

# Eastern Title At Stake Here

By TOM CARROLL, Daily News Sports Writer

**I**T'S CALLED boat racing on the water but more often than not these day hydroplane racing has become airborne.

Regrettably, almost 25 per cent of the active unlimited hydroplane drivers lost their lives in recent weeks — three in the June 19 President's cup regatta on the Potomac river, the fourth only last Sunday when Chuck Thompson was killed in the Gold Cup race on the Detroit river.

Gene Whipp of the Dayton Motorboat association, preparing for the American Power Boat association's Eastern divisional championships on the Eastwood park lake here tomorrow and Sunday, talks in terms of the "old four-year cycle bugaboo."

Whipp, who's abandoned the driving end of the sport in favor of a referee's role, points out that "the last fatality was four years ago—in 1962. We've had more in the limited boat racing, but then there are more drivers.

"Two drivers were killed in a 1951 Seattle regatta but that was the most fatalities in a single race until this year's President's Cup event. For years, speedboat racing got by with fatalities at a minimum, but then they started working on the boats to make them faster and I suppose you could say that the greater speeds have resulted in more deaths."

**WHIPP ESTIMATES** that some 125 - 150 boats will be competing in the nine classifications in the Eastern divisional championships which get under way with eliminations at 12 noon Saturday.

Proceeds from the two-day one dollar admission charge will go once again to Barney Children's Medical center and Judge Carl Kessler will present the huge trophy following Sunday's championship events.

Whipp also looks for "better speeds than in the Detroit

Gold Cup, where they were off about 15 miles per hour because of the river conditions up there.

"At Eastwood park we have a site which lends itself to a natural marine layout in that it has high banks and is protected from the winds. We'll be able to control our landlocked course much better than was the case on the Potomac and Detroit rivers and, consequently, we can look for better speeds."