

# Hydro Races Here Whipp-Cracker

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For Gene Whipp, veteran hydro jockey, Sunday was some kind of day.

Running in the 5-liter, 7-liter and 280 classes, Whipp walked (or maybe swam) off with both national and world honors after rolling his 280cc Bulls Image in the first turn of lap number one.

"It really wasn't so bad," the Kettering speedster remarked after changing into dry clothes. "The roll was as gentle as those things get, and to tell the truth, that cool water felt good."

Whipp's miscue halted the world championship heat in the 280 class, and denied him the opportunity to join in the restart some 10 minutes later, had his crew been able to drain the water from Bulls Image and get the engine running.

Was the hydroplane damaged in the miscue which fellow racers were calling a "classic hydroplane roll?"

"No, it wasn't hurt at all," Whipp said. "All that happened was that it filled with water — no marks on it that I know of."

Shortly after Bulls Image rolled and stopped the race, and he made the hands-up signal to let the crowd know he was uninjured, Whipp was billed for \$5 by Nelson Shultz, race director.

With a laugh in his voice, Shultz took the PA microphone and told the estimated crowd of over 55,000: "He (Whipp) owes the Association (DMBRA) five dollars. At the driver's meeting this morning I told them that any man who had to use the helicopter owed the cost of picking him out of the water. So Gene, get your checkbook out . . ."

Checkbooks aside, Whipp won himself two titles Sunday in the 7-liter division two class. The national



**GENE WHIPP . . . Double Winner  
Kettering Pilot Also Gets Shower**

was first, with Whipp beating out Jim Davis of Louisville by better than 30 seconds of elapsed time for the five mile course.

Whipp's total time of 3:24.1 gave him a streaking average of 88.192 mph, as opposed to the second-running Davis at 4:03.2 and 74.013 mph.

An unusual finish climaxed the 7-liter national finals. Whipp's Heavy Hauler and Davis's Hornet were the only two boats to finish the race. An official clock malfunction delayed the start of the race, sending all entries back to the pits to refuel.

Only five were on hand for the restart, and of these three went dead in the water due to engine trouble during the race. Whipp came home an easy winner.

In the world championship heat, Whipp edged out Cincinnati's Bill Hodge's Long Gone, again using his Heavy Hauler, with an elapsed time of 11:009 against Hodge's 13:027.

What's next for Whipp? He'll enter the Illinois Governor's Cup race at Kankakee on Labor Day and the Orange Bowl regatta on Christmas in Miami. In these he will attempt to add to the records he already holds, including the 225-class national in 1968 at Tanawanda, N.Y., and the 280 national point championship taken in 1969. This is Whipp's second world title, the first coming in 1961 when he called the 150-class home.

Did the knowledge of already taking a national title bother him any when he faced Hodge for the world?

"Not at all," said Whipp, flashing those salesman-blue eyes. "Until you cross the checkered flag you can't anticipate anything."

No question about that, Gene. Now, about that five dollars . . .