

UNLIMITED NewsJournal

A CHRONICLE OF SPEED

JULY 2022

Peabody wins the Gold Cup.

Corey Peabody was crowned the winner of the 112th APBA Gold Cup at Guntersville, Alabama. His victory at the controls of the U-9 *Lynx Healthcare* came when both Jimmy Shane and Dave Villwock were disqualified for infractions that happened before the final heat started. It was Peabody's second career race victory.

Defending Gold Cup champion Shane drove U-1 *Miss HomeStreet* to wins in every preliminary heat he entered in the two-day contest and seemed well on his way to his sixth Gold Cup win—running ahead of the other competitors through the entire final. When the race ended, though, officials ruled that he violated the minimum-speed rule by dropping below 80 mph before the start. With Shane's disqualification, the Gold Cup went to Peabody, who crossed the finish line second.

Villwock in U-40 *Miss Beacon Plumbing* won three of his four preliminary heats, thus setting up a greatly anticipated battle with Shane in the final. It wouldn't happen. He was also disqualified, first for driving the hydro outside of the racecourse boundary before the start, and then for also violating the minimum-speed rule.

Placing second in the race was Jeff



Chris Denslow

Jimmy Shane in *Miss HomeStreet* (left) battled Corey Peabody in *Lynx Healthcare* during Heat 3A of the Gold Cup. Shane went on the victory in that race, but Peabody won the winner-take-all final heat and the APBA Gold Cup after Shane was disqualified.

Bernard in the U-91 *Goodman Real Estate* and taking third-place honors was Jamie Nilsen in the U-11 *Miss Colleen*. The other starter in the final, J. Michael Kelly in the U-8 *Miss Tri-Cities*, did not finish.

Jimmy King and the Allison-powered U-3 *Griggs presents Miss Ace Hardware* were also in the race, but didn't score enough points to get in the final because of a minimum-speed disqualifi-

cation before Heat 3B.

The standings after the Gold Cup show Shane with 1,600 points, Peabody with 1,469, Villwock with 1,369, Bernard with 1,319, Kelly with 1,125, Nilsen with 1,069, and King with 825.

A full report about the Gold Cup race in Guntersville will be featured in next month's issue of the *Unlimited NewsJournal*. ❖

ALSO IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

2 Testing a new site in Vancouver
5 Tri-Cities preseason test session

8 Vintage boats hit the water
10 Norm Christiansen interview

15 Senior \$ays by Bob Senior
16 My \$0.02 Worth by Andy Muntz

GETTING READY FOR RACING IN 2022

The hydros test a new site in Vancouver, Wash

BY CRAIG FJARLIE

The first event of 2022 took place on the Columbia River at Vancouver, Washington, on May 20. Nelson Holmberg was event director. The exhibition featured four boats: U-8 *Miss Tri-Cities*, U-11 Unlimited Racing Group (sponsored at the event by May Awning and Patio), U-40 *Miss Beacon Plumbing*, and U-91 *Goodman Real Estate*.

The pits were behind an industrial area, upriver from the prime spectator viewing section. There was a 15-foot drop from the back of the pits to the water. A dock was set in place on the west side of the pits, with a ramp leading down to it. The course would be approximately two

miles around.

A drivers' meeting was held at 8:30 a.m. Head referee Rick Sandstrom reminded drivers that only one boat would run at a time. There would be no draw—the teams would have to work out among themselves when each boat would run.

The local fire department insisted there would be no grinding of metal, to prevent flying sparks. There was still work to be done before boats could take to the course. The rescue boat was launched and the buoys needed to be put in place. Darrell Strong, owner of *Miss Tri-Cities*, volunteered to use his pick-up truck to go to the Portland airport and purchase four drums of fuel, one for each

team, that were in containers approved by the fire department inspector.

The size of the crowd was hard to judge due to the viewing area being a narrow trail along the river where people were constantly coming and going, but a safe estimate would be about 1,000 throughout the day. Some of those expecting the action to begin at 9 a.m. were getting impatient as the delay extended to 11 o'clock without an explanation. But, finally, a few minutes before noon, everything was ready.

The first boat out was *Goodman Real Estate*. Driver Jeff Bernard made three laps, his best speed was 142.011 mph. Upon his return to the pits, he said roll-



Chris Denslow



Lon Erickson

ers were staying in turn one because of the current. “It reminds me of Owensboro,” he remarked.

Miss Beacon Plumbing went next. The hull had obvious aerodynamic changes from 2021, and the level ride showed the team had made a positive improvement. Dave Villwock ran three laps, his best speed was 154.619 mph. It was the fastest lap of the day; no other boat came within 10 mph of that speed. Villwock and owner Kelly Stocklin were obviously pleased.

Miss Tri-Cities was the third boat out, but it was a short run. J. Michael Kelly made two laps, the fastest at 116.550 mph. Then on the third lap the boat took a hop and went dead in the water. Smoke came out of the exhaust pipe and the local fire department reacted as if the boat were on fire.

There was no major damage, but before a tow boat could get a line on the boat, the current had taken it a long way down the course. It was a slow ride back to the pits for J. Michael. The crew reported they had a cracked fuel or oil line and were done for the day.

At about 1:40 p.m., U-11 was cleared to run as *Miss Tri-Cities* was approaching the pits. Jamie Nilsen turned five laps, his best speed was 138.557 mph.

While U-11 was running, *Goodman Real Estate* went in the water, right behind *Miss Tri-Cities* on the dock. When Nilsen came in, there was no room on the dock,



Chris Denslow



Craig Fjarlie

TOP: The four participants in the Vancouver exhibition in the pit area along the shore of the Columbia River. **MIDDLE:** Part of the crowd that watched the event. **ABOVE:** Dave Villwock and the U-40 *Miss Beacon Plumbing* prepare for a test run.

so he shut down early at the mouth of the pits. The tow boat had to quickly release *Miss Tri-Cities*, then chase down U-11, which was drifting down river in the current.

It was 2:15 p.m. when *Goodman Real Estate* went out and ran five laps. Bernard's best lap was 136.874 mph. He had to slow down in the lumpy turns and watch for small chunks of debris.

Beacon ran again. Villwock did two laps, his best speed was 153.590 mph. The course was supposed to close at 3 o'clock, but given the morning delays and the time spent towing in *Miss Tri-Cities*, H1 was granted an extension until 3:30 p.m. U-11 went in the water at 3:10 and did five consistent laps. Nilsen's best was 139.437 mph, his fastest lap of the day.

There was general agreement that Vancouver would be interested in having a race. However, given the tight pit facility and limited spectator viewing area, a different location would have to be approved to meet all the needs for a full field of boats and adequate space for fans, including parking. Nelson Holmberg worked hard to put the exhibition together. Here's hoping his effort can move on to the next level. ❖



Lon Erickson



Craig Fjarlie



Chris Denslow

TOP: Jamie Nilsen takes the U-11 around the course. **MIDDLE:** A busy moment at the dock when crew members tend to both *Miss Tri-Cities* and *Goodman Real Estate* while the U-11 approaches at the end of a tow line. **ABOVE:** *Miss Beacon Plumbing* on the Columbia River.

Tri-Cities preseason testing: 2022 is going to be a competitive season.

BY CHRIS TRACY

Five unlimited hydroplanes arrived Thursday in Kennewick, Washington, for the Friday, June 3, preseason testing session: U-1 *Miss HomeStreet*, U-8 *Miss Tri-Cities*, U-9 *Pinnacle Peak Consulting*, U-21 *Lakeridge Paving*, and U-40 *Miss Beacon Plumbing*. They all sported final paint jobs, except the U-9 *Pinnacle Peak Consulting*, which had no sponsor decals on the sponsons.

It was kind of an odd June day for the normally sunny Tri-Cities, as it was cloudy and about 70 degrees in the morning. The Tri-City Water Follies, which hosts the event, had expertly set up the course and the pits were ready for testing to begin at 9 a.m. The water looked perfect and there was little to no breeze. Cooler weather allows the engines to run more efficiently, and the boats run faster.

All boat teams came with one purpose: to test. And, they did. All tested several times over the day—maybe the most testing ever in the history of pre-season testing in the Tri-Cities. One boat went on the course at a time, with the first going out at 9 a.m. sharp and the last out at 4:30 p.m. Except for a lunch break and during a half-hour heavy rain shower, the boats were consistently going in or out of the water.

There were two cranes, and they were busy. Often one was taking out or putting in boat equipment and the other was putting in or taking out a boat from the Columbia River. It's worth noting, that during preseason testing, running top speed laps is generally secondary to running several combinations, testing systems, testing various engines and gearboxes, maybe trying something



Lon Erickson



Lon Erickson

TOP: The pit area at the Tri-Cities. **ABOVE:** The crew gets Jimmy Shane and *Miss HomeStreet* ready for a test run as the U-21 *Lakeridge Paving* returns from the course.

new or giving a new driver some seat time. That said, the top lap speeds during the day were pretty fast for all the participating boats.

Miss HomeStreet, with Jimmy Shane driving, tested three different engines and ran laps in the 140s to the 160s, with

the fastest lap at 166, which proved to be the fastest lap of the day. The boat looked great—solid runs, great acceleration, good ride. There was one hiccup. The boat went out for its second test session, ran three fast laps in the 160s, and then appeared to go dead in the water. Shane



Chris Denslow

ABOVE: Brian Perkins drives *Lakeridge Paving* around the Columbia River course during a test run.
RIGHT: J. Michael Kelly takes *Miss Tri-Cities* onto the course.



Lon Erickson

restarted the boat and brought it back in. A crew member told me that this had happened before with this engine and they'd have to check it out again.

Miss Tri-Cities, with J Michael Kelly driving, ran many times with the fastest lap being nearly 158. The boat looked good from the shore, but Kelly told H1's Brad Luce that he had some handling issues in the corners. The team worked on that issue during the day. Kelly was much happier with the boat's handling at the end of the day, although his speeds were not quite as fast in later runs—in the 153 to 155 range. With all the boats running well and fast, Kelly commented about the competition, "What more could you ask for?"

Pinnacle Peak Consulting ran well and fast. Its fastest lap was just under 160. If I saw anything, and this is picky, maybe a consistent tiny hop near the apex of the turn nearest to the pits. Corey Peabody seems confident in his ride and this boat is poised to be a contender.

Perhaps the boat that perked the most fan attention at testing was the *Lakeridge Paving*. The boat is almost new and has not run since 2019, nor has driver Brian Perkins driven an unlimited since the pandemic.

When the boat last ran, its ride was not perfect and appeared in need of new-boat dialing in. Well, that's history. The boat needed a little tinkering after it first went out. In the second run, the boat was impressive and Perkins navigated a top speed lap of 159! That team has to be happy.

The boat likely ran more laps than any other, as owner Greg O'Farrell's grandson and co-owner Brian O'Farrell's son, rookie Gunnar O'Farrell, took the boat out and ran many laps, enough reportedly to qualify as an unlimited driver. His fastest lap was a respectable 148.

O'Farrell, who is in his early- to mid-twenties and sports a distinctive mullet haircut, appeared to be more and more confident in the boat as he ran more laps. But he'll likely need more seat time to refine his track and turning arc. The *Lakeridge*

boat is expected to compete at both the HAPO Columbia Cup in Tri-Cities and the HomeStreet Bank Cup in Seattle.

Innovations abound with the *Miss Beacon Plumbing*. In Vancouver, the boat appeared with significant changes to the left sponson. At Tri-Cities, there was more handiwork on the left sponson, as a flaperon was installed between the two upright fences. It appears to work in connection with the front canard.

Dave Villwock took the boat out several times and tested engines, gearboxes, and combinations. The boat's ride appeared improved from last year and was generally smooth. Fastest lap was 1:64. Driver Dave Villwock explained in an H1 interview that, "Everyone [on the Bucket List team] is all in" and "People that work hard often get lucky."

One boat was a no-show and another did not test, which had fans wondering. The U-91 *Goodman Real Estate*, which ran in the Vancouver exhibition, was thought to have committed to test, but did not show. The *Goodman* boat is expected to compete at all races this season.

And fans are scratching their heads about the *Graham Trucking* boat. The *Graham* team had NOT confirmed with Tri-Cities that they would test. Reportedly, the team has done much work to the hull in the off-season, but the boat did not run in Vancouver, nor test in Tri-Cities, which is uncharacteristic for the *Graham* team.

Scott and Shannon Raney's U-11 was not expected to test in Tri-Cities, but participated in the Vancouver exhibition. The piston powered U-3, owned by Ed Cooper, traditionally does not make the long trip from Indiana to Tri-Cities to do preseason testing. Both boats are expected to race for the Gold Cup in the season opening race in Guntersville, Alabama.

It's clear, all the boats are fast this year. The competition will be good, and this will be a great year for fans to attend as many races as they can. ❖



Lon Erickson



Chris Denslow



Chris Denslow

TOP: A closer look at the changes to the left sponson of *Miss Beacon Plumbing* and the flaperon that was installed before the Tri-Cities test session. **MIDDLE:** Corey Peabody driving the U-9, which will begin the 2022 season as *Lynx Healthcare*. **ABOVE:** Darrell Strong (left), co-owner of the Strong Racing Team with Corey Peabody. The two are at a Tri-Cities Dust Devils baseball game the night of the test session where Peabody threw out the first pitch. The team announced they will play as the Roostertails when the boats return to the Tri-Cities in July.

The debut of the rebuilt 1979 *Squire Shop* and a test of vintage boats.

BY LON ERICKSON

Four unlimiteds took to the water of Lake Washington at the Stan Sayres Pits on Tuesday, May 24. Each of the boats was from a different era and intended to run with different goals in mind. From oldest to newest:

- ◆ The 1959 U-12 *Maverick* (formerly Bill Black's *Gale V* reproduction), which is now owned by Steve Hayden and was updated by Mike and Larry Hanson.

- ◆ The 1962 U-7 *Notre Dame* (formerly the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum's *Oberto*), which is owned by Thunder Valley Hydroplanes and Gary Hansen.



Lon Erickson



Lon Erickson

TOP: The 1979 *Squire Shop* was recently restored by the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum, was launched, and made its first run on Lake Washington in 30 years. **ABOVE:** Three of the four boats at the event. From the top, the 1979 *Squire Shop*, the 1962 *Notre Dame*, and the 1959 *Maverick*.

◆ The 1973 U-1 *Pay 'n Pak* owned by Dr. Ken Muscatel.

◆ The debut of the museum's latest addition, the 1979 U-2 *Squire Shop*.

The feature of the day was the debut of the '79 *Squire Shop*, which was getting back on the water for the first time in 30 years. Museum Director David Williams handled the inaugural shake down run and crew chief John Watkins took the U-2 out again later in the day. On hand to be a part of the debut were Bob Steil, the boat's original owner; Dave Knowlen, the designer; and Norm Berg, its builder. The plan is for its original driver, Chip Hanauer, to be in the seat later this summer.

The '59 *Maverick* made several runs with Dixon Smith behind the wheel and gave new owner Steve Hayden a look at one of his vintage fleet on the water.

The '73 *Pak* was on hand to provide rides for auction recipients, driving school participants, and museum volunteers who have earned rides through hours they have worked. The boat made one run early in the day but suffered a cracked fitting that couldn't be repaired onsite, so they were done early.

Julie Heerensperger Warren and family were on hand to honor her father, Dave Heerensperger, the owner of the *Pay 'n Pak* race teams. She intended to ride the *Pak* onto Lake Washington and spread his ashes in the south turn of the hydroplane course. But, with the *Pak* unable to run, she instead went out with David Williams in the *Notre Dame* to do the honors.

Thunder Valley's '62 *Notre Dame* was able to pick up some of the slack in rides given and made a number of runs throughout the day, and provided some seat time for a few drivers.

Under somewhat-overcast spring Seattle skies, it was a good day to be a vintage unlimited fan. ❖



Lon Erickson



Lon Erickson



Lon Erickson

TOP: The 1973 *Pay 'n Pak* made a brief appearance at the event until mechanical issues ended its day. **MIDDLE:** The men who created the *Squire Shop* in 1979. From the left, designer Dave Knowlen, owner Bob Steil, and builder Norm Berg. **ABOVE:** The 1962 *Notre Dame* sets off on one of its runs.

FROM THE UNJ VAULT:

Norm Christiansen and his backyard boat.

The decade of the 1950s brought a mania for roostertails in Seattle that included a number of interesting characters. Norman W. Christiansen was certainly among them. Born in Seattle in 1918, he attended West Seattle High School and the University of Washington, then was employed in a capacity that he described as marine engineering. In 1956, at a time when the local passion for unlimited hydroplanes was massive, Christiansen entered the sport with his home-built *Tempest*. The boat would become the first to have the legendary name of *Miss Bardahl* the following year and would then race as *Miss Burien*. Craig Fjarlie interviewed Christiansen in 1974 and the result was first published in the January 1975 issue of the *Unlimited NewsJournal*.

UNJ: When did you first become interested in boat racing?

Christiansen: I think it was about 1953. Bill Tonkin—we had always been buddies—and I each built a boat. We started in the 136-cubic-inch class. It turned out I built the hulls and Bill setup the engines.

When were the first pieces cut for *Tempest*? When did construction start?

Well, I started on that in the fall of '55. I had fairly complete plans because I'd been in design commercially for several years. Our first big problem, as I saw it, was to get a gearbox. That was a big outlay. So, I got the money together

and we ordered a box from Staudacher, which is a Volker box. Actually, once we had the gearbox, I felt all the other problems were minor. I worked on it in my basement, which was really handy, and I had help from quite a few people. Finally, we got the hull fairly well completed and then had to move it outside, or partly outside, in order to put the sponsons on because the opening was only about the size of the main hull.

What unique or original features did you incorporate? Did you deviate in any way from standard design practices of the day?

No, I don't think so. Actually, we just

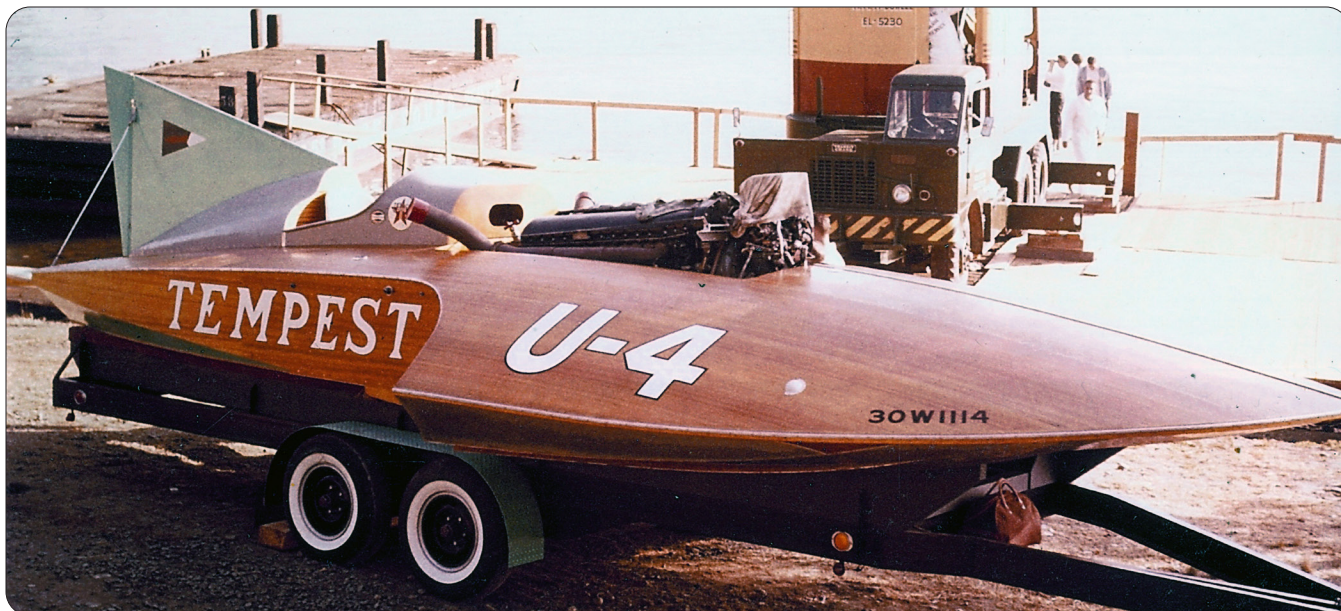
wanted to build a boat that was able to get out and compete with the others. We weren't looking for any special features. It was enough to get the conventional one going.

Where did you get the engines?

Well, we only had one engine the first year. I think we paid \$250 for it. I ordered it from a guy who had a wrecking yard up around Anchorage, Alaska. Anyway, he had just gone out and cut the front end off the airplane. It still had the cowling, oil cooler, and everything on it.

By the time you got the boat in the water, how much did it cost?

Well, of course there wasn't any la-



Jerry King

The brand-new *Tempest* in 1956. The boat was built in Norm Christiansen's back yard.

bor involved. It was only the material that we bought for the hull, which was spruce, plywood, bolts, aluminum, the engine, and gearbox. I'd say we probably had about \$7,000 all totaled.

What was your impression of the first test run? Were you satisfied?

Yeah, I think we were. We had it over at Sand Point and we had quite a crowd around. Bill Tonkin was at the wheel. He and I went out together the first time. I don't recall that we had any problems at all. We were just about at planing speed, about 60, 70 miles an hour.

Were any significant changes made after the first test run?

I don't recall any except our propeller. It was three-bladed, which I bought from Staudacher, and it turned out to be a very poor wheel. In fact, we broke a blade off it in testing, so we borrowed one from the *Miss Seattle* crew, which was an old *Slo-mo IV* wheel. It was a two-bladed bronze wheel and it had a crack in it, but we couldn't be choosy about it at the time. It turned out to be one of the best wheels we ever operated with. But we were always worried about the crack.

Why was Bill Tonkin selected to drive in the 1956 Seafair Race?

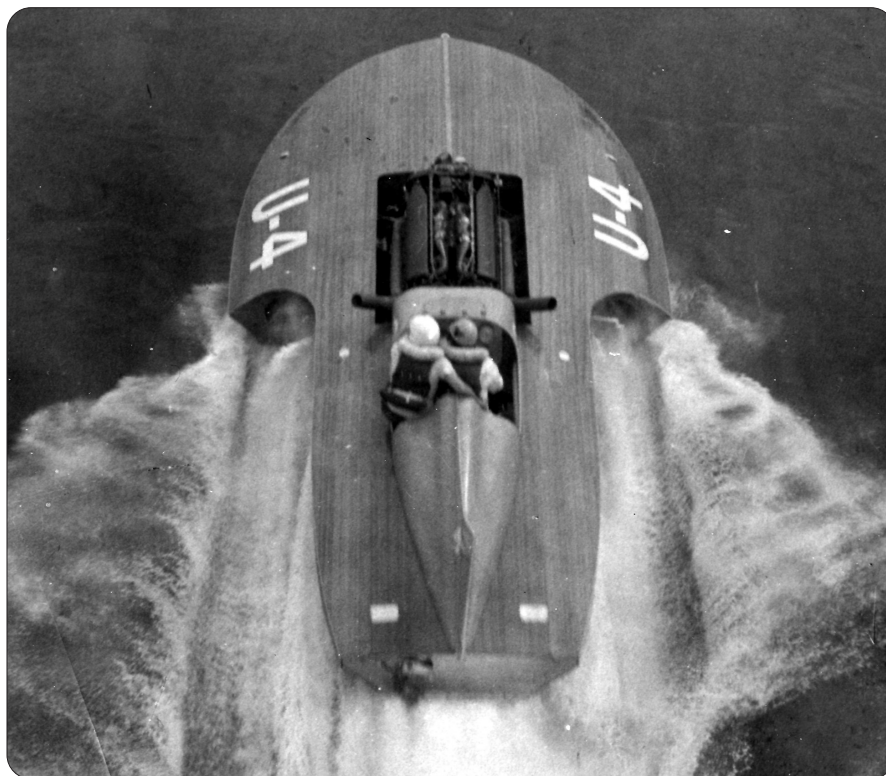
I was the owner and had to organize

things, so I felt it was too much for me to take that on along with the driving. So, it ended up that I selected Bill to be the driver.

How did you feel after the Seafair race was over? Were you satisfied with

your effort? And had you hoped to go to any other races in '56?

Satisfied—very much so. As I recall, we qualified at around 103 with only a couple of hours on the boat. So, we got in the race and finished the first heat. We

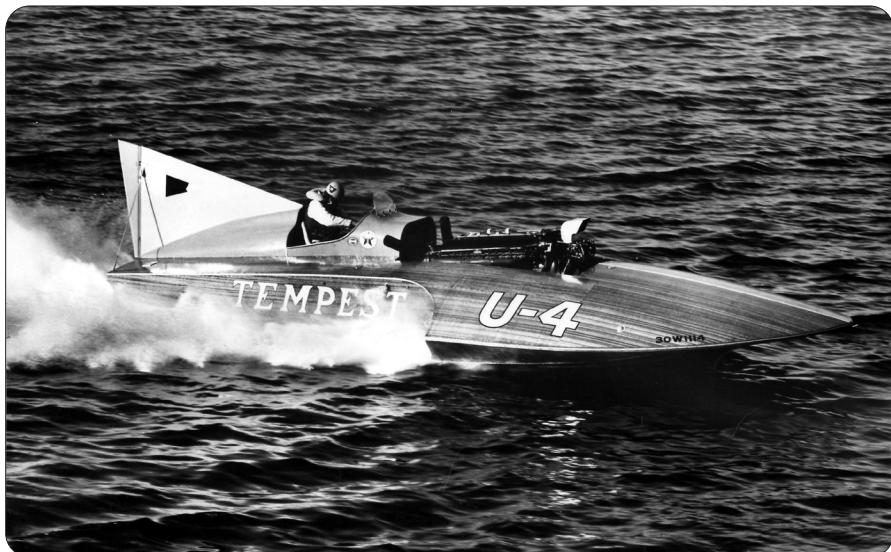


Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

The new *Tempest* heads out onto Lake Washington for its first test run with Bill Tonkin behind the wheel and Norm Christiansen at his side.



Sandy Ross Collection



Bob Carver Photos



Bob Carver Photos

TOP: Norm Christiansen's *Tempest* parked next to *Such Crust III* in the Mt. Baker Pits during the 1956 Seafair Trophy race. **MIDDLE:** *Tempest* on Lake Washington in 1956. **ABOVE:** In 1957, Christiansen convinced Ole Bardahl to sponsor his boat. It was Bardahl's first entry into the sport, starting an involvement that lasted 14 seasons and resulted in 27 race victories and six national titles.

had some trouble with a cooling line to the stern bearing going out. Anyway, we entered the second heat—we had some mechanical failure [oil line] and it put him out for the rest of the race. And, we didn't have any sponsor, or other funding, at the time. We didn't have any real urge to enter any more races that fall.

When did you meet Ole Bardahl? Who initiated that contact?

It was that fall [1956]. I think it was about that time. I was approached by Peter Woeck. He was interested in the hydros and had welding and crane facilities. I think I made initial contact with Ole Bardahl, and then, in order to firm up the deal, Pete and I went over and had the final meeting to agree on a sponsorship.

What were the terms of the agreement made with him?

As I recall, it was an initial payment to get us underway and to buy some equipment. And to paint the boat. And then, I think, two more payments, which were hinged on the completion of some races that were scheduled.

What changes were made on the boat in the winter of '56 to '57?

We corrected some minor problems. Of' course we did order one or two more propellers. We purchased a couple more engines and we began organizing the crew better. We had Pete Woeck's oldest son, Richard, as crew chief. We were continually working up the engines. We also established the ability to change engines quickly.

How did it happen that Norm Evans was selected to drive in '57?

Under Bardahl's sponsorship we had to get more organized. As I recall, Ole and Jim Phillips [Bardahl public relations representative] wanted us to have a driver more well known in the big class. They kicked around a few names and Evans happened to be free. We talked to him, and he was willing to come in and drive.

In the 1957 Gold Cup, your boat led for part of the first heat—the first time a

Bardahl boat, or even your boat, was in front. How did you feel then?

I'd say in my own thinking I just hoped that everything held together out there, and that he would be able to keep up a favorable position. From experience we knew that the least little thing can put you out of a race. When you're on shore watching a boat at those speeds you have a picture of all those small things. Of course, it's a combination of the mechanics of the boat, of the driver's skill, and of a certain amount of luck in the position you get in a race.

You stayed with Bardahl through the western part of the '57 season, then you sold the boat to the crew.

Well, I found after the year with Ole Bardahl that I either had to get into the hydro racing full time or pretty much pull out, because you can't operate a set-up like that in your spare time. So, I decided to ease out of it somewhat. We put the boat on the shoulders of the corporation: Tempest, Inc.

So, in 1958 and 1959 the U-4 became Miss Burien. Mira Slovak drove in the '58 Apple Cup, Bill Brow and Dick



Kirk Johnson



Bob Carver Photos



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

TOP: The 1957 *Miss Bardahl* at the team's boat shop. **MIDDLE:** *Miss Bardahl* cruises past the boats tied to the log boom during the 1957 Gold Cup in Seattle. **ABOVE:** Christiansen sold the boat to his crew in 1958 and the boat was renamed *Miss Burien*.



Parker Studios

The Miss Burien speeds across Lake Washington during the 1958 Gold Cup

Short alternated in the Diamond Cup, and then Brow got the nod from then on out. How were the drivers selected?

We were going through a period there of trying out drivers. We had quite a few offering to drive. We knew that a top driver is an individual all to himself.

If we didn't offer any one driver a continuous seat, each one tended to look on a race to show what he could do.

In 1959 you were working on a boat similar to Waggoner's Shanty II, a one-step design. Would you comment on the success of that 280-class boat?

It had a Chevy V-8 in it. If you had ideal water conditions it was quite stable, but once you got any kind of wave action, it became fairly unstable. It had problems.

You saw a lot of unique boats in the '50s, a lot of interesting things happened. What stands out in your memory most?

I used to be interested in watching *My Sweetie*. It was a real operating vessel, but of course it was outmoded by the time the prop-riders came in. I think the accident that Bill Muncey had with the Coast Guard cutter was pretty thrilling. I found that after we really got into it, and were working on the boat in the pits, that you never had much time to watch other happenings. I can't recall anything but a lot of hard work and worries trying to keep the boat operating.

How real was the Seattle-Detroit rivalry? Was it a big play-up by the press, or were there hard feelings?

No, I don't think there were any hard feelings in the true sense. Of course, the press tried to play up anything that looked like a controversy. My impression was that the people from back east had been racing much longer than we had. They were in it more for the sport.



Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

Miss Burien being lifted by a crane at the 1959 Apple Cup in Chelan, Washington.

They tried to win, but weren't too upset if they didn't. Our people out here tended to look at it as real competition. They weren't in it really for the sport. They were in it to get the Cup and keep it here. So, I tended to favor the Eastern view.

Could you make a comparison between the time when you were involved in the sport and what it is like today [1975]?

As I see it now, there aren't any of the small-boat owners in there. You can't operate on a shoestring anymore. When

you have a sponsor, it's strictly business 'cause they're in it for the publicity, which is essentially money. Some claim to be in it for the sport, but if you look at most of 'em, it's advertising in one way or another. It seemed that it was much more pleasant when I was operating than as it is now.

As in all, was it worth it? Are you glad you participated?

Oh, I have never regretted it. I found it was a challenge. I had a lot of people tell me that I couldn't get into that type

of sport in my position. I enjoyed the activity, but there's a lot of sacrifice with it. Occasionally, I get the urge to sort of get back into it, but then I weigh things and I say, "Well, it's too much." I'm sort of happy doing what I am. So, I'll stay out of it. ❖

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Feeding Your Hydro Habit by Bob Senior



A guide to help hydro fans spend their hobby money.

HYDROS WHO'S WHO, by Jim Sharkey. The definitive reference tool for all Unlimited hydroplane enthusiasts. Contains information on all the boats, drivers, owners, years raced, and race results. Includes the *Unlimited NewsJournal's Record Book and Statistics*. The book has been updated from 1946 through 2021. For sale exclusively c/o the Hydroplane Museum Store for \$25. <https://www.hydroplane-museumstore.org>



Lon Erickson

SPEAKING OF THE MUSEUM... They are selling a beautiful new full-color poster of the Winged Wonder *Pay 'n Pak*. Check it out at the above address. While you are there, browse the Museum Store

button for membership information, racing videos, boat racing books, and hydro apparel.

HYDROMANIA: A HISTORY OF THE DIAMOND CUP, by Stephen Shepperd. This 400-page book is illustrated with over 100 photos. The book offers in-depth details of the Idaho races between 1958 and 1968. Available at \$39.95, plus tax and shipping c/o the Hydroplane Museum store.

TRI-CITIES AND SEAFAIR VIP PACKAGES AVAILABLE. Super-fan Rick Herrmann has 20 spots available at the Tri-Cities HAPO Columbia Cup "Hot Spot" tent. \$125 each, plus \$25 VIP parking. Email racinricky@msn.com ... Seafair offers a great Captain's Club VIP program. Prestige viewing at the start-finish line. Details at <https://www.seafair.org/events>

LOOKING FOR A 2022 SEAFAIR SKIPPER PIN? Contact Steve Levy. \$6 each, plus shipping. He also has a vast supply of earlier years for sale. Email stevenl20@aol.com

MEET HYDROPLANE ARTIST DONOVAN FURIN. Mr. Furin developed his love for hydroplane racing while growing up

in Seattle. He can recreate your favorite boat or racing memory, in either oil or water color, from an 8 x 10 or even larger. Contact him at donovan.furin.jc@gmail.com. You can view some of his work. Just Google Donovan Furin Hydroplane Art.

RACING THRU TIME. THE LOVE STORY OF JOHN AND ARLENE WALTERS. This book by long-time hydroplane racing participant John Walters is nearing publication this fall. We will keep you posted. A portion of book sales will be donated to organizations that treat depression and are involved with suicide prevention.

PRE-EMINENT HYDROPLANE PHOTOGRAPHER BILL OSBORNE is "considering" re-printing his book *Fifty Years*. It has been highly praised and has been out-of-print for a while now. If Bill does re-print, we will let you know.

AND MAY I TOOT MY OWN HORN AGAIN? Memorabilia collectors may be interested to know that every two weeks or so I send out an email Memorabilia Auction. If you would like to receive it, please contact me at bob.senior37@hotmail.com ❖

MY \$0.02 WORTH

Editorial Comment by Andy Muntz



With the Guntersville Gold Cup in the books, let me take a wild guess about the topic that is on the minds of many hydro fans. Could it be ... the minimum speed rule before the start?

I feel like we've beaten this horse already. Over the years we've answered all the questions that keep coming up on this subject. But, they're still being asked. So, here's a review:

Why does H1 have the minimum-speed rule? Because fans didn't like it when boats stopped or slowed to a crawl in order to claim a lane before the start.

Why not assign the lanes? Tried for seven years starting in 1991 and again for four years starting in 2001. The verdict both times was that drivers hated it and wanted to return to a clock start and a fight for lanes.

There must be a better way. The old rule said a boat had to remain on a plane. Why not go back to that? It worked with piston-powered boats that were slow to accelerate, but not so much with new tur-

bine boats that can troll then accelerate quickly. Besides, what's "on a plane"? It was too subjective and difficult for officials to enforce.

How about a score-up buoy? Make it so the boats can't pass the score-up buoy before a certain time and must therefore go fast in order to get to the starting line when the clock strikes zero. Been there, done that. It just moved the trolling to the other end of the course.

Okay. So, if we're stuck with the minimum-speed rule, why does the boat have to be disqualified? Why not make them run an extra lap? Because the officials don't know if a violation has happened until they read the data recorder after the race is over. By then, it's too late to run an extra lap.

But, can't the speed be read by somebody in real time while the boats are on the course? That's complicated. The walls of water that we call roostertails create all sorts of havoc with GPS systems. H1 actually has some experts in rocket telemetry trying to figure it out. Not as easy as it sounds.

Strobe lights! That's the solution! A

strobe light flashes when a boat drops below 80 mph! You're kidding, right?

So, the dilemma continues.

There is something new to report on the subject of rules, however. How often have you complained that such-and-such driver didn't deserve a penalty for starting too early, or for his lane encroachment, or that the boat didn't actually drop below 80 mph before the start?

Well, H1 has heard you.

If you've ever thought such a thing, H1 has a new feature just for you. When a referee makes a call, the details of that infraction are now written in a form that is posted on the H1 website for all to see. It's there with the evidence—a photo of the boat crossing the line too early, a photo of the lane infraction, the chart from the data recorder that records the speed.

It's part of H1's attempt to be more transparent. Check it out. You'll find the reports under the "Results" tab. ❖

EDITOR: Andy Muntz

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WEBSITE: unlimitednewsjournal.net

EDITOR: Unlimited NewsJournal, 14313 Beverly Park Road, Edmonds, WA 98026

Email: ajmuntz@icloud.com

Letters are welcome, but may be edited for clarity and space.

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Check our website for more information.