



Showtime North of the Border

A new boat club is called on to provide a show with lots of noise/Chris Bridel

It seemed like a dream come true the day our newly formed Toronto Model Power Boat Club received a call from the Uxbridge Kinsmen Club. Uxbridge is normally a quiet typical, Canadian town located about 25 miles northeast of Toronto. But, once a year their Spring Water Days brings the town alive with five days of parades, carnivals, contests and fireworks displays. This year they wanted a model power boat regatta to be staged at Elgin Park in the heart of town. All they asked for was lots of noise to attract a crowd and a good show to entertain them. We planned to give them just that.

Our first step to success was to call Les Modeleurs Marin du Quebec, a club of over 110 members based 350 miles away in Montreal. Staging small town shows is nothing new to this club. This year they have nine weekends of races scheduled in various small towns in Quebec. All of their regattas are either sponsored by breweries or distilleries. Because our Spring Water Days race was scheduled for June 21 and 22, 1980, (which happened to fall on a long holiday weekend for the Quebec modellers) they planned to bring seventy boats to the event.

The next call was placed to another well established club, the Golden Triangle Marine Modellers of Waterloo, Ontario. Fortunately for us, they dropped plans for a race of their own for the June 21 and 22 weekend and pledged full support for our first race.

Contestants began arriving at the race site at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 21 to find picture perfect conditions for racing. The entire month of June was plagued with unseasonably cold, wet and windy weather. In fact, the day before the race many localities re-

ported trees uprooted by high winds and heavy rain. The weather for our weekend was ideal with sunny, temperatures in the seventies and light winds. The race site was a well protected pond right in the town of Uxbridge with plenty of camping facilities adjacent to the pond. The Uxbridge Kinsmen Club did everything short of rolling out the red carpet for the boaters. The pit area was cleaned and filled to the shoreline, and rows of picnic tables were provided for the models. A 100 watt Shure public address system was provided for us along with a powered retrieve boat manned by volunteers from the Uxbridge Fire Department. This highly motivated club also provided a shuttle service between the race site and camping area for the contestants. For incentive, beautiful first, second and third place plaques were given for each of the eight classes of boats run on the weekend. A natural six foot high rise in a section of the shoreline provided excellent visibility of the course for the drivers. The spectators were not ignored either. Bleachers were set-up opposite the pit area for an excellent view of the race course.

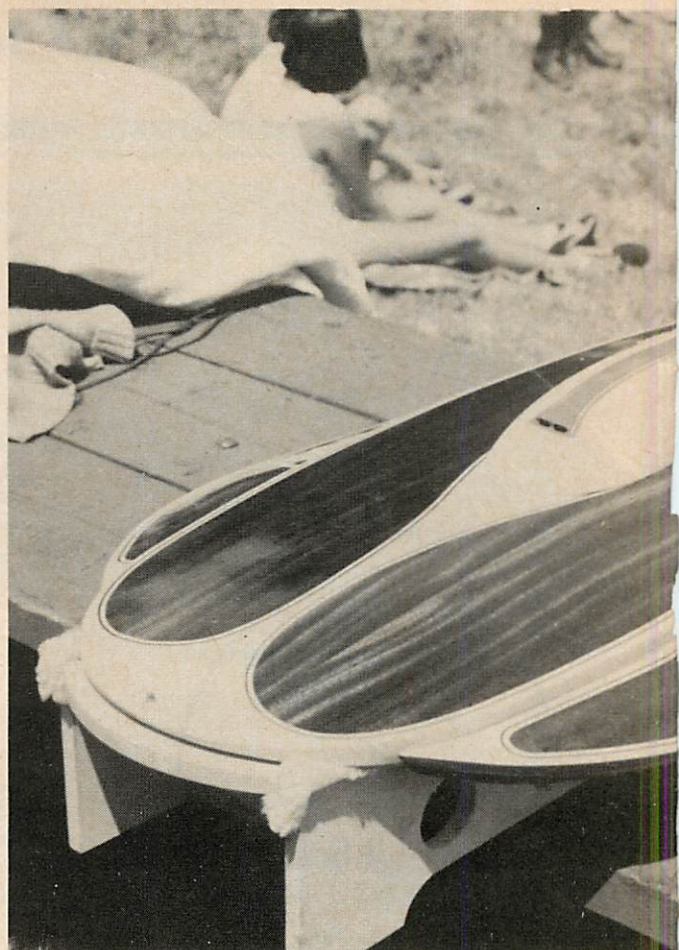
After all the equipment had been set up and tested, a drivers meeting was held to explain the rules. Running rules were I.M.P.B.A. with a couple of twists in the interest of the spectators. Instead of running the entire course during pit and clock time, contestants were allowed to cut the course and run around the clock and buoys four, five and six, similar to how full scale races are run. This maneuver made lining up for the start a snap. If you found yourself running short on clock time for the start, you could cut the course between the clock and buoys one,

two and three. If you had lots of time, you could run all the way around the course if you wished. As a result, most heats started with all boats heading for the start line in formation as the clock hit zero. This provided much tighter and more interesting races for the spectators.

Rule number two was designed to eliminate one boat races. If only one boat was left running during a race (and unfortunately this happened several times), the driver was asked to make one complete lap and bring his boat in. The driver was awarded full finishing points. There is nothing more boring to a spectator than watching one boat run the course at part throttle playing "dodge the dead wood" just to rack up laps. We felt it would be better to clear the course and get on with the next race as soon as possible to keep audience interest high.

As the racing got under way, it was evident we had a wide variety of boats running. Sure, there were the usual Crapshooters and Gators in attendance, but they were far outnumbered by hulls from J.V.S., S.H. Grainger, Steve Muck, B.M.D., Dumas, as well as a number of scratch built hulls.

John Freund Jr. and his boys from the Golden Triangle club experimented for years with quiet boats running in the 80-85 D.B. range. Many of the hulls were the European enduro style hulls complete with rubber mounted engines, water cooled tuned pipes, large quick-fill fuel tanks and submerged prop drives. These quiet boats proved to be quite competitive on the oval against the American style surface prop deep vees when properly set-up. As expected from these boys, the workmanship was top notch.



Pat Pancione, from Rochester, New York and his Thundergator that he has named "Italian Stallion" (above). The first place Scale .60 Hydro "Lauterbach Special" of Gilles Duguay (right). Note the engine details and driver.

Our French Canadian friends from Les Modeleurs Marin du Quebec ran an awesome group of beautifully detailed scale hydros. Their large membership concentrated their building efforts on three major classes of models-outboard tunnels, sport 40, and scale 60 hydros. It was not uncommon for their races in Quebec to have fifty sport forties and a dozen scale sixty hydros. The favorite sport forty hull was the J.V.S. powered by a rear rotor K&B. These models were detailed like the full scale "Country Boy" and "Olympiad" and proved almost as quick as the outriggers.

The scale sixty hulls were truly works of art. Seven scale boats powered by either O.P.S. or O.S. Max .65's did battle over the weekend.

Gilles Duguay piloted the "Lauterbach Special" GP200; Jean Charette ran his "Deepwater Special" GP247; Charles Kobilard fired his "Golden Nuggett" GP899; Donald Reed brought his beautifully finished "Atlas Van Lines" U-1; Denys Charette ran "L'Entreprise" GP77; Toronto's Paul Brault ran his colorful "Long Gone" GP4 and Tom Harris was there with "Goodbye Charlie".

As you can see, the boys from Quebec were big fans of Grand Prix hydros. Full size Grand Prix hydroplane racing, water racing's newest show, proved its mettle out on the race course as an exciting blend of competition and professionalism aimed head-on at the spectator. The heard of Grand Prix beats in Valleyfield, Quebec, where this class of racing developed in the late '60's and early '70's. For over forty years, racers and modelers descended upon Valleyfield for the hot and heavy action. Several of Grand Prix's heros such as Jules Le Boeuf and Marcel Le

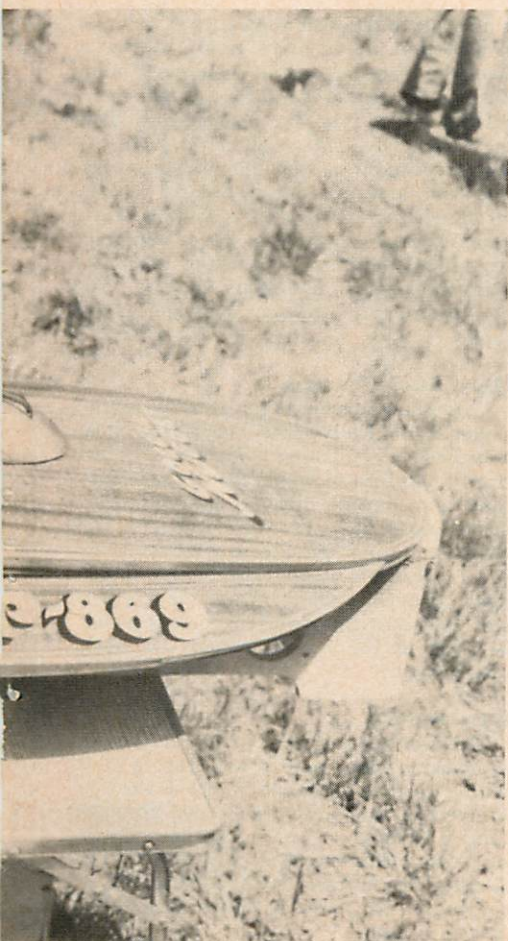




PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRIS BRIDEL



Paul Brault, the weekend's Contest Director with his OS Max powered "Long Gone" (top). The wing on the rear is functional. The sign says "swimming at your own risk"; that definitely applied to race day (above)! Here we see the start of a Scale Hydro race. The "Golden Nugget" by Charles Robillard (below).



Berge became well known to many of the local modellers. It was only natural for the Quebec modellers to scale down the exciting G.P.I. class to the $\frac{1}{4}$ mile oval.

As a point of interest, the Modeleurs Marin du Quebec do not run outrigger hulls. They claim, although the riggers are much faster than the three point full bodied hydros, they are not as reliable. The spectators cannot identify with a motorized stick either. Since they have races almost every weekend in Quebec, their equipment must be reliable. This echoes what I.M.P.B.A. president has been trying to impress upon boaters—to strive for consistency and spectator appeal to forward the hobby. It has certainly worked in Quebec.

Between heats of competition, we provided a couple of special exhibition runs for the hundreds of spectators that lined the pond for the weekend. Joe Lacey, one of the founding fathers of the Toronto Model Power Boat Club, fired his 60 inch long O+R powered P.T. boat for the crowd. Joe originally built this model in 1952 and reports that his original twelve channel Kraft reed set is still going strong. Top speed of this 28 year old model was about 18 M.P.H. It's little wonder that Joe's P.T. has survived all these years—the bulkheads are made from $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick plywood.

In distinct contrast, Pat Pancione from Rochester, New York, made some smoking passes with his twin O.P.S. .65 powered Thundergator. Pat's "Italian Stallion", which took top laurels this year at the Toledo show in Competition hydro, proved that it would run as good as it looks. The boat features twin Octura 1470 props on $\frac{1}{4}$ " shafts,

along with some mighty fine handling characteristics. Each run was followed by heavy applause from spectators and boaters alike.

AM Mono

Rick Rodwell from Mississauga, Ontario, easily captured top position of the weekend with a total of 1525 points. Rick's "L'il Northwind", powered by a potent piped K+B 3.5, quickly outdistanced a crowd of vee hulls and ski boats. Rick wrapped-up first place by heat four, however, in heat five he was still determined to run her wide open to give the crowd a good show. At buoy number four on the fourth lap, Rick's flying wing performed a 360 degree spin complete with swan dive only to emerge from the water a few feet later and continue on its way. Who said B MONO was boring?

Open Outboard

Once again, Dan Druckmuller of Scarborough, Ontario, grabbed first place with his stock motored outrigger racking up 1625 points for the weekend. Outboard racing became very popular in this section of Canada and because of this, we learned several things. First of all, stock outboard motors dominated the winner's circle, not due to all out speed, but due to reliability. Dan coupled this factor to a superior hull design—a modified Crapshooter hull very similar to Precision Boat's El Diablo design. Taking a five year old inboard Crapshooter model, Dan enlarged the sponsons, and increased the boat's width to produce a fast, stable model. The motor itself was coupled to a rudder which helped turn his boat and prevent spinouts in the turns. Dan might have scored perfectly



A true golden oldie is Joe Lacey's circa 1952 scale P.T. Boat (above). This is a photo of a small part of the pit area (below). Lots of action.



Here is a sampling of the Hydros from Quebec (above). Scale types are very popular with spectators. Scale hydro drivers intent on a race (below).



for the weekend if his prop had not entangled with weeds in heat four.

AB Hydro

George Hodgins of Stouffville, Ontario, grabbed an early lead in points with his K+B powered Crapshooter. George was handed first place early when he was the only boater left running in his class on Sunday morning.

CD Mono

The writer backed into another win in the popular CD Mono class with 1800 points. My O.P.S. powered Dumas fiberglass Cigarette proved not to be the fastest boat in its class, but the most consistent. That, my friends, was heat racing. The deep vees provided some very tight, exciting racing over the weekend. Two heats ended in deck to deck battles with the winner being declared by inches. My old rival, Bill Vick and myself figured we were due for some classic neck and neck racing. In the two heats we ran together, Bill and I hit the line together on the start. Unfortunately, Bill's vee decided to hook on him later in the contests. Maybe next time, Bill.

CD Hydro

Terry Keeley from Ottawa, Ontario, bagged his first ever CD hydro win with his super smooth running K+B 6.5 / Gator combination. Terry spent a lot of time this year setting up his hydro for Uxbridge. Obviously, his work paid off. Terry's 1625 points for the weekend consisted of four firsts and one D.N.F. Heat five gave Terry a good driving lesson (don't change lanes across another boat's roostertail). Terry's Gator set the al-

titude record for the meet when the roostertail of a slower hydro blew his boat skyward on the back chute.

I remember meeting Terry for the first time last year at a race in Toronto. He had travelled over 250 miles from home on the bus with little more than his model boat and starting equipment in hand. That's a dedicated boater. Fortunately this year, Terry is a student in Toronto and a valuable member of the Toronto Model Power Boat Club.

Sport 40 Hydro

Roger Brault blasted to a solid class win with a near perfect 1950 points driving his scratch built "Country Boy". The entire field for this class came from Les Modeleurs Marin du Quebec. Running with 6.5 and 7.5 c.c. rear rotor engines provided some fast and tight racing over the weekend. About 70% of all drivers finished their heats in Sport 40, giving the spectators lots of action.

Scale 60 Hydro

Gilles Duguay from Valleyfield, Quebec, obviously had a little more horsepower dialed in to his "Lauterbach Special" to take the gold with 1500 points. This class quickly became the favorite with both the spectators and the boaters. Boaters dropped everything to watch. Spectators lined the pond in interest. A dozen or so photographers fought for a good view of the course. As the clock started, the big .65's fired in rapid succession. Mini pipes or open stacks were the rule of the day. The start of a scale 60 heat could be heard all over town. It was interesting to note that the Quebec boaters would not throw their models on the launch. Instead, they placed the run-

ning boats in the water and allowed them to slowly climb up on plane as the full scale boats do. I was particularly impressed with the driving in this class. Five of the seven entrants were from the Quebec club, and they obviously had great driver-to-driver and driver-to-pitman communication during clock time and race time. The starts were in formation with each boat remaining in its lane. The models were well set-up with very scale-like handling. The finish of each heat was greeted with thunderous applause from the spectators and boaters. Real showmanship.

Hard Luck Award

This weekend's hard luck award was presented to Jim Kelly of Ste. Foy, Quebec. Jim travelled over 500 miles to Uxbridge only to score a big zero in points for the weekend. Since Jim had so much trouble with his model power boat, he was awarded a "I'd rather be sailing" tee shirt to take home. Jim spent more time helping our Toronto Model Power Boat Club members with the P.A. and scoring duties than working on his model boat. Thank you Jim. Your help was much appreciated.

Conclusion

This was the most enjoyable race I have attended in a long time. It was great to work with such well organized groups as the Uxbridge Kinsmen Club, the Golden Triangle Marine Modellers, and Les Modeleurs Marin du Quebec. This race was billed as the "First Annual Model Power Boat Regatta" in Uxbridge. We are planning a bigger and better Second Annual.