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Bardahl Wins Lake Tahoe

By Phil Cole

Miss Bardahl, helmed by the biggest money winner in Unlimited hydroplane racing history, easily dominated a field composed of the world's six fastest race boats to win the Lake Tahoe World Championship Regatta, Sept. 25 at Stateline, Nev.

Stocky Ron Musson, who has won more money and more races than any other driver, pushed the Green Dragon to consecutive opening heat victories to pull ahead of a field consisting of Harrah's Tahoe Miss, Miss Exide, Miss Madison, Miss U.S. V and Notre Dame. So clearly did Musson outclass the rest of the field that he had to finish no higher than fourth in the final heat. He wound up second to Tahoe Miss, who had the second fastest heat of the day.

Under terms of the Lake Tahoe plan, racing's new format, only the six fastest boats qualified for the championship race. This triggered hectic qualifying activity on all four qualifying days, with a total of 136 attempts by the 17-boat field.

Roy Duby, world recordholder for the mile straightaway, showed the rest of the thunder-boats the short way around the three-mile Lake Tahoe course, situated 6,200 ft. above sea level. He posted a two-lap qualifying average of 119.986 mph. Duby's fastest lap was 120.837 mph.

The other qualifiers ranged downward to 111.631 in the first flight, giving the field an average speed of 115.025 mph, the fastest field in history.

Over 35,000 watched the three-race program. The Tahoe plan featured the six fastest boats in the World Championship race, with the five next fastest in the Ponderosa Trophy race and the slowest four boats in the South Shore Trophy race.

The huge throng saw the fastest racing program ever staged, with a heat started every half hour. There was a maximum period of 10 min. between boats on the water. Spectators were kept entertained, crews were kept busy and there was little of the tedious waiting between heats and delays that are characteristic of many other Unlimited events.

Musson won the first heat of the championship race easily after a near-tragic mixup in the first turn. Lake Tahoe's new starting "gates," which had each boat starting in a pre-assigned spot, allowed the field of six to cross the starting line at full throttle. By the time it reached the first turn, the entire field was bunched at maximum speed.

Entering the turn, Miss Exide moved in on Notre Dame. Rex Manchester, the Shamrock lady's driver, turned left and shut off, only to have Roy Duby, in the inside lane in U.S. V, ram his stern at 170 mph. The collision cleaned off the tail fin of Notre Dame and damaged its cowling. Notre Dame was left dead in the water and U.S. V limped around the course for three laps.

Musson came out of the mixup on top and led wire-to-wire. Miss Exide was second and Miss Madison third. Tahoe Miss limped home fourth with a damaged supercharger. Bardahl's

average speed was 104.976, fastest heat of the day.

Musson won the second heat just as easily, followed by Tahoe Miss, Exide and Madison. His speed was 102.118.

In the final heat, Bardahl was on top until the end of the backstretch on lap number one, where Tahoe Miss shot past and stayed in front the rest of the way. Bardahl was second, U.S. V was third and Madison fourth. Tahoe Miss' speed here was 104.834.

In the final standings, Bardahl was first, Tahoe Miss second, Miss Exide third, Miss Madison fourth, Miss U.S. V fifth and Notre Dame, in bad luck all day, sixth.

Dan Foster, the veteran campaigner retired for almost 10 years, roared back into action to win the Ponderosa Trophy race in Miss Smirnoff, from Detroit.

Lee Schoenith's blue and red hydro got excellent handling from Foster, who replaced the injured Bill Cantrell in the cockpit. Foster ran speeds of 109 mph in early laps. Once in front, he cooled off the Smirnoff and throttled back to win easily.

Foster, who almost kicked the Smirnoff into the top six in the qualifying period, dominated the Ponderosa race as clearly as Musson outclassed the World Championship field. Savair's Probe, Berryessa Belle, Miss Budweiser and Savair's Mist scrambled for the other positions. In the final standings, Bernie Little's Miss Budweiser was second, with Chuck Hickling doing a fine job. The Savair boats finished third and fourth and Berryessa Belle was fifth.

Red Loomis thrilled himself and the upper turn spectators in heat two when he spun out violently in Savair's Probe in lap four.

Jack Schafer's Such Crust, driven by Fred Alter, withstood a challenge from Bob Fendler's Miss San Diego to win the South Shore Trophy. Bill Schuyler's \$ Bill was the hard-luck boat in this race.

Entering the final heat, \$ Bill and Such Crust were tied in points, but \$ Bill failed to start. This gave Alter a clear shot at the South Shore crown.

The \$ Bill won the first heat in this race, followed by Such Crust. Rex Bixby, in \$ Bill, and Alter in Such Crust, switched places in the second heat while Alter won the third, followed by Fendler.

In final standings, Such Crust was first, followed by Miss San Diego and \$ Bill. Mariner Too did not finish the first heat and did not start in the second or third.

Musson and Bardahl led the national high point championship for the third straight year at Lake Tahoe. It was Bardahl's fourth consecutive win at the Lake-in-the-Sky. Musson drove three of these winners, with relief driver Don Wilson the fourth winner.

The racing program was climaxed by one of the wildest awards ceremonies in history. Held at Harrah's South Shore Room, it was highlighted by various "awards" given to drivers in the spirit of fun.

The sponsoring South Tahoe Regatta Association, a new member of APBA, did an excellent job in its first outing. Headed by Nevada banker Jim Koch and Race Chairman Red Farnsworth, the STRA posted marks for excellence that gave other races something to shoot at in the future.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RACE

HEAT 1

Boat and City	Driver	Av. Mph
1. Miss Bardahl, Seattle	Ron Musson	104.976
2. Miss Exide, Seattle	Bill Brow	99.264
3. Miss Madison, Madison, Ind.	Buddy Byers	91.946
4. Tahoe Miss, Reno, Nev.	Chuck Thompson	89.256
(Miss U.S. V, Detroit, Roy Duby; Notre Dame, Detroit, Rex Manchester, DNF)		

HEAT 2

1. Miss Bardahl, 102.118; 2. Tahoe Miss, 98.450; 3. Miss Exide, 93.782; 4. Miss Madison, 89.389; 5. Miss U.S. V, 87.619; 6. Notre Dame (Speed Unavailable).

HEAT 3

1. Tahoe Miss, 104.834; 2. Miss Bardahl, 101.771; 3. Miss U.S. V, 99.264; 4. Miss Madison, 95.795; 5. Miss Exide, 88.321. (Notre Dame, DNF)

FINAL POINT STANDINGS

1. Miss Bardahl—1100; 2. Tahoe Miss—869; 3. Miss Exide—652; 4. Miss Madison—563; 5. Miss U.S. V—352; Notre Dame—95.

PONDEROSA TROPHY RACE

HEAT 1

Boat and City	Driver	Av. Mph
1. Miss Smirnoff, Detroit	Dan Foster	98.181
2. Savair's Probe, Warren, Mich.	Red Loomis	95.897

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3. Miss Budweiser, Tampa, Fla.	Chuck Hickling	93.701
4. Savair's Mist, Warren, Mich.	Walt Kade	89.895
5. Berryessa Belle, Sacramento, Cal.	Bob Miller	Unavail.

HEAT 2

1. Miss Smirnoff, 96.895; 2. Savair's Mist, 94.521; 3. Miss Budweiser, 91.711. (Savair's Probe, DNF; Berryessa Belle, DNS)
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HEAT 3

1. Miss Smirnoff, 94.060; 2. Miss Budweiser, 92.608; 3. Savair's Mist, 91.016. (Savair's Probe, Berryessa Belle, DNS)

FINAL POINT STANDINGS

1. Miss Smirnoff—900; 2. Miss Budweiser—563; 3. Savair's Mist—521; 4. Savair's Probe—225; Berryessa Belle—95.

SOUTH SHORE TROPHY RACE

HEAT 1

Boat and City	Driver	Av. Mph
1. \$ Bill, Lampac, Cal.	Rex Bixby	86.000
2. Such Crust, Detroit	Fred Alter	84.559
3. Miss San Diego, Los Angeles	Bob Fendler	80.935
(Mariner Too, Detroit)	Warner Gardner	DNF

HEAT 2

1. Such Crust, 89.507; 2. \$ Bill, 85.294; 3. Miss San Diego, 81.657. (Mariner Too, DNS)
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HEAT 3

1. Such Crust, 87.068; 2. Miss San Diego, 85.079. (\$ Bill, Mariner Too, DNS)

FINAL POINT STANDINGS

1. Such Crust—619; 2. Miss San Diego—423; 3. \$ Bill—394.

Bardahl Takes San Diego Cup

By Harry Monahan
San Diego Union

Miss Bardahl shattered three records and claimed two national championships en route to victory in the San Diego Cup race on Mission Bay, San Diego, Cal., Oct. 3.

An engine explosion and fire aboard Harrah's Tahoe Miss also spiced the program witnessed by about 40,000. Driver Chuck Thompson escaped injury, but the boat's engine compartment and tailfin were damaged extensively.

Little Ron Musson pushed Miss Bardahl to three heat victories in the record-breaking finale to the Unlimited hydroplane season. The Green Dragon ripped the Mission Bay course apart in her first try, setting a 15-mile APBA speed record of 116.079 mph. Miss Bardahl had a top single three-mile lap of 117.87, also a new record.

Both of the old records were set here last year when Miss Bardahl averaged 113.660 for 15 miles and Miss Exide was caught in 117.647 for a single lap.

Ole Bardahl's speedster won her second heat with an average of 115.335, and polished off the record 16-boat field with a 113.780 clocking in the finale. This gave her an average of 115.064 for the 45-mile total, and this also is believed to be a new record for the class.

That blistering first heat triumph also sewed up the boat and driver national high point championships for the Bardahl crew. With the 1,200 points earned here, Miss Bardahl and Musson each finished the season with 7,777 points. This is the boat's third consecutive title and the second in a row for Musson, who picked up the San Diego Union Perpetual Trophy emblematic of the driver honor at the awards dinner in the Hilton Inn.

Runnerup honors in the regatta went to Miss Madison, the community-sponsored boat from Indiana driven by Buddy Byers, which posted two firsts and a third on the nine-race card. Miss Exide, driven by Bill Brow, was third overall with a 1-2-3 record for her three heats.

The All-California Trophy, presented by the Union-Tribune Publishing Co. to the state-based boat which finished highest in the race standings, was awarded to Ken Murphy's Berryessa Belle, driven by Bob Miller, which finished in a tie for sixth place with Miss Budweiser and Miss Smirnoff.

Second place in the national point standings went to Notre Dame and driver Rex Manchester. Mrs. Shirley Mendelson McDonald's game blue-and-white skimmer from Seattle won

two heats, but developed mechanical problems in the last heat and failed to finish.

Tahoe Miss and driver Thompson had difficulties from the opening gun. They had the inside track at the start of the first heat, even though the regatta's defending champion, Mariner Too, crossed first. Going into the first turn, however, Mariner Too cut Tahoe Miss off and Mariner's roostertail hosed down the Nevada boat's engine leaving her dead in the water.

In the second heat, Tahoe Miss again did not get out of the first turn. The four-boat field hit the start in almost a deadheat, but Miss Exide and Tahoe Miss had position going into the turn. Suddenly, Tahoe Miss' blower ruptured and the engine compartment erupted in flames.

Thompson abandoned ship quickly and wasn't even singed. But he didn't have time to throw any switches, so the fuel pump kept pouring aviation gasoline into the engine compartment. The city lifeguard patrol boat Alert finally subdued the stubborn blaze after forcing her on the beach at Fiesta Island.

The boat did not appear to be a total loss, however, with her sponsons still intact and only the paint scorched off the deck. The relatively unimportant tailfin and cockpit cowling, which are plastic and plywood fixtures, will have to be replaced.

SAN DIEGO CUP RACE

HEAT 1-A

Boat and City	Driver	Av. Mph
1. Such Crust, Detroit	Fred Alter	95.846
2. Savair's Mist, Warren, Mich.	Walt Kade	91.603
(Mariner Too, Detroit, Warner Gardner, DIS; Tahoe Miss, Reno, Nev., Chuck Thompson, DNF)		

HEAT 1-B

1. Notre Dame, Detroit	Rex Manchester	110.882
2. Miss Budweiser, Tampa, Fla.	Chuck Hickling	101.465
3. \$ Bill, Lompoc, Cal.	Rex Bixby	101.427
4. Miss Tri-City Sun, Seattle	Bob Gilliam	Under 70

HEAT 1-C

1. Miss Madison, Madison, Ind.	Buddy Byers	107.441
2. Miss Smirnoff, Detroit	Dun Foster	101.066
3. Miss Exide, Seattle	Bill Brow	89.344
(6 Laps)		
4. Miss San Diego, Los Angeles	Bob Fendler	73.851

HEAT 1-D

1. Miss Bardahl, Seattle	Ron Musson	116.079
2. Berryessa Belle, Sacramento, Cal.	Bob Miller	99.704
3. Savair's Probe, Warren, Mich.	Red Loomis	97.790
(Miss U.S. V, Detroit, Bill Muncey, DNS)		

HEAT 2-A

1. Notre Dame, 107.741; 2. Berryessa Belle, 93.652; 3. Savair's Probe, 89.167. (Miss U.S. V, DNF)		
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HEAT 2-B (Re-Start)

1. Miss Exide, 109.577; 2. Miss Budweiser, 101.867; 3. Savair's Mist, 100.708. (Tahoe Miss, DNS)		
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HEAT 2-C

1. Miss Bardahl, 115.335; 2. Miss Smirnoff, 108.173; 3. \$ Bill, 101.313; 4. Miss Tri-City Sun, Under 70.		
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HEAT 2-D

1. Miss Madison, 98.684; 2. Such Crust, 94.620; 3. Miss San Diego, 91.993. (Mariner Too, DNF)		
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FINAL HEAT

1. Miss Bardahl, 113.780; 2. Miss Exide, 109.823; 3. Miss Madison, 100.539; 4. Such Crust, 97.174 (Notre Dame, DNF)		
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FINAL POINT STANDINGS

1. Miss Bardahl—1200; 2. Miss Madison—1025; 3. Miss Exide—925; 4. Such Crust—869; 5. Notre Dame—800; 6. Miss Smirnoff—600; 7. Miss Budweiser—600; 8. Berryessa Belle—600; 9. Savair's Mist—525; 10. \$ Bill—450; 11. Savair's Probe—450; 12. Miss San Diego—394; 13. Miss Tri-City Sun—338.		
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