


Huddle In Garage Started Regatta

By James Robey



Some of the nation's top boat racers are determined to stage a hot race at Eastwood lake Sunday, but a few Dayton boatmen recall that the big hydroplane race grew from a cool beginning.

Fact is, it was as cool as December, 1963. That's when a few racing enthusiasts huddled in a garage at 560 Monterey avenue.

A hydroplane with a 145-cubic inch engine was being doctored by Dave Koch. Not that the craft was sick. But a dyed-in-the-bilge boatman doesn't need that excuse to tear down an engine.

Elroy Spicker said Dayton should have a boat racing association . . . or was it Koch, or Jim Davies. Maybe it was Charley Fyffe, Joe Krietzer or Gene Whipp who said it.

Anyway, the suggestion was made and presto, the Dayton Motorboat Racing association was formed. Less than a year later more than 100 active members in the association were promoting boat racing in general, and an inboard hydroplane race for Dayton in particular.

They Don't Race For The Money

"Why do we like racing? Because of the fellowship, the sportsmanship . . . and thrills," said association commodore Gene Whipp.

"We don't do it for the money," he added, pointing out that first place winners Sunday will risk their necks for an \$80.

Most persons wouldn't go across town to take a chance on a jackpot that size, but boat racers are coming from as far as Texas and Montana to get in on the Dayton racing classic.

Contenders will include at least two national champions, Paul Bauer of Deer Park, O., national point champion in the 48 cubic inch class, and Bill Sterrett of Owensboro, Ky., national champ in the 7 litre class. Both are also members of the Dayton racing association.

In all, 75 to 80 boats will be on deck for the races Sunday at Eastwood lake, the large quarry south of the Harshman road, Route 4 and 69 intersection.

Inboards are classed in seven groups, ranging from the smaller 48 cubic inch inboard to the dashing 7 litre (Junior Gold Cup) hydroplanes.

A special outboard pleasure craft race will find Dayton's Jon Culver and John Keller out to maintain their leadership in the national outboard circuit.

Money Going To Barney Hospital

"We don't know exactly how many spectators will come out, but estimates have ranged up to 30,000," said Whipp.

"About 6,000 feet of snowfence was erected last weekend to control the crowd and policemen will be on duty to keep traffic moving.

"The association raised \$4,000 through advertising in its 32-page program.

"Now," Whipp went on, "all expenses of the race have been paid and every dollar taken in on admissions will go to the Barney Hospital for children."

The admission Whipp referred to is \$1 for adults and 50 cents for children.