

Regatta Review

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GOLD CUP RACE WEEK IS HERE!

On Thursday we'll be moving the boats in, and finish preparations for Friday's opening to the 2007 Gold Cup event.

BOX OFFICE AND CREDENTIALS INFORMATION

The hours for the on-site box office / will-call and credentials trailers have been posted on our web site: <http://gold-cup.com/fanguide/index.html>

INTERNET COVERAGE OF THE GOLD CUP RACE

Tune in to our streaming audio broadcast directly from the Public Address system with announcers Jeff Ayler and Brad Luce. Also watch the ABRA hydroplanes page for the official results. For all the links see: <http://gold-cup.com/news/07/coverage.html>

NINE BOAT UNLIMITED HYDROPLANE FIELD EXPECTED

Ten boats were on their way, but due to damage at the Madison race the U-10 will not be ready in time. It sounds like they think the prop hit something in the water, one blade was gone and another dinged. When that happens, the drivetrain goes out of balance and tears everything apart. Gotta feel bad for them, they were doing so well and just plain seem to get more hard luck than any team deserves. They're taking it to the old Miss Budweiser shop in Washington State for proper repairs.

WRIF ROCK GIRL TAYLOR TALKS ABOUT APBA GOLD CUP RACING

Here's a nice info spot by one of the local radio stations, WRIF, with the WRIF ROCK GIRL at the APBA headquarters with the Gold Cup:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0bM89ugRqs>

100 YEARS AGO - CHIP II

By Fred Farley - APBA Unlimited Historian

Officially known as the "American Power Boat Association Challenge Cup," the Gold Cup is the ultimate prize that every competitor strives to win at least once. In terms of prestige, it compares on an international level to England's Harmsworth Trophy and Australia's Griffith Cup.

Created by Tiffany's, the trophy originally cost a total of \$900. But millions have been spent--and lives sacrificed--in the pursuit of it.

The 1907 GOLD CUP was held in St. Lawrence, NY.

WINNER - CHIP II

Driver: Charles Wood

Owner: Jonathon Wainwright

Average: 23.903

CHIP II became the first two-time winning hull in Gold Cup history with her victory in the 1907 race. But the triumph was a hollow one. CHIP II was the next-to-slowest boat on the basis of uncorrected time.

F.G. Bourne's STRANGER was faster. However, on the basis of power and length, it was determined to spot CHIP II and DELAWANNA several minutes in the race.

A variety of power sources were used in Gold Cup racing during the first decade. In 1907, CHIP II used a Leighton, DELAWANNA and VINGT-TROIS ran a Fairbanks motor, and PIRATE had a Trebert.

50 YEARS AGO - THE 1957 GOLD CUP REMEMBERED...

By Fred Farley - APBA Unlimited Historian

After having been involved in controversy at the 1955 and 1956 Gold Cup races, Bill Muncey won an undisputed victory in 1957 with the original Ted Jones-designed MISS THRIFTWAY. Bill didn't have the fastest boat there, but he had the most reliable.

Both HAWAII KAI III with Jack Regas and MISS WAHOO with Mira Slovak posted faster heat speeds than MISS THRIFTWAY. But neither the KAI nor the WAHOO were able to complete the 90-mile distance.

MAVERICK (former REBEL SUH) with Bill Stead also ran a faster heat (in Heat 1-C) than Muncey and managed to finish all three heats, but was slowed by mechanical difficulties in Heat 2-B and dropped from contention.

The fastest heat of the race was 109.823 (in Heat 1-C) by HAWAII KAI III; the fastest competition lap was 113.804 (in Heat 1-A) by MISS WAHOO.

MISS THRIFTWAY won Heat 1-B quite handily over a distant-running Russ Schleeh in SHANTY I. In Heat 2-A, MISS THRIFTWAY likewise finished considerably ahead of Chuck Thompson in SHORT CIRCUIT. Muncey's heat speeds in 1-B and 2-A were an identical 104.016 miles per hour.

For the Final Heat, MISS THRIFTWAY had a considerable lead both in points and in total elapsed time. Muncey settled for a safe second behind MAVERICK. This gave MISS THRIFTWAY a total of 1500 points (including 400 Bonus Points for the fastest race), compared to 925 for SHANTY I and 869 for MAVERICK.

MISS THRIFTWAY's 90-mile average of 101.979 was the first in Gold Cup history at over 100 miles per hour.

A total of twenty Unlimiteds attended the 1957 Gold Cup. This compared to the record of twenty-two that appeared in 1948. Fifteen of these qualified at above the minimum speed of 95 miles per hour for three consecutive and continuously run laps. MAVERICK was the fastest qualifier with an average of 117.054.

The Detroit delegation in 1957 comprised GALE V, GALE VI, MISS U.S. I, MISS U.S. IV, SUCH CRUST III, and SHORT CIRCUIT (former TEMPO VII). Only one (SHORT CIRCUIT) qualified for the Final Heat and finished an overall fifth. And only one (MISS U.S. I with Fred Alter) averaged a heat at over 100 miles per hour.

The 1957 Gold Cup marked the first appearance of a MISS BARDAHL hydroplane. This particular hull (the homebuilt former TEMPEST of 1956) was only sponsored--not owned--by Ole Bardahl. But with Norm Evans driving, the original "Green Dragon" got out in front in Heat 1-A and led Slovak in MISS WAHOO for several laps--a definite sign of things to come.

The originators of the Gold Cup series envisioned it as a development category with the door always open to new ideas. The 1957 contingent indeed featured a number of forward-thinking concepts--some more successful than others.

The one-of-a-kind MISS "U" (also known as "Miss University District") featured a one-point hull configuration and a Ranger 6-cylinder aircraft engine. Despite the efforts of owner Armand Swenson, a Seattle gunsmith, MISS "U" never achieved a planing attitude.

Wally Pannebaker's WHIZSKI was a 7-Litre Class hydroplane that tried to pass itself off as an Unlimited. Measuring only 20 feet 10 inches in length, a 4-foot 2-inch tailfin was added to bring the boat up to the Unlimited minimum. Powered by a Packard automotive engine, WHIZSKI failed to achieve the qualification minimum of 95 miles per hour.

George Simon's MISS U.S. IV, one of only three Unlimited hydroplanes ever designed by the distinguished Limited architect Henry Lauterbach, was an enlarged duplicate of Bob Rowland's YOU ALL, a successful 266 Cubic Inch Class Lauterbach hull. Unfortunately, MISS U.S. IV never went any faster than a 266. She would top out at 120 miles per hour on the straightaway, and that was it.

A lot of attention focused on THRIFTWAY TOO in 1957. Unlike every other boat on the circuit that year, THRIFTWAY TOO sported a forward-cockpit (or "cabover") hull configuration. Since the end of World War II, a number of Unlimited hydroplanes had seated the driver ahead of the engine. These included SANT AMBROGIO (1948), SKIP-A-LONG (1948-49), THUNDERBOLT (1952), and SCOOTER (1954).

Although touted by designer Ted Jones as "the boat of the future," THRIFTWAY TOO was only sporadically competitive. She did manage to finish second in the 1957 President's Cup

and 1958 Diamond Cup races with Brien Wygle driving. The 34-foot hull was handicapped on account of being designed to carry two V-12 aircraft engines. But she never used more than one. And while her sister ship, the MISS THRIFTWAY, had a professional crew, THRIFTWAY TOO only had a volunteer crew.

After four years of experimentation, THRIFTWAY TOO--the first modern cabover--was written off as a failure and eventually buried in a landfill. But she left behind the germ of an idea that was later picked up upon and perfected by others.

The 1957 race was run in the new Stan Sayres Memorial Pits, located about a mile south of the old Mount Baker Boat House Pits, which was used from 1951 to 1956. The Sayres pit area has served as "Hydro Central" for the Seattle race ever since with the exception of 1974, when the boats pitted at the Sand Point Naval Air Station.

Gone in 1957 was the 3.75-mile course used for the Lake Washington races from 1953 to 1956. A 3-mile oval was once again in evidence. It would remain until 1973.

Disappointingly, the 3-mile track (vintage 1957-1973) was located farther out in the lake than previous courses and did not improve spectator vantage points. Some point to this occurrence as the beginning of the erosion of interest in Unlimited racing in Seattle.

- Brian Reed - DRRA Volunteer