

Whipp plays it cool

By George Sauerberg
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Gene Whipp of Kettering triumphantly toured the Eastwood Lake race course in his "Heavy Hauler" for the benefit of Power Boat Magazine photographers yesterday.

Whipp's lone runs of the circuit after winning the 7-Litre Division I world championship in the last race of the day were a fitting culmination of five days of national and world championship powerboat racing with proceeds going to the Children's Medical Center.

Officials of the Dayton Motor Boat Racing Assn., sponsors of the regattas, estimated more than 25,000 attended yesterday, with more than 100,000 spectators for the five-day span. The races were sanctioned by the American

Power Boat Assn. and the Union of International Motorboating.

WHIPP, a member of the Dayton association, had an easy time winning the 7-Litre Division I national and world titles after his toughest competition, Cincinnati's Bill Hodge in "Long Gone," stopped dead in the first final heat with a wet distributor.

All Whipp, who had won the first heat with an average speed of 88.192 miles per hour (mph), had to do to win his second national title and first world championship was finish the final two heats.

After running neck-and-neck the second final heat, Whipp geared down and drove ultra-conservatively. He finished the heat with a 76.857-mph aver-

age, way behind Hodge.

WHIPP ALSO took the third final heat slowly while Hodge pushed for an easy win. Whipp had merely to finish on the same lap as Hodge to win the world medallion, but even at that he was by no means overconfident.

"I've seen guys be 100 yards from finishing a race and have something go wrong with their engine or something," Whipp said later. "I would have liked to have made it a good race, but I didn't want to push my engine. I didn't need to, so why do it?"

While Hodge on the first lap of with Hodge cruised to easy victories, a fellow Dayton association member from Birmingham, Mich., Ted Panaretos, blew an excellent chance for his first national championship

when he took a piece of bad advice.

PANARETOS SAID he sought some help from a representative of a sparkplug manufacturer after winning the first final heat of the 225-cubic-inch-displacement (CID) class.

On the advice from the representative, Panaretos changed the jets and turned the distributor on the engine of his "Goodie Wagon." The result was a loss of 800 rpm and a fourth-place finish in the second final heat.

The national championship went to Danny Walls, a Dayton club member from Bellevue, Ky., for the third straight year. Walls, driving "Justa-Pest II," owned by Dayton member Gene Benning of Piqua, won the second heat after taking

second in the first heat.

"**WE BLEW** our fanny right out of the water on that one," Panaretos grumbled afterward. But his mechanics corrected the problem in time for Panaretos to win the third heat, taking the world championship by 5.1 seconds of elapsed time for the three heats.

Two native Portuguese girls, clad in national costumes, added color to the races, but their country's representative, Tony Rodrigues, had a tough weekend.

The Valley Stream, N.Y., resident relinquished his U.S. 7-Litre Division II title Saturday, finishing second, and yesterday his 7-Litre Division I boat had fuel injection troubles and never did get into a race.

ALTHOUGH MANY boats stalled and died during the afternoon, Whipp was the only driver involved in a flip. His 280-CID hydroplane went over, but he was uninjured.

Gov. John Gilligan arrived by helicopter after the races to present an achievement trophy to young Duff Daily of Miami, Fla., who finished third in the SK Class nationals.