

Regatta Review

Issue #64 - January 18, 2008

SEE US AT THE DETROIT BOAT SHOW, AUTORAMA, AND WINTER BLAST

The DRRA will have a display at the 50th annual Detroit Boat Show as well as Autorama, and we need volunteers to help staff the booths.

Also, the Chrysler Jeep Superstores display boat will be at the Winter Blast!

Detroit Winter Blast: February 8th through the 10th
<http://www.winterblast.com>

Detroit Boat Show: February 16th through the 24th
<http://www.detroitboatshow.net>

Detroit Autorama: March 7th through the 9th
<http://www.autorama.com/casi/detroit.htm>

Please contact Sharon at the DRRA office if you are interested in helping: (586) 774-0980

100TH GOLD CUP APPAREL NOW AVAILABLE

Apparel with the logo for the 100th running of the Gold Cup race is now available! For photos and pricing see:

<http://www.gold-cup.com/merchandise/GoldCup-100th-Apparel.pdf>

Send orders to the DRRA:
17640 East Nine Mile Road, Eastpointe MI, 48021

UNLIMITED HYDROPLANE RACING GAME

Some enterprising folks have put together an Unlimited Hydroplane racing game using the rFactor racing simulation program.

You can find out all the details at the Hydroplane League group on Yahoo:
http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/hydroplane_league

Hmmm... what would happen if you put a bunch of unlimited hydroplanes on a NASCAR track and turned them loose? Probably this...

<http://www.kndu.com/Global/story.asp?S=7562355>

INTERESTING HYDROPLANE PROJECT AT SAFE HARBOR BOYS HOME

Safe Harbor is a residential home for troubled disadvantaged, at-risk boys ages 14 - 17. In

addition to addressing emotional issues, Safe Harbor provides academic and vocational training for the boys we serve. We are located on the St. Johns River in Jacksonville, Florida and many of our activities are focused on maritime activities.

Our most recent project is the construction of racing hydroplanes that the boys are building and plan to race in the coming year.

Be sure to tune in to NBC Nightly News on Friday, January 25 at 6:30 for a special piece about Safe Harbor Boys Home.

Thank you
The crew at Safe Harbor Boys Home

THE MISS AMERICA VIII LAWSUIT OF 1991 BY CAROL ANN EMERSON - ABRA ASSOCIATE UNLIMITED HISTORIAN

The ownership of Gar Wood's Harmsworth champion MISS AMERICA VIII was finally settled in a Seattle, Washington, courtroom on September 13, 1991. After several years in legal limbo, the craft officially became the property of Dr. Ken Muscatel and his partners Joe Frauenheim and Craig Magnusson of Seattle, who acquired MISS AMERICA VIII from a Florida museum in 1988.

Detroit industrialist Harold Mistele, who already owned MISS AMERICA IX and MISS AMERICA X, sued for ownership of the VIII. Mistele based his claim on a bill of sale for \$10,000, obtained from Gar Wood, Jr., who claimed that his late father, Gar Wood, Sr., had given him MISS AMERICA VIII when he (Junior) was a child.

Mistele and Wood, Jr., were unable to produce any evidence that Wood, Sr., had ever relinquished ownership of the VIII.

The trial focused largely on an obscure Harmsworth Trophy rule, which allowed only one boat per owner in Harmsworth competition.

Called as an expert witness on behalf of Dr. Muscatel was APBA Unlimited Historian Fred Farley. Farley testified for several hours in the case, explaining what the "one-boat/one-owner rule" was and what it meant in actual practice in reference to Harmsworth racing in the 1930s.

Farley pointed out that although MISS AMERICA VIII was indeed registered in Gar, Jr.'s name at the 1931 Harmsworth Regatta in Detroit, the boat really belonged to Gar, Sr., not Gar, Jr., who was only thirteen years old in 1931.

Throughout the 1920s and `30s, whenever Gar, Sr., participated in Harmsworth racing, he consistently entered his newest and most competitive boat in his own name. The back-up boats were always entered in his son's name or in his wife's name in order to circumvent the

"one-boat/one-owner rule."

Farley identified two published documents, which strongly suggested that Gar Wood, Sr., rather than Gar Wood, Jr., was the actual owner of MISS AMERICA VIII.

The book SPEEDBOAT KINGS, written by J. Lee Barrett and published in 1939, represents Gar, Sr., as owning all of the MISS AMERICA boats. Barrett was a close friend of Gar, Sr.

A magazine article, written by Charles F. Chapman and published in MOTOR BOATING in 1931, likewise identified Gar, Sr., as the owner of the MISS AMERICA team. According to Farley, the Chapman article reflected displeasure over the fact that Gar, Sr., satisfied the letter of the "one-boat/one-owner rule" but not the spirit of it.

Farley gave many examples to the court of where, in boat racing, the registered owner of a boat is not necessarily the real owner. One example was HAWAII KAI III in 1957. That was when the KAI's owner, Edgar Kaiser, decided to distance himself from the boat for business reasons. So, he made the crew chief, Mike Welsch, the owner of record for the 1957 season.

Another example was the time when a Grand Prix Class owner, Jack Stetser, registered his pet, a dog named Sugar Bear, as the owner of his GP boat XANADU at Detroit. That was when the race committee wouldn't allow Stetser to bring Sugar Bear into the pits.

Ken Muscatel, testifying on his own behalf, explained how he and his partners obtained releases from all of the surviving heirs of Gar Wood, Sr., who passed away in 1971. Gar, Jr., was not included in Gar, Sr.'s will.

After three days of oral testimony, Superior Court Judge Edward Heavey dismissed the lawsuit and ruled in favor of Muscatel, Frauenheim, and Magnusson. This ended months of speculation as to the fate of one of the more famous boats in the history of Unlimited racing.

MISS AMERICA VIII, a 28-foot step hydroplane, powered by a pair of 12-cylinder Packard engines, won the 1929 and 1931 British International ("Harmsworth") Trophy races on the Detroit River.

THE 100TH RUNNING OF THE GOLD CUP - JULY 11-13, 2008

It's not too soon to start planning for the historic 100th running of the Gold Cup, July 11-13 2008!

- Brian Reed - DRRA Volunteer