



Staff Photo by Bob Doty

Boat Pilots Les Brown (L), Sam Urso Chat

... On eve of races at Eastwood park lake

Racing Boats Qualify Today For Tomorrow's Big Show

By Mickey Davis
Journal Herald Sports Writer

Ripping along at angry speeds, sometimes up to 150 mph, more than 150 power boats will attempt to qualify today in the Eastern division championships at Eastwood park.

But only 84 of them will—12 in each of the seven classes.

Elimination heats will be held from noon to 5 p.m. today, with those qualifying advancing to the finals tomorrow, beginning at noon.

The event, next to the biggest of its kind, is sponsored by the Dayton Motor Boat Racing association in conjunction with the American Power Boat association.

Sunday's winners automatically qualify for the country's biggest power boat race—the National championships — at Guntersville, Ala, July 27-31.

As in any kind of race, speed enthusiasts are always interested in the fastest, the biggest, and perhaps, even the most expensive.

In this race, it's the seven-litre class. Boats in this class cost in the neighborhood of \$20,000, are over 20 feet long

to compete in his Miss Crazy Thing.

One of Sterrett's top competitors will be Bill Heath, driver of Long Gone, Heath, of Worth, Ill., won the Orange Bowl Grand Prix and the St. Petersburg, Fla., Southland Sweepstakes with the craft this year.

Local entries with the best chance of topping Sterrett or Heath are Xenia's Dean Chenoweth, pilot of Country Boy, and Dayton's Dave Thomas, driver of George Walther's Sayonara.

Chenoweth and Thomas are also top choices to win in other classes.

Chenoweth is the defending Eastern division champion in Chuck's Joy, entered again in the 145 class (powered by Falcon or Ford V-8 engines).

Thomas set an Eastwood park record last year in whipping

his 266 cubic in Mai Tai around the five-mile course at an average of 86 miles per hour. He has the Mai Tai again entered in the 266 class (powered by Chevrolet or Dodge engines).

National high-point champions, in addition to Sterrett, who are entered in this weekend's competition are: 48-cubic inch, Paul Bauer, Cincinnati; 145, Cheri Petti, Ventnor, N.J.; 150, Ed Pliescot, Cambridge, Md.; 225, Ed Morgan, Detroit, Mich.; 266, Skeeter Johnson, Cambridge, Md., and 280, Walter Struzek, Norristown, Pa.

The 1½ mile Easswood park course is located just south of Harshman road—Route 4 and 69 intersection.

Proceeds of the race, at which 10,000 people are expected, will be turned over to the Barney Children's hospital.