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1964 YEARBOOK **\$1.00**

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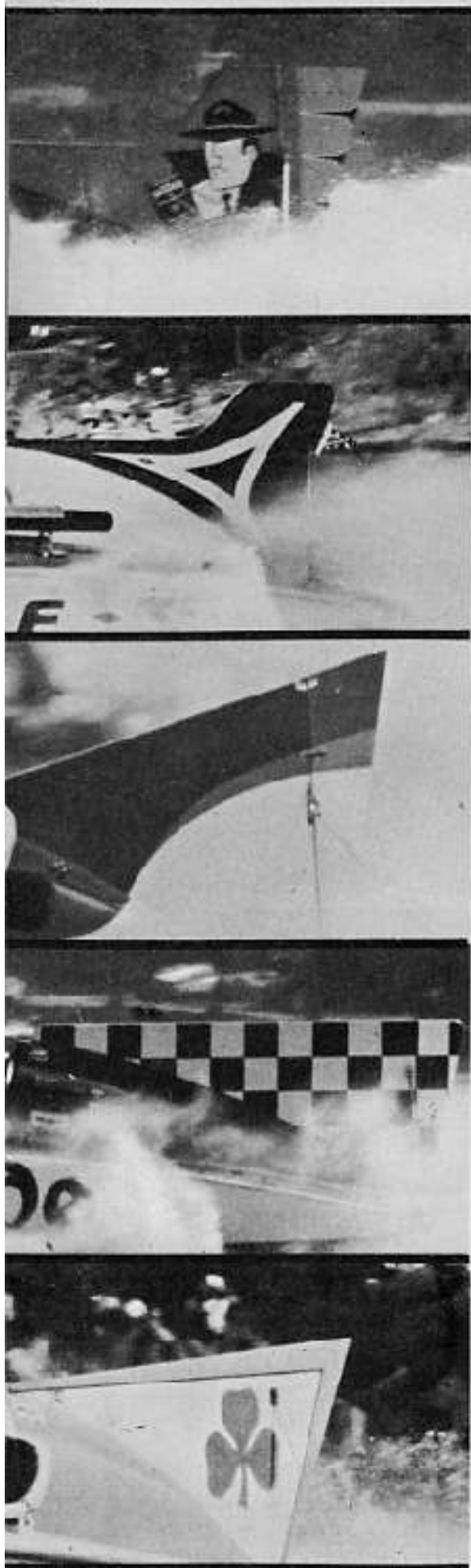
DRAG BOATS

Roundup of the
World's Fastest
Quarter-Mile
Competitors

WATERSKIING

Action Highlights of
The Season's Most
Exciting Tournaments





IT'S A SHAKEN, surprised and occasionally stupefied cluster of unlimited race camps which look toward the 1964 season from the trembling ramparts of the 1963 effort.

That circuit, fans may recall, posted a startling list of boat accidents, driver injuries and aborted regattas.

Beginning with the Alabama race on Lake Guntersville June 22-23 six campaigners showed up to have a go at the fast and favored Miss Bardahl. That craft with Ron Mussen driving qualified at 112,600 mph to prove she was

denly hydrauliced her bow in a geyser of spray. Slovak was slammed unconscious through the debris, rescued from underwater entanglement by Warner Gardner and transported to hospital care where facial lacerations and broken ankle were listed serious but not critical.

The Seafair Regatta on Seattle's Lake Washington fell heir to the startling and nostalgic announcement of Thriftway's retirement from competition. Of course it had to happen sometime. There were ever those who insisted the retirement

BARDAHL THROWS THE HIGHEST ROOSTERTAIL

By Eileen Crimmix

PHOTOS BY BOB CARVER

• Behind their flashing tails, shown at left and right, rise even more famous roostertails. Can you identify them? Turn page for the answers.

fast, then raced at an average of 100.446 mph to win the race and prove she was correctly favored.

At Detroit's Gold Cup Regatta, however, it was Miss Thriftway going for her fifth Gold Cup title that was the fast, favored, odds-on favorite to win. Why no? The formidable camp held virtually every unlimited record for speed and all unlimited records for endurance.

But the fifth-win hopes of drivers Bill Muncey and Thriftway were washed down the drainage of two roostertails liberally applied during the initial seconds of the event. Miss Bardahl went on to win and Thriftway finished an incredible sixth!

With Thriftway waterlogged out of the hard running in Gold Cup the July 27-28 Diamond Cup Regatta on Lake Coeur d'Alene, Idaho rose out of unusual proportion to become a test race between Thriftway and Bardahl. Was Bardahl capable of consistently besting the favored veteran campaigner, and if so, what fantastic new heights of competitive performance would fans view the remainder of the season?

Neither question was answered as Bardahl fell prey to mechanical trouble during the race and was not even listed among finishers. But a pre-race qualifying time of 110.421 mph maintained Bardahl's reputation as a fast craft.

Muncey and Thriftway won the Diamond Cup but it was the soaring 118 speed and shocking Exide accident in the final heat that made the event memorable.

With Slovak in Exide pounding beside Muncey in Thriftway, the Exide sud-

denly overtook her bow in a geyser of spray. Slovak was slammed unconscious through the debris, rescued from underwater entanglement by Warner Gardner and transported to hospital care where facial lacerations and broken ankle were listed serious but not critical.

Almost simultaneously the Exide camp announced purchase of retired Whoo to replace their destroyed craft. So it was lost one gain one as the tradition of competition-as-usual brought eleven boats to the starting line.

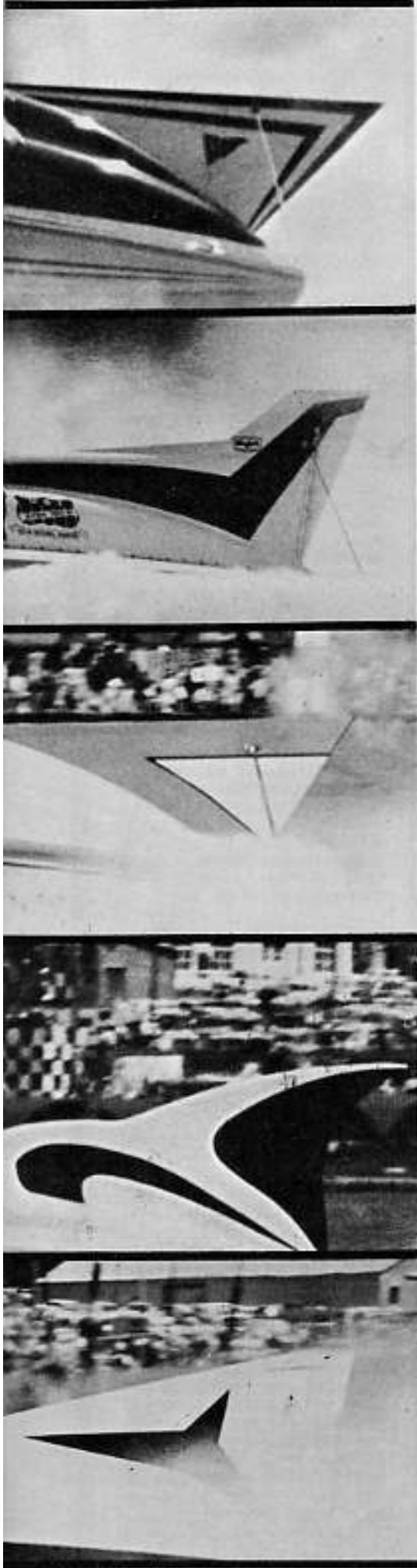
Thriftway roared to a new heat record of 113,550 mph then, experiencing mechanical trouble, died on the course and was towed into the pits and retirement.

A squall delayed racing about two hours, after which a quick tabulation of point totals showed Bardahl and Tahoe Miss pitted against one another to capture the final heat and race. Tahoe Miss made it by six seconds while establishing a new 45-mile race record of 109.447 mph.

Between Seafair and Madison, Indiana's Governor's Cup Regatta, Aug. 31-Sept. 1, the unlimited world suffered three serious blows. Mariner Too blew up, injuring Mary Hendricks; Continental Airlines beached Exide driver Mira Slovak and Bardahl flipped injuring Ron Mussen.

These accidents presaged no performance or record performance by these camps. Mariner Too was indeed unable to appear, but Exide, surprisingly, with Bill Brow at the helm won the race and Bardahl with Don Wilson in the cockpit placed third.

It was at this point that the 1963 season fell apart, but the campaigners could not foresee this future. So they pushed to the Potomac for the Sept. 14-



15 President's Cup Regatta and there met their first full weather defeat.

Only two heats were staged before rain canceled the race. Miss Exide was awarded the win on the basis of elapsed time in her heat. Her average speed was 104.695 mph. Interesting to note that Gale V, winner of the only other heat, averaged 104.610 mph to prove that .085 seconds of loafing gets you nowhere in unlimited Circles!

There was one more race to go; Harrah's Tahoe Regatta at Stateline, Nevada, Sept. 29. Naturally it was inconceivable that this flossy event also should have weather trouble. Two races in a row would be too much.

It was. Much too much. And two in a row. The weather smashed a five-heat day down to three and gave Bardahl her third and final win of '63. In order to score anything at all Heats 2A and B had to be voided. Heats 1A and B found Gale V and Bardahl tied on points, so Bardahl won on elapsed time.

It was not what fans or racers describe as a gala finish to a thrilling season. In fact, the season might well have been titled "Circuit of Confusion." The foregoing 7-race summary is merely the skeleton of '63 unlimited racing. Fleshed in anecdotes and incidents so common to unlimiteds and beloved by fans the Circuit of Confusion could add "...and Consternation."

After all, there was the matter of driver Don Wilson saying harsh things about and to driver Warner Gardner. It had to do with Gardner's roostertail somehow leaving Gardner's transom to land in Wilson's lap. It is one thing to do this quietly, quite another to do it in headlines. So both drivers were formally censured by APBA officials.

Later, top contender of the year, Bardahl, rounding a turn fell over on its back with Ron Musson in the cockpit. When righted the boat suffered only minor damage, but Musson was hospitalized with several broken ribs, ended up in a cast and out of racing for the rest of the season. Don Wilson settled behind Bardahl's wheel.

And there was incredible saga of the wonder boat of the year Miss Exide. After being newly constructed in Spring, launched and christened with much fanfare and publicity, then raced to fifth place in the Gold Cup the unfortunate craft demolished herself in a straight-a-way spring at Diamond Cup.

With driver Slovak injured and the boat beyond repair, the Exide career seemed finished.

Not so. Out of mothballs came Wahoo, Slovak's former unlimited steed when owner Bill Boeing followed the circuit. Wahoo was re-named Miss Exide and Russ Schleich plucked from his California work to drive the craft in Seafair.

Slovak would recuperate on the beach but would, of course, drive the Madison race and all the rest.

Oh so? Oh, no. Slovak's employers, Continental Airlines, apparently felt any airplane engines Slovak wanted to operate should be operated not on water but in air. Faced with a race-or-fly choice, Slovak chose flying.

That left Miss Exide driverless until Bill Brow, steady competitor in limited racing but also experienced in unlimiteds, was offered the Exide cockpit. Brow, a skillful lead-foot, charged Exide to two consecutive victories and top qualifier of the Tahoe race before the season petered out.

Ranking fourth nationally and winning two events in a first season is an excellent record for a new camp. Therefore, it was doubly surprising when the Exide Battery Company announced withdrawal of sponsorship in '64! Reconsideration is possible, but meanwhile owners Milo and Glen Stoen counter-announced their intention to campaign the former Wahoo/Exide, sponsor or no sponsor. The name, it's assumed, will be changed.

Certainly the "sweetheart" boat of the season (if a 12-cylinder, 100 mph, 6,000 lb., 30 ft. 9 in. craft can answer to the delicacy of the word) was Tempo.

Aptly named, gracefully built for Guy Lombardo by Les Staudacher, Tempo was campaigned by Bernie Little with Bob Schroeder driving. A four-seater pleasure hydro, Tempo gave guests a taste of 90+ mph speeds and an inkling of the physical battering taken by every unlimited driver.

Even Astronaut Gordon Cooper took a spin, orbiting the Seafair course at a somewhat lower altitude than he's orbited the earth.

The M and M boats, Mariner and Madison wrecked themselves out of the season. But it was left to the Miss U.S. camp to display the ultimate expression of discontent and quit the sport. It's a severe loss. Owner George Simon and his Miss U.S. boats have been steady, tough campaigners. One craft, Miss U.S. I holds the present world straight-a-way mark of 206.419 mph.

In addition, the camp leaves unlimited racing in the same year that a court decision upheld their excellent usage of their boats in public relations and advertising programs and their expense write-off as such.

Simon and his U.S. Equipment Company proved what unlimiteds have squawked about for years—that a sponsor's (or owner's) expenses are legitimate business costs when a boat is properly used to publicize a product or business.

Yet quitting the sport when winning in court must provide this camp with



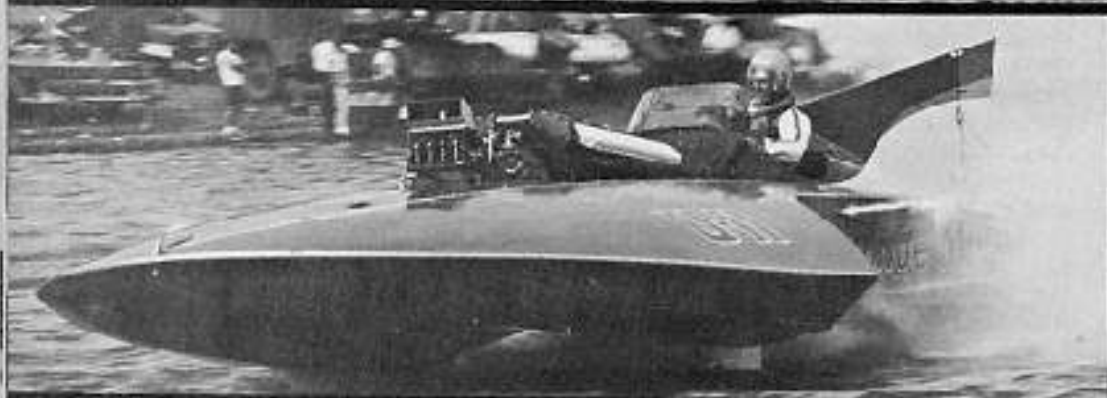
(1) MISS BARD AHL

• Sharing driving honors for the famed Bardahl "green" during the 1963 season were Ron Musson and Don Wilson. After piloting the top unlimited craft the first four races, Musson suffered five cracked ribs in a tip. Wilson picked up the helm when Musson chere during the remaining three events. Bardahl won the 1963 Gold Cup.



(2) GALE V

• Heady, consistent Bill Cantrell drove Gale V, "Cadillac of Unlimiteds" to 4 second places and a third during the circuit to wind up second in the high point standings. The Gale V is known to unlimited fans throughout the country because the boat makes most every race on the unlimited calendar.



(3) TAHOE MISS

• Winner of the Seattle Seafair and third in the overall standings, Tahoe Miss was the most powerful boat of the 1963 Unlimited field. The big, beefy hull is equipped with a throaty two-stage bowser system. Driver Chuck Thompson, in addition to taking the Seafair, managed a third at the Detroit Regatta, held July 7th.



(4) MISS EXIDE

• The Miss Exide camp raced two different hulls piloted by three different drivers. After the newly-built Exide was destroyed in the final heat of the Diamond Cup, the Exide team acquired the former Wahoo hull and re-christened it Miss Exide. Following his injury, driver Mira Slovak retired at the "suggestion" of his employers.



(5) NOTRE DAME

• What is her potential? Nobody really knows just how good this Unlimited can be. She ranges from lead in position to back of the pack. For example, at the Guntersville Governor's Cup, Notre Dame finished a strong second. In other regattas during the '63 season she finished in 4th, 6th, and 8th place.

(6) TEMPO

• Built for Guy Lombardo by jet ace Les Stoudacher, Tempo is certainly one of the most unique craft that has ever campaigned the Unlimited circuit. It is a four-seater "pleasure" hydro. When running in regattas the three seats not occupied by driver were covered with special snap-on cockpit covers. Tempo ran well in most events entered.



(7) MISS THRIFTWAY

• After nine years of rugged campaigning, the famous Miss Thriftway had something less than a successful 1963 season. Racing under the helm of the top race driver Bill Muncey, Thriftway competed in only three events, winning one. Following the startling and nostalgic announcement of the retirement of Miss Thriftway it was understood that Muncey plans to drive another unlimited.



(8) \$ BILL

• \$ Bill was raced by Norm Evans. Craft showed surprising speed on occasion but overall performance was not dependable. If more bugs can be worked out of this unlimited she may make a better 1964 showing. There is little doubt that she has the power potential to hit the all-out speeds required to place consistently well in the circuit.



(9) EAGLE ELECTRIC

• Former Miss Spokane, the Eagle Electric had excellent speed and was first into the corner numerous times. But she usually placed 3, 4 or 5. Or, on occasion she simply blew. Hull age plus several major accidents tag her as an unknown quantity. At Diamond Ccp the shaft and struts tore loose, beaching her for the remainder of the event.



(10) TEMPEST

• It isn't beyond the realm of possibility that the outstanding dark horse competitor in the entire Unlimited field is Tempest. Driven by Chuck Hickling, Tempest showed strong potential during the few times she competed. The craft corners exceedingly well and is capable of high speed. However, she campaigns spasmodically, thus misses being top caliber competition.





• Bernie Little, owner of Tempo, spends hours at each race taking guests for rides in his craft. Here he explains a dashboard dial to Astronaut Gordon Cooper who helmed Tempo briefly. Regular driver Bob Schroeder, right rear, appears to have enjoyed ride.

• Chuck Thompson, below, drove Tahoe Miss hard and fast during 1963. Shown here at Seafair, she won that event after some bouncing, kiting, floating moments that had officials fingering their emergency flare guns.





• Pit activity draws major spectator attention in pre-race days. At Seafair the \$ Bill received thorough attention from her crew while Notre Dame, ready to go, lies unattended. Note special vans for transport of spare equipment and engines.

Bardahl Throws The Highest Roostertail

(continued from page 27)

chuckles of irony.

As for Notre Dame, this middle-pack runner never achieved her expected potential, nor has harmony always reigned in her camp. It was not too surprising to find fifth-ranking Notre Dame suddenly appear in Seattle.

The Dame was turned over to the loving care of former Thriftway crew chief Jack Ramsey. An engine change was forecast. Bill Muncey planned to act as test driver before and after alterations. Retired Thriftway equipment also was placed at the disposal of Notre Dame. It looked like rosy days ahead for the craft.

Unfortunately, the rosy glow turned to flame. Fire destroyed the cockpit and much equipment while Muncey test-ran the craft. Muncey, pumping cockpit extinguisher toward the fuel-fed inferno, was no match for high-test aviation gas. When the extinguisher was empty Muncey boarded a craft from Jett's Marina. Fire-fighting equipment aboard this boat extinguished all flame in 20 minutes.

Presently, no prediction has been made about Notre Dame's re-construction or new construction.

And as if driver losses and boat mortality on and off the course is not enough, the possibility is strong that the circuit may lose a major race in '64—brace yourself—Seafair!

A mounting series of dissatisfactions climaxed this Fall when Seattle lost the '64 Gold Cup bid to Detroit. First there was a wail about regatta costs and losses; then consternation about what event could be substituted as a climax to the 10-day Seafair Celebration; and finally, resolute appointment of a 10-man committee to "study the feasibility of staging an unlimited hydroplane race here next summer."

Feasibility? If, after 13 years of exciting Seafair Regattas, doubt exists as to their "feasibility" perhaps it's time Seattle, unlimited camps and fans and all powerboat racing knew about it.

And that is where the unlimiteds are. High and dry between the wreckage of boats, plans, driver injuries and camp problems of 1963 and the oncoming tide of campaign strategy, official decisions and races (they hope) of 1964.

1963 UNLIMITED RACE SUMMARY

Guntersville, Alabama; Governor's Cup Regatta; June 22-23. Top Qualifier: Miss Bardahl, 112,500 mph. Order of Finish: Miss Bardahl, Notre Dame, Gale V.

Detroit, Michigan; Gold Cup Regatta; July 7. Top Qualifier: Miss Thriftway, 116,463 mph. Order of Finish: Miss Bardahl, Gale V, Tahoe Miss, Notre Dame, Miss Exide, Miss Thriftway, Tempo, St. Regis, \$Bill, Blue Chip.

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho; Diamond Cup Regatta; July 27-28. Top Qualifier: Miss Bardahl, 118,421 mph. Order of Finish: Miss Thriftway, Tempest, Miss Exide, \$Bill, Tempo, Notre Dame, Tahoe Miss.

Seattle, Washington; Seafair Regatta; August 11. Top Qualifier: Miss Thriftway, 117,052 mph. Order of Finish: Tahoe Miss, Miss Bardahl, Miss Exide, Tempo, Miss Eagle Electric, Tempest, Miss Thriftway, Notre Dame.

Madison, Indiana; Governor's Cup Regatta; August 21-Sept. 1. Top Qualifier: None. Order of Finish: Miss Exide, Gale V, Miss Bardahl, Blue Chip, Miss Madison.

Washington, D.C.; President's Cup Regatta; Sept. 14-15. Top Qualifier: None. Order of Finish: Miss Exide, Gale V (weather cancellation).

Stateline, Nevada; Harrah's Tahoe Regatta; Sept. 29. Top Qualifier: Miss Exide, 112,578 mph. Order of Finish: Miss Bardahl, Gale V (weather cancellation).

1963 FINAL HIGH POINT STANDINGS

Miss Bardahl - 1963 National High Point Unlimited Champion; Gale V, Tahoe Miss, Miss Exide, Notre Dame, Tempo, Miss Thriftway, \$ Bill, Miss Eagle Electric, Tempest, Miss Madison, Blue Chip, Miss Michigan, Fascination I, Miss St. Regis, Fascination, Such Crust, U.S. V, Mariner Too, Miss U.S. I.