

Regatta Review

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Welcome to Gold Cup race-week 2005!

NEW SPECTATOR INFORMATION ON THE GOLD CUP WEBSITE

New and improved information about the Box Office, Will-Call, Credentials, and Parking locations has been added to our Parking page. On our home page click on "Box Office & Parking" in the right-hand column.

Also newly posted is the tentative schedule as well as a page with links to all the coverage. Those of you that can't be here, don't miss the live audio streaming from the PA provided by MLive.com! Those that take photos and post them on their own website are invited to let me know once they have posted their first round of photos.

DRIVER CHANGES FOR THE 2005 GOLD CUP

+ Veteran to Pilot U-5 FormulaBoats.com in Detroit:

Veteran driver Mike Weber, formerly of the U-10 Miss Emcor, will pilot the U-5 FormulaBoats.com in this weekend's Chrysler Jeep Superstores APBA Gold Cup race in Detroit, it was announced on Tuesday. One of two new teams on the 2005 ABRA circuit, the U-5 crew and owner Chad Sanderson are full of energy and excitement. Check out their website. <http://www.u5racing.com>

+ New driver announced for the U-13 Spirit of Detroit:

Terry Troxell of Gig Harbor, Wash. will return to the seat of an Unlimited hydroplane Friday as driver of the U-13 Miss Spirit of Detroit. The boat, a former Winston Eagle/Smoking Joe's hull set the Detroit River speed record of over 170 with Mark Tate driving, was purchased by Oakland County businessman Dave Bartush from the USA racing team last month and took delivery last week, in time for this week's Chrysler Jeep Superstores APBA Gold Cup race in Detroit. [Editor: I've heard that Cal Phipps was unable to drive due to ABRA qualification matters... not confirmed]

COASTALWAVE BRINGS WIFI ACCESS TO THE DODGE PITS AGAIN

CoastalWave, a company specializing in WiFi access at Marinas in our area and the Lake Erie area will again be providing WiFi access to the Dodge Pit area for those that are able to make use of it. Look for an SSID (connection name) of GoldCup or DodgePits, etc.

HYDRO RACES ROAR BACK WITH NEW SPONSORSHIPS

See the recent article in Crain's Detroit, a local business weekly publication, by Robert Ankeny:

<http://www.craigslist.com/cgi-bin/article.pl?articleId=27390>

FOR THE MEDIA: THE GOLD CUP EVENT IN REVIEW

History:

The APBA Gold Cup began in 1904 and is the most prestigious trophy in powerboating. Created by Tiffany & Co., it is also the oldest active motorsport trophy in the world. The first major race to be run on the Detroit River was the 1916 APBA Gold Cup. This was by virtue of the community-owned MISS DETROIT winning the Cup in 1915 on Manhasset Bay near Long Island and earning the right to defend it on home waters.

The Boats:

Today's Unlimited Hydroplanes are built with aircraft composite materials, must be propeller driven, and use jet and piston engines to power them to speeds up to 200 MPH. They average about 32 feet in length and weigh 6000 pounds.

The Event:

July 15-17 2005

Qualifying is on Friday with racing on Saturday and Sunday. Besides the Gold Cup race we will also have a race for the Silver Cup for V-8 powered limited hydroplanes, as well as on-the-water vintage exhibitions.

Our Spectators:

There are many paid spectator options from park settings to a large bleacher section to prime seating atop Pit Tower and at the Start/Finish line. Free viewing is available from the Belle Isle beach for all days of the event.

Web Page:

<http://www.gold-cup.com>

INTERVIEW WITH JOE LITTLE - BY DRRA VOLUNTEER PAUL SCURLOCK

When someone posted this afternoon that Joe Little was trying to get A/B to pop \$500,000 for a one boat, one team for the Gold Cup, it suddenly came to me. Call Joe and ask. After a brief conversation with his secretary, Joe returned my call at the time I had asked him to and he was gracious enough to answer all of the questions he has been hit with for months. I told him I had read his comments last week in Madison about pulling a boat out and trying to win the Gold Cup that was "stolen". His word, not mine. His response was that what happened last year bothered him, the way it was handled as much as the fact that it happened. He said the opportunity unfulfilled to have his name on the cup along side his fathers was a "great disappointment" and, that while the operation was officially closed, it wouldn't have been impossible to do. After saying all of that, he told me there would not be a Budweiser in the pits for the Gold Cup.

Since he seemed willing to answer questions, I just kept going. Yes, they would prefer to sell the equipment in a package, they would entertain offers to sell things one boat at a time. In

either case, they have not received any proposals that come close to the value they have assigned the equipment. They have sold a "few" engines to a couple of off-shore teams and some props and other equipment to other unlimited teams.

I asked him about the rumor that since the boats were in Seattle that they may show up at Seafair. He laughed and said, in fact, HE was planning on being in Seattle for the General Motors Cup, once again, he was pretty sure the boats wouldn't be.

I asked him about 2006 and once again he replied "never say never" when I asked him about the possibility of returning to racing. The one comment that I found interesting was that he didn't think he would like to see "The Miss Budweiser team in someone else's colors."

He did say that if the latest hurricane moving over Cuba right now bypassed Florida that he planned to be in Detroit with his son next Monday and Tuesday for the Major League Baseball All Star Game. I asked, and he agreed, if he did come up that we could sit down and talk in a little more depth. The last question I asked was if he planned to stay the rest of the week and attend the Gold Cup. He sighed a small sigh and said no, that he had to get his son back to Florida and ready to start school the first of August. Say what you will, but I don't think he dislikes the sport as much as everyone makes it out to be. Paul Scurlock, Detroit

50 YEARS AGO: DETROIT STEALS SEATTLE'S PRIDE

(reprinted from Sports Illustrated, Aug. 15, 1955)

By Paul O'Neil

Ever since Slo-Mo-Shun IV, a daringly new kind of Gold Cup hydroplane, made her bellowing debut five years ago, Seattle has been the capital of the noisy, spume-hung realm of marine speed, and Stanley M. Sayres, her wealthy owner, has been its undisputed monarch. Slo-Mo was the first of the monster "prop-riders" -- aerodynamic curves were built into her hull, her engine was pushed forward to keep her stern high, and at racing speeds she became partially airborne and skimmed with but a few square inches of forward sponsons and only the lower half of her propeller arc in the water. Alarmingly free of drag, she hit a world record of 178 mph; with her newer sister, Slo-Mo-Shun V, she has kept the Gold Cup year after year against all assaults.

But last Sunday, while a quarter of a million hopeful partisans crowded up along miles of Seattle's sun-drenched, fir-framed Lake Washington, the reign of Stanley Sayres and the Slo-Mos came to a dramatic end and the Gold Cup went back to Detroit. It was blinding speed which did the bright red Slo-Mos in -- speed which made the 1955 gold Cup the most hair-raising as well as the most curious on record. Slo-Mo V hit a gust of wind at 165 mph while qualifying, became completely airborne, looped 50 feet above the water and was wrecked; Slo-Mo IV fell out two laps short of home and victory with a blazing engine, leaving a hot new Seattle boat, orange-hulled Miss Thriftway, winner of two of the race's three heats.

But it was poker-faced teamwork by frustrated Detroit owners which won the race. Just before the last heat they held a hurried shoreside conference and agreed to send trailing, twin-engined Such Crust III out as a blocker for their only hope, Gale V, which had been second

in the first heat, second in the second and which eventually was third in the final 30 miles. They had good reason: under Gold Cup rules the boat with the fastest average for the full 90 miles gets a 400-point bonus.

The jubilant Seattle crowds started home, certain that Miss Thriftway, owned by Willard Rhodes, Northwest grocery executive, had guaranteed another Gold Cup race on Lake Washington next year. But Miss Thriftway had run one slow heat -- the first -- and in the third Such Crust had blocked her on the turns for laps, slowing her times. An hour after the race was over the timers made a startling announcement: Gale V, owned by Joe Schoenith, Detroit electric supply contractor, and driven by his chunky 28-year-old son Lee, had run the 90 miles 4.53 seconds faster than the new Seattle boat and was the winner.

Gale V had never been in real contention with either Slo-Mo or Miss Thriftway as they gave thundering expression to the enmity which now exists between Designer Ted Jones (creator of both boats) and his former friend and confidant, Stanley Sayres. Slo-Mo had left the winner behind in setting a new lap record of 107 mph and a new heat record of 103.159. But Gale V, though she had trailed throughout the race, nevertheless ran the 90 miles faster than it had ever been run before: an average 99.526 mph.

Her record time gave statistical expression to the fierceness with which the battle was fought, and in a way her curious victory seemed only fitting. Seldom if ever in the history of the Gold Cup had race day approached amid such an atmosphere of tension, danger, acrimony, valuing ambition and vaulting local pride. From the day the gleaming, deadly big hydroplanes -- the heavyweights of speedboat competition -- were trucked into Seattle it was evident that in 1955, for the first time, the Slo-Mos were in for a genuine fight. Designer Jones had lent his genius to the construction of three new boats, well built on Slo-Mo lines and principles -- his own boat Rebel Suh, Miss Thriftway and Guy Lombardo's new Tempo VII. He was grimly bent on humbling Sayres -- Rebel and Thriftway operated and were serviced as a team and during the year he had also lent a hand at modifying many of the Detroit boats, among them Gale V. The Detroit owners were also sick to death of humble pie. They were humanly envious of the fact that Greater Seattle Inc. -- an organization which has annually promoted tourist-pulling, carnival-like Seafair Week in conjunction with the Gold Cup races -- has contributed more than \$30,000 a year toward the maintenance and operation of Sayres' Slo-Mos.

Almost from the first day of tests and warmups it was also evident that speeds were due to rise to startling levels. Both Slo-Mos had new Rolls Royce aircraft engines rated at 1,650 horsepower. Most of the other boats were powered by 16-cylinder Allison's, rated at 1,150. But in both cases engines were hopped to the bursting point -- the Allison's, designed to turn 2,800 rpm in an airplane, were being pushed to 3,500 rpm and sometimes close to 4,000 by tremendous supercharging and were delivering 2000 hp and providing up to 170 mph in the stretches.

It seemed almost certain that there would be a big field -- perhaps as many as 12 boats. Referee Melvin Crook of Montclair, N.J., a New York businessman and an editor of Yachting magazine, felt a nerve-straining concern for the safety of drivers as he watched

daring, lighthearted Danny Foster qualify Lombardo's Tempo VII at a record 116.8 mph and then saw bespectacled Joe Taggart of Canton, Ohio, top him in the Slo-Mo-IV with 117.391. Both men were coming into the turns at 130 mph. Steering an all but airborne Gold Cupper is not merely a matter of turning the steering wheel -- enormous torque pulls them eternally to the outside and after they begin their swing it is often necessary to fight them with throttle and an opposite rudder to keep them on course.

The key to Referee Crook's worry was Slo-Mo V and her passionately competitive driver, Lou Fageol. In earlier Gold Cups, Fageol had made a practice of retreating north under the narrow approach arch of Seattle's famed Floating Bridge before heats, lurking there hidden by the concrete bastions of the bridge itself and then hurtling into view at 150 mph, zooming past boats milling toward the starting line and taking the lead with rocketlike authority. Twice this "flying start" had almost caused disaster, but the Detroit owners talked openly of setting up a defensive block to stop it. In midweek, Referee Crook banned it. Stan Sayres, a man in whom shyness and arrogance are curiously combined, hit the ceiling.

He invited Crook to dinner at his handsome, lawn-bordered Hunts Point home -- a house which sits just above a lakeshore boathouse and machine shop in which the Slo-Mos are kenneled. For hours, with Driver Fageoul and Seattle Yacht Club officers, he insisted that the ruling be rescinded. Crook refused. Next day Crook was told by a high-placed Seattle citizen that if he continued to refuse, Sayres would pull out his boat (an allegation Sayres later denied with vehemence). The morning after that, rebelling at the pressure, Crook resigned. He was replaced with Stanley Donogh, an executive of Sears Roebuck in Seattle. Donogh announced he would rescind the rule. Six Detroit owners and then New York's Guy Lombardo threatened to walk out on the race themselves.

Driver Fageol's near-tragic mishap with Slo-Mo V -- in which he miraculously escaped death but went to the hospital with broken ribs and spinal injuries after averaging 124 mph for two and a half laps -- indirectly ended the argument. The flying start was banned and Sayres announced that he was through with racing after 1955. But tension mounted hour by hour as the gleaming, high-finned, roaring boats hurtled through tests on the lake and as mechanics toiled round the clock to repair the awful mechanical attrition caused by strains on bearings, shafts, propellers and power plants.

At five minutes to one on race day it reached a peak. A dreamy silence lay over the miles of humanity packed along the shore of the smooth blue lake, over the thousand yachts and cruisers moored side by side for miles around the course, over green hills and headlands which stood up against the blue summer sky beyond them. The silence was broken by a growing thunder. One by one, 10 hydroplanes were floated, one by one their exhaust stacks coughed, belched smoke, rumbled and one by one they began a slow jockeying for a position from which they could accelerate to the start.

Time passed slowly, aching. Then suddenly the mass muttering became a brazen, bull-like bellowing, and 10 sinister shapes came hurtling south down the lake, dwarfed by the enormous lashing white curtains of water flying behind their sterns. A flash of yellow, of red, of mahogany, of blue, of orange -- then what looked like high moving fountains marched

off into the distance in uneven formation. The race was on. The applause began rolling down the shoreline -- Slo Mo IV, the red boat, the boat which could keep all this grandeur for yet another year, was speeding into the lead.

The flying curtains of white water became fewer almost immediately. As Danny Foster hit the north turn in Lombardo's Tempo VII the cover of his gasoline tank broke. A gout of gasoline sloshed out, touched the exhaust stacks, became a bright billow of searing flame. He ducked and chopped his throttle, the fire went out and he sat up again, out of the race and with a badly burned right arm. Henry Kaiser's Scooter II hit some drifting debris, filled and sank almost immediately. But Slo-Mo hurried on, eight times around the three-and-three-quarter-mile course and then took the checkered flag.

Next time out, Slo-Mo attempted to hug Gale V, hottest competition in the first heat, at the start and fell irrevocably behind. But orange Miss Thriftway, driven by chunky young Bill Muncey, burst into the lead and kept it to the end with an average of 100.944 mph. All around the lake the crowds breathed more easily; two Seattle boats were now tied with 625 points, and Detroit's threat to steal away the bauble of civic pride seemed remote and pale. But back at the pits, Detroit's trailing owners and drivers were gathered in emergency session around young Lee Schoenith, driver of Gale V.

"I haven't got a chance," said Schoenith, "unless I win the third heat. I'm gonna win."

"Yeah," cried his teammate Bill Cantrell, "quit coasting!"

But George Simon, dark-haired owner and driver of Detroit's Miss U.S. -- which was out of the race with a broken supercharger shaft -- had another idea. Figuring intently with pencil and pad he arrived at the conclusion that Gale V's average speed might be much closer to that of either Seattle boat than anyone believed. He eyed Detroit Bakery Man Jack Schafer, a broad-shouldered, jovial man who looks for all the world like the captain of a tramp freighter. Schafer pushed back his white yachting cap and beckoned to Walt Kade, a 51-year-old Packard Motor Co. engineer who drives his big, twin engined Such Crust III.

As Kade walked up Simon said: "You gotta block that IV, even if you go over the line too soon. You've got nothing to lose, and if it works we'll have the cup back in Detroit." Kade shrugged. But as the field ran for the start of the third and crucial heat Such Crust was hugging the pole in front of the pack -- and Detroit's Miss Cadillac was running exactly parallel off to her right. The maneuver failed -- Joe Taggart gunned Slo-Mo between the two with a terrific burst of acceleration, burst in front and fled for the south turn, opening water on the field. But Such Crust, rolling ponderously in second, was to find other work to do before the race was over.

Miss Thriftway, off to a bad start and last in the field of six, began one of the most amazing stern chases in Gold Cup history. Driver Bill Muncey threw her past Breathless, Miss Cadillac and Gale V and was challenging Such Crust for second after little more than a lap and a half. He did not get past -- Such Crust bounced wide on every turn. But he stayed close, so close that he hid in the spray of Such Crust's roostertail to keep Such Crust's Driver Kade

from knowing his exact position. Finally, on the fifth lap, Kade came up behind slow-running Breathless and Muncey tore out of hiding, gunned past both and set out for Slo-Mo. "I hid in his tail too," he said afterward. "I figured Taggart wouldn't know I'd passed Crust and wouldn't be expecting anything. Then I went out and passed him -- I saw him look over at me and really jump. Well, he stood on the throttle to pull her up and his engine caught fire."

That was the end of the boat race -- Slo-Mo went dead in the water as Taggart worked with a fire extinguisher and Muncey took the checkered flag, waving jubilantly to the applauding tens of thousands on shore.

He cut his engine, drifted slowly to the crowded official barge, and climbed out -- to weep, to embrace his pretty wife, to be mobbed by his maintenance crew, to be cheered, photographed, thrown into the lake and even -- ah, stern and trying moment -- to be kissed by ex-Heavyweight Champion Max Baer. But Such Crust's delaying tactics had cost him precious seconds. An hour later, after most of the crowd had gone home certain that he had won, the timers announced the official winner.

"You did it, Jack," cried jubilant Detroiters as Baker Man Schafer received the news. "Thank you," said Jack. "Thank you." He smiled broadly. After a moment he smiled again.

SOME SAD NEWS TO PASS ALONG

+ From Donna Vaughn: Sorry if Russ and I haven't been seen at many functions lately but we found out 2 weeks ago that Russ's Mom is in 4th stage of lung cancer and it's now the final stages for her. Please think of her in your prayers. She's a wonderful lady. I pray the pain won't last much longer. I've been blessed from her with her 4 sons who she loves dearly. God Bless all. -- Donna and Russ Vaughn

+ From Janet Bartello and Judy Warren-Wright: Terry Duffiney (security at the main gate) lost his wife Kim to cancer on Saturday. He's having a memorial at his home next Saturday 6pm - ??, 4032 Scott B Dr, St Clair Mi 810-326-1456. It would be nice to see the support of as many volunteers as possible. He's had a rough time. Please pass this info to anyone who should be informed. Thanks -- Janet & Judy

- Brian Reed - DRRA Volunteer