

## MOTORSPORTS

**RAY  
HOLLIMAN**


# This boat's name describes its unique, colorful history

The first owner, Steve Manson, was blind in one eye. The second owner, Marty Prast, is crippled.

The driver, Ken Brodie, is . . . well, some people think anybody who likes to race boats at more than 100 miles per hour is a little bit crazy.

So there you have the name of the racing team and of the boat: *Blind, Crippled and Crazy*.

**THIS IS THE BOAT** that won a three-lap, side-by-side duel Sunday to win the 5-litre championship in the 42nd annual Southland Regatta at windy Lake Maggiore. The owner, driver and crew hope this was just an indication of things to come as they make their annual attempt at the national points championship.

The history of the boat is unique, as explained by chief mechanic Mike Stamler, an original member of the racing team:

"The first owner was Steve Manson, and he was blind in one eye," said Stamler, "and then he dropped out and Marty came along. He's crippled. And we said that anybody who drove the boat for us had to be crazy."

Owner Prast, from Grand Island, N.Y., is confined to a wheelchair because of injuries suffered in the Vietnam War. His plaything — the thing that keeps his spirits up — is involvement with the boat and with his crewmen.

His driver since the team was formed in 1976 was Joe Giambroni, who also built the boat. But Giambroni was killed last summer while driving a 7-litre boat in Canada

and Brodie, a superstock driver, was hired as his replacement.

The team finished third in the points race last year and, Brodie believes, could win the elusive title this season.

**"WE SHOULD BE VERY** competitive," said Brodie, who said he was backing off at times in Sunday's race in deference to the choppy water. "We have an excellent motor builder, and we have a powerful motor in this boat."

The *Blind, Crippled and Crazy* team, like most others who field 5-litre boats, was aided last year by a rules change that allowed the boats to use stock engines if they wished. The 5-litre class had run into problems in recent years because of the expense involved in using fuel-injection engines American Power Boat Association regulations called for. In many races, not enough 5-litres showed up to make a race, and there was rarely more than the minimum three.

"Now we can run a 368 Chevrolet motor," said Brodie, "and that cuts down the cost. That means more people can put 5-litres in the water, and you're going to see a lot more competitive boats than in the past few years."

Prast, the money man, isn't so sure he's saving that much money as the group travels all over the East coast and into Canada to make most of the APBA races.

But he, and all the rest of the members of this carefree group, know they're having a lot of fun.