiana. (Above) Tyler Hanson stands before the stripped down national champion hull.



U-22 Facebook page



## U-27 WIGGINS RACING

Shop nights continue at Wiggins Racing. The hull is upside down in the shop with changes being made to the running surfaces (speed secrets).



U-27 Facebook page

(Top Left) It's crew night at the U-27 Wiggins Racing Team shop in Gadsden, Alabama. (Above) Adjustments are being made to the U-27 hull.

(Top Right) Mike Hanson is making repairs to the Ellstrom Racing hull in the Seattle shop. (Bottom Right) Mike Hanson making minor repairs to the Ellstrom hull.

## ELLSTROM RACING

As Mike Hanson continues to work and find small areas that need to be repaired, hints are coming that 2016 will bring a new color scheme for Ellstrom Racing.



Ellstrom Facebook page

## NEXT MEETING OF UNLIMITEDS UNANIMOUS

**Saturday, February 13, 2016**  
**Meeting starts at 2 p.m.**

Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum  
5917 South 196th Street  
Kent, Washington 98032

**We'll be there visiting the annual  
RC Hydro Show**

**YOU ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND!**

**Silver Lake Dental Arts**

Michael C. Johnson, DDS, PS  
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