



FOLLOWING THE UNLIMITEDS...

FROM OGDEN TO MADISON

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EXCLUSIVE PHOTOS BY BOB CARVER

THE BONNEVILLE REGATTA

THE FIRST ANNUAL Bonneville Regatta for unlimited hydroplanes was staged on Willard Bay Aug. 14-15 for the new Utah Cup trophy.

It was the fourth thunderboat race of the year on the '65 American Power Boat Association-sanctioned schedule.

Willard Bay, a new reservoir 7 miles from Ogden, Utah, hosted a freshly created course with spectator area on the front chute and curving around the upper turn.

A rip-rap dike provided an amphitheater effect and "rock-camping" plus picnicking was much in evidence. Since weather held clear and hot, a colorful array of sun umbrellas, regular tents and staked canvas shelters blossomed above the rocks to provide shade.

A blow to sponsor and participants alike was the discovery on Wednesday of pre-race week that the carefully prepared pit area was not suited to the size, weight and maintenance of the huge unlimiteds.

With admirable energy the Race Committee, working alongside Assistant Referee Harry Woods and his wife Lucille, marshalled forces to create in three days a new pit area on the site of a boat launching ramp.

Power, water, communications from judges' stand to pit control — all appeared like magic so that by Friday the thunderboats were testing and struggling with problems of sticky water and altitude—4,200 feet.

On Saturday, qualifications for the Golden Spike Award began. All boats

not experiencing carburetor or other difficulty ran for the trophy which was designed around one of the original Golden Spikes driven into the first transcontinental railroad.

For several hours *Notre Dame* appeared the winner, but finally *Miss Bardahl* posted a 112-mph time that resisted efforts of all other challengers. Ron Musson and *Bardahl* added another trophy to their growing collection.

Race day dawned clear, hot and without the intermittent breeze that favored unlimiteds earlier in the week. Sticky (calm) water was feared by all contestants who regretted verbally that this condition, plus altitude, would reduce speeds and, consequently, subdue the sizzling, battling show the unlimiteds are capable of staging.

Heat 1A brought a somewhat unrecognized triumph before spectators when *Miss San Diego* with Robert Fendler driving won the first heat in which she'd raced. Veteran fans were aware of how many times this camp had tried to qualify for a course, any course! So to win their initial racing heat was a heady thrill.

Roostertail and Jerry Schoenith led into the first turn followed by *Savair's Mist*, *San Diego*, *Such Crust* and *Tahoe Miss*.

By lap three *Roostertail* and *Savair's Mist* had died and *San Diego* was in the lead. She continued to lead to the finish with *Such Crust* and *Tahoe Miss* behind. *Such Crust* was bucking badly on the chutes and *Tahoe Miss* varied from fine bursts of speed to sputtering and clanking that indicated potential unrealized.

Heat 1B brought *Miss Smirnoff* into

the first turn with *Budweiser* hard on her transom followed by *Madison* and *\$ Bill*. In a back-and-front chute battle Buddy Byers in *Madison* finally bested Chuck Hickling in *Budweiser*. About 500 yards from the finish of lap three the ailing *\$ Bill* slowed to a stop as driver Rex Bixby swung the wheel hard left to drift the powerless craft into the infield, then waved a "driver's ok" signal to the officials. The remaining three boats finished in their lap two order: *Smirnoff* and Cantrell, *Madison*, and *Budweiser*.

Heat 1C saw *Bardahl* first across the start, first into the turn and first across the finish. *Notre Dame* pressed hard to obtain an advantage somewhere on the course. But a lump of wake in the upper turn, then a sudden dippy-doodle in lap three put Rex Manchester a scant roostertail behind *Bardahl*. From this distance he continued to pressure.

Mariner Too, meanwhile, was unable to start and *Savair's Probe* dropped back continually until at the finish she was exactly half a lap behind *Notre Dame*.

The first section established three situations. Starts lagged as the field was unable to judge their altitude-reduced speeds and unable to break away quickly from the flat water. The fastest lap of Heat 1A was *San Diego's* 103.448 mph; of Heat 1B, *Smirnoff's* 108.216 and Heat 1C, *Bardahl's* 111.801. And with at least one boat mortality per heat, the laps lacked the racing excitement the unlimiteds delivered at Diamond and Gold Cup.

Heat 2A was strictly exhibition. *Smirnoff* led all the way, *\$ Bill* conked out before the first turn and *Madison*, *Such Crust* and *Savair's Mist* played follow the leader. *Smirnoff* managed a

fastest lap of 106.509-mph.

Heat 2B saw Warner Gardner in *Mariner Too* repeating his favorite ride — leading the pack into the first turn. Once there, however, *Bardahl* took the lead from second spot by posting a 110.204-mph lap while *Budweiser* stayed in third. *Tahoe Miss* was scheduled for the heat but was unable to start. By lap three *Mariner* loudly proclaimed a serious illness and ran lap four under power so reduced one fan cracked, "Warner seems to have lost the blower, fuel pump and propeller!" But finish lap five the gallant team did, with Gardner giving the officials a chuckle as he stood up and rocked back and forth to urge the boat on as he passed the front-chute crowd with about as much propulsion as a starter engine puts out.

Heat 3C showed Utah spectators the best start of the day as *Notre Dame* and *Savair's Probe* hit the line on the money

while *Roostertail* trailed off a plane and *San Diego* was unable to start. *Roostertail* died almost immediately leaving *Notre Dame* and *Savair's Probe* to run a lonely heat almost half a lap apart.

The Final brought *Bardahl* and *Smirnoff* to the course tied with 800 points. *Notre Dame* was second with 700, *Madison* third, 600; *Budweiser* and *Savair's Probe* tied for fourth with 525.

A good scrap between *Bardahl*, *Notre Dame* and *Smirnoff* was anticipated. But now it was *Notre Dame* that would not start. At the one-minute gun she was not only dead in the water but out of the heat.

Bardahl led easily into the first turn with *Madison* close behind. *Budweiser*, *Savair's Probe* and *Smirnoff* vied for third spot, with *Budweiser* coming off solid in that position. *Smirnoff* and *Savair's Probe* used laps two, three, four and five to scrap for fourth position with *Smirnoff* secure in that spot at the

finish line.

After a long, hot day, a high boat-mortality rate, and consequently, too little dueling, the first Utah Cup was presented to the *Bardahl* Racing Team. With 1200 points the *Miss Bardahl* was a substantial winner; *Smirnoff* in second with 969 points was barely secure against *Madison* in third with 900. *Budweiser* took fourth spot with 750; *Notre Dame*, fifth with 700; *Savair's Probe*, eighth, 400; *Tahoe Miss*, ninth, *Savair's Mist*, tenth, and *Mariner Too*, eleventh — all tied with 225 points. *Roostertail* and *\$ Bill* were unable to garner a single point for their time and trouble.

Since the pits were in a lagoon adjoining Willard Bay and connected by a narrow, shallow canal, all unlimiteds were towed to and from the course by smaller craft. This necessity somewhat lengthened time between heats, but not as much as was expected. Crews of each boat were treated to an unaccustomed view of the racing from the outside edge of the first turn where tow boats nosed into the dike.

The general impression was that spectators were awed by the size and sound of the huge boats, patient with circumstantial delay and sympathetic toward those boats suffering mechanical problems.

As for Ogden's Race Committee, "Just give us another year" was the determined, oft-repeated remark as they helped restore the pit area to public use, and watched the camps button up for the long haul to Detroit and the Spirit of Detroit Regatta Aug. 29th.

SPIRIT OF DETROIT REGATTA

ALTHOUGH *Miss Bardahl* is an odds-on favorite in any race, the Spirit of Detroit Regatta Aug. 29 was slated to be won by *Notre Dame* on the basis of Luck and Performance.

But Luck is a fickle dame. Deserting the national high point leader and second-place finisher in Diamond and Gold Cups, she smiled upon *Tahoe Miss*, a craft that had won no race since Labor Day 1964 and was so dogged in 1965 by misfortune that in Diamond Cup 1965 she did not start, finish or race a single heat!

Yet, with three first-place finishes Chuck Thompson and *Tahoe Miss* swept the field to earn 1,200 points and gain the overall trophy. It was no cinch effort, however. The water was tricky and the field evenly matched.

Heat 1A saw the hottest running of the race as *Bardahl* and *U.S. V* led *Savair's Mist* and *Madison* to the first turn.

1, 2, 3 at Willard Bay, Utah



• In winning the first annual Bonneville Regatta, *Miss Bardahl* also received the Golden Spike Award as fastest qualifier at 112-mph.



• Second overall, *Miss Smirnoff* driven by Bill Cantrell, exhibits one of the leaps she performed so handily on chutes and into turns.



• Buddy Byers took the reliable, steady-running *Miss Madison*, owned and sponsored by the Indiana community, to third place.

1, 2, 3 at Detroit, Michigan



• Tahoe Miss ended a long hard-luck streak at Detroit by winning its first cup since Labor Day 1964 under driving of Chuck Thompson.



• Speed and stamina of Tahoe Miss proved too much for Gold Cup winner Miss Bardahl. Ron Musson, however, hung in for second overall.



• Rex Manchester provided big thrills with Notre Dame at Detroit, nipped Bardahl in the Final heat action to snare third place overall.

Such Crust was unable to get into the heat due to repair problems.

Within half a lap *Madison* was in trouble as *Bardahl* took the lead and *U.S. V* pounded hard after her. Buddy Byers swung *Madison* across to alert the pits to ready a crane. As Ron Musson slammed *Bardahl* down the front chute with Roy Duby in *U.S. V* a scant roostertail behind, Byers cut behind them toward the pits and drifted quickly to the sea wall.

At the finish it was *Bardahl* well ahead with a fastest lap and heat speed of the regatta with 110.921 mph, *U.S. V* second with 101.886 and *Savair's Mist* close behind with 99.815. What cut Duby's time so drastically was a missed buoy in the upper turn. That he picked it up and still finished second shows the speed of the red, white and blue, red, hot and fast *U.S. V*.

Heat 2A was a parade with only one change of position. *Blue Chip* led *Roostertail*, *Mariner* and *Savair's Probe* to the

first turn and through lap one. Lap two saw *Mariner* slip behind to last place. The remaining laps were run in the foregoing order. By this heat the water was kicking up and what was lacking in racing duels was compensated for by individual boat hazards.

"We were all out of shape at one time or another," commented drivers.

Heat 3C brought on the closest battles of the entire regatta. The field of *Notre Dame*, *Budweiser*, *Tahoe Miss* and *Smirnoff* slammed past the start and into the first turn as a massed pack with only yards separating them. *Tahoe Miss* passed *Budweiser* to take second place, but at the beginning of lap two the field was still closely packed until *Smirnoff* suddenly lagged far behind.

Meanwhile, *Tahoe Miss* began the struggle to pass *Notre Dame*. Thompson tried sneaking up the roostertail but Rex Manchester kept him wide on his hip. Then Thompson cut back and forth

behind *Notre Dame's* tail to disguise his position in an effort to power past Manchester in an unaware moment.

For three laps no strategy worked, but *Tahoe Miss* gained steadily on *Notre Dame*. Finally, on lap five in the upper turn, Thompson had *Tahoe Miss* on the inside. As Manchester straightened *Notre Dame* for the chute finishing run, Thompson poured coal to *Tahoe Miss* for a roaring finish. By a boat length it was *Tahoe Miss* with a speed of 106.508 mph to *Notre Dame's* 106.090. Both drivers were applauded as they came into the pits.

Budweiser, meanwhile, bogged down in lap three so badly that an equally slow *Smirnoff* passed her in lap four and the final order of finish was *Tahoe Miss*, *Notre Dame*, *Smirnoff*, 79.763 and *Budweiser*, 66.914.

Heat 2A brought *Madison*, *Such Crust*, *Roostertail*, *Mariner* and *Savair's Mist* to a flashing start that saw *Savair's Mist* drowned in converging roostertails and floating helplessly in the course. In lap two the final order of finish was established as Bill Muncey driving *Such Crust* passed Jerry Schoenith in *Roostertail*, *Madison* led them both through the remaining four laps and *Mariner* went dead in the upper turn.

Heat 2B again brought four boats across the start closely bunched and battling for position. In a surprising situation *Bardahl* went into the first turn last but picked up third spot over *Blue Chip* in lap two, then second by lap three. Catching Thompson in *Tahoe Miss* was, however, impossible. *Tahoe Miss* won at 108.346 mph, *Bardahl* was second with 103.408; *Budweiser*, 99.082, and *Blue Chip* at 96.017.

Heat 2C was a fast parade with *U.S. V* in first at 107.484 mph, *Notre Dame* second, 104.166; *Savair's Probe* last with 74.792.

As points were totaled to determine competitors in the Final Heat, the Horace E. Dodge Memorial Race was run. It gave *Budweiser* and Chuck Hickling their first unlimited racing win. *Such Crust* and Bill Muncey were second, *Madison* and Buddy Byers ran third, followed by *Mariner* and Warner Gardner, *Savair's Probe* and Red Loomis; *Smirnoff* and Bill Cantrell were unable to finish.

Into the Final Heat *Tahoe Miss* went with two heat wins and 800 points. *Bardahl* and *U.S. V* were tied with 700; *Notre Dame*, 600; *Blue Chip*, 569, and *Roostertail*, 525.

Surprisingly, there was only one position change from start to finish. But this action generated plenty of excitement. *Tahoe Miss* led wire to wire. *Bardahl* was second, temporarily, *Notre Dame* third, followed by *U.S. V*, *Blue Chip* and *Roostertail*. For four laps *Notre*

Dame pressured *Bardahl* until, in the last lap, *Notre Dame* caught and passed the *Green Dragon* in the upper turn and dashed triumphantly across the finish in second place.

A less triumphant dash was made by *U.S. V* which powered toward the pits with driver Roy Doby signaling wildly for assistance. As he coasted to the sea wall and stood up it could be seen he was wet to the waist. Within seconds the stern of the boat was awash and within about 15 seconds the entire vessel was under water with only the bow pointing skyward.

A skin diver leaped, attached a line to this bow and saved the boat from the depths and current of the Detroit River.

Overall, *Tahoe Miss* won the regatta with 1,200 points. *Bardahl* with 925 was second, *Notre Dame* with 900 was third; *U.S. V*, 889; *Blue Chip*, 896; *Roostertail*, 820; *Madison*, 400.

At the disappointed *Bardahl* camp a perspiring, grimy Ron Musson was approached by veteran sports reporter George E. Van. "How about a crisp,

clear, short, quote Ron?" asked Van.

Musson, stared, blinked and said with a grin, "I lost."

Everyone laughed. But there was to be neither grin nor laughter when, a week later, Musson repeated these same words at the Madison, Indiana, Governor's Cup Regatta.

GOVERNOR'S CUP REGATTA

IF REGATTA SUCCESS is measured in terms of spirited dueling, threatening weather, good boat performances, an accident to thrill spectators, and a dispute between drivers to please the hot-tempered — if regatta success is measured by these things, the Sept. 5 Madison, Indiana Governor's Cup was a rousing success.

Tahoe Miss, with Chuck Thompson driving, won the event the second consecutive year. Following the Detroit win

a week previously, this gave the team a two-race score of six consecutive heat victories, which is nice winning any way you care to view it.

It was especially nice after what owner Bill Harrah termed "a long dry spell" during which *Tahoe Miss* not only won no races, but had difficulty finishing or starting heats! Until Detroit, the sleek *Gray Ghost* of Lake Tahoe had not won an event since Labor Day, 1964.

For *Miss Bardahl* and Ron Musson, the removal to second overall, and fifth in the Final Heat, was a severe shock. *Bardahl* had the race won with two heat wins and a hard-fought lead in the Final when an official ruling penalized the team an extra lap.

Dueling between *Savair's Mist* and *Savair's Probe* plus the duel between *Bardahl* and *Tahoe Miss* will not soon be forgotten. And Bill Cantrell doubtless will remember forever his sky-ride in *Miss Smirnoff* and subsequent injuries received in an accident both spectacular and unique. Upon recovery from



• This was the start of Heat 26 at Detroit with *Blue Chip*, *Budweiser* and *Tahoe Miss* pounding down the front chute toward the first turn.



• High-flying *Notre Dame* and *U.S. V* indicate how rough the Detroit River course was. *U.S. V*, placed fourth, sank after final heat.

three fractured ribs, badly sprained wrist and neck plus multiple bruises it's expected he will receive twinges of pain to remind him that unlimited racing is not for the weak or the wary.

The regatta began peacefully and sensibly enough with only adverse weather predictions hovering over it in the form of slow-moving, heavy rain clouds. Heat 1A brought an eager Bill Cantrell and Smirnoff into the first turn followed by Miss La Peer and Warner Gardner who in turn were followed by twin Leaping Leans, Such Crust and Savair's Mist. Smirnoff came out of the turn first to remain in the lead. La Peer blew in the first turn of the second lap. Savair's Mist and Ed O'Halloran passed Such Crust and Clarke Williams. Except for a spray-tossing spin out by Such Crust, that was all there was to that heat.

Heat 1B gave Bardahl and Musson a field easily out-classed. Roostertail and Jerry Schoenith ran a dogged second with no hope of catching Bardahl. Blue Chip and Fred Alter settled into third after taking a tremendous leap into the first turn. And the real race was staged by Savair's Probe as Red Loomis tried every racing trick to pass Blue Chip. What Probe gained in the turns was lost on the straights, and what must have been sheer frustration for Loomis was sheer racing delight for watching spectators.

Heat 1C belonged to Tahoe Miss wire to wire. Madison and Buddy Byers followed her into the first turn and Notre Dame and Rex Manchester took more of Budweiser's roostertail than any boat can handle. By lap two Notre Dame regained speed to pass Budweiser. Then Madison blew a blower to establish the final order of finish: Tahoe Miss, Notre Dame, Budweiser and Madison.

The draw for Heat 2A provided an evenly matched field of Smirnoff, Savair's Probe, La Peer and Budweiser. La Peer experienced starting trouble and fired up only seconds before the one-minute gun. In powering onto the course the boat left a deep wake that proved the undoing of Smirnoff and Cantrell.

With Smirnoff in lane two and ahead, Budweiser in lane one and charging hard and Savair's Probe in lane three almost exactly opposite Budweiser, the three boats pounded toward the first turn.

Smirnoff took a bad bounce upon hitting the first wave of the V-wake left by La Peer. Upon hitting the second wave the boat took off like a 727 jetliner until the extreme stern was about 20-25 feet off the water with the bow angled skyward.

Spray from the other boats created the illusion that Smirnoff simply dis-

appeared in mid-air as their tails hid Smirnoff's downward progress.

When next seen the boat was idling flat on the water around the center turn buoy and Cantrell was not in sight. Rescue vessels soon located him and sped him to medical aid as other patrol vessels nosed driverless Smirnoff into shore several hundred yards downstream.

A re-draw brought another field to Heat 2A and dropped Heat 2C from the schedule. Bardahl led the Heat 2A Re-run wire to wire. La Peer pressured hard from second place while Savair's Probe and Such Crust passed an ailing, the dead, Roostertail.

In lap two La Peer missed a buoy, picked it up then drove furiously to shake a close Savair's Probe. As Loomis in Probe fought to take second, La Peer suddenly spurted oil. On windshield, driver, boat side, deck and finally on the engine, the oil sprayed. There,

heated intensely, the hot oil began to wrap the entire course in an oval of blue smoke. In lap five Savair's Probe finally passed La Peer to make the final order of finish Bardahl, Savair's Probe, La Peer and Such Crust.

Heat 2B gave Tahoe Miss another start-to-finish lead with Notre Dame second, Madison third, Blue Chip fourth and Savair's Mist fifth. The well-spaced heat proved to be only a lull before action.

With Tahoe Miss and Bardahl tied in points for the Final Heat it was mandatory that either win the heat to win the race. Notre Dame with 600 points could place second overall at best if either leader won, more logically would place third. Savair's Probe and Mist with 469 and 427 each were running for fun unless the rest of the field broke down.

In a sizzling start the Bardahl led Tahoe Miss into and out of the first turn. For the remaining five laps Tahoe Miss never ceased to press Bardahl at every

1, 2, 3 at Madison, Indiana



● Tahoe Miss followed up its win at Detroit with another big victory at Madison. The boat and driver Chuck Thompson also won the same race last year.



● Bardahl and Ron Musson appeared to have the race clinched with three firsts, but a penalty lap dropped the entry to fifth place in the Final, second overall.



● Notre Dame has been a threat all season, led in high point standing up to the Governor's Cup. Third place at Madison dropped the Dame a notch behind Bardahl.



• Such Crust (upper left) spins out in Heat 1-A producing a gigantic cloud of spray. Driver Clarke Williams was soaked but unharmed. (Upper right): Miss LaPeer, piloted by Warner Gardner, leaves a trail of blue smoke during the re-run of Heat 2-A. Earlier, Miss Smirnoff (center, left) had bounced off wake left by LaPeer,

throwing driver Bill Cantrell out and running driver-less onto beach. At right center, the injured Cantrell is rescued by patrol craft. (Bottom row): Both the Savair boats did run well at Madison, with Savair's Probe (left) finishing fourth overall and Savair's Mist fifth. Red Loomis drove Probe, Walter Kade rode the Mist.

opportunity. In return, *Bardahl* forced *Tahoe Miss* wide on turns. *Notre Dame* lay close behind in a safe, sensible third. Half a straight back the two *Savair* boats dueled up a real storm. *Probe* and Loomis took turns on the inside to gain distance, then lost space to the acceleration of *Mist* and Walter Kade on the straight. But finally in lap five the *Probe* passed as spectators cheered.

Meanwhile, up front an astounding announcement blared across the Ohio River. *Bardahl* was being penalized a lap for a rule infraction on the start of the heat. As *Bardahl* thundered across what should have been a wire to wire finish, only the green flag greeted the *Green Dragon* and her disbelieving driver.

Tahoe Miss got the checkered flat as *Bardahl* roared through a penalty lap. Overall results placed *Tahoe Miss* in the winner's circle with 1200 points; *Bardahl* was second with 929 and *Notre*

Dame third with 900. *Savair's Probe* placed fourth with 694; *Savair's Mist* was fifth with 596. Next was *Smirnoff*, 400; *Blue Chip*, *Such Crust*, and *Madison*, 394 each; *Roostertail*, 300; *La Peer* and *Budweiser*, 225.

It was inevitable that Musson would question the referee's ruling on the start, which found *Bardahl* had forced *Tahoe Miss* inside the course after starting lanes had been established. Since there is no appeal from the referee's decision in unlimited racing, the ruling sticks despite some beach controversy and puzzled searching of the APBA Rule Book for both the letter and spirit of The Law.

Best news of the event came as the crowd dispersed. Cantrell's injuries were less severe than at first reported, and *Smirnoff*, with only a sponson dented, might be repaired for the *Tahoe World Championship Regatta* in three weeks.

Other crews, meanwhile packed for the long drive across the nation to finish the 1965 season at Lake Tahoe, Sept. 25, then San Diego, Oct. 3. If a proposed exhibition race on Lake Berryessa, California was accepted following the San Diego race, it was certain the entire unlimited contingent would cry "Enough!" after squeezing 9 regattas and four cross-country trips into a 14-week season.

At any rate, the final two races would determine the outcome of the national high point championship race which, until the Governor's Cup Regatta, was led by *Notre Dame*. At Madison the *Bardahl*, with 5477 points, slipped past *Notre Dame*, 5469, by eight points.

Whether the *Green Dragon* and Musson could hold and increase this slim lead was only one question the *Tahoe* event would answer.

Whether Musson could beat *Tahoe Miss* on her home waters was the other.