

# Whipp takes title on gamble

By Paul Meyer

Journal Herald Sports Writer

Gene Whipp took one of those "nothing-to-lose, everything-to-gain" gambles yesterday.

And ended up winning everything when Billy Hodge almost lost it all.

What Daytonian Whipp won was his second straight 7-liter inboard hydroplane world championship at Eastwood Lake.

What Cincinnati Hodge almost was his boat — "Long Gone."

**HODGE**, driving a more powerful boat than Whipp because Billy ran with 20 percent "Nitro" in his fuel tank, had little trouble wiping out Whipp's early leads to win the first two heats.

So when it came time for the third heat — the one which on

the basis of lowest total elapsed time for the three heats would determine the world champ — Whipp decided to gamble on a change in his start, the part of his race Gene considers his strength.

"I figured I was about 10 or 12 seconds behind Billy," Whipp explained, not knowing at that point that officially he trailed Hodge by exactly 12.9 seconds. "His boat is probably about the fastest 7-liter in the world, and we'd have been happy to finish second, but we decided to try something a little different.

"After all," Gene reasoned, "I think we could have finished second with little trouble running the way we had been. We had nothing to lose."

But everything to gain. **"SO WE** decided to go for

starting position about 10 seconds later than usual," Whipp said, "and really hang it out at the start. I came storming down off that corner.

"The lead boat has about a 10-mile-per-hour advantage," Gene continued. "And Hodge hadn't had to fight my tail in the first two heats."

The change caught Billy by enough of a surprise that Whipp was able to get the size lead at the start he wanted. And that quick advantage easily carried Whipp's "Miss Heavy Hauler" through the three laps (five miles) ahead of the pack.

But had Whipp been clairvoyant, he would have known his gamble was unnecessary.

Because Hodge was unable to finish.

**BARRELING** down the backstretch on the final lap, Hodge's boat suddenly stopped dead in the water. Whipp and his pit crew thought Hodge had blown his engine—an occupational hazard of running with "nitro."

"That wasn't it," said Les Brown, owner of Hodge's boat. "The (left) sponson tore off and the boat started filling with water."

Brown explained that the sponson was probably cracked before the race even started—and Hodge concurred with that thinking.

"That's why I was running kind of 'squirrely,'" Billy said. "I didn't know it before the heat, but that must have been it. Then coming down the straightaway at the start of

the last lap, the boat took a pretty bad bounce. That was probably what finished it."

Hodge decided to try to finish, however, because he thought he was close enough to Whipp that he would still have a lower total elapsed time.

**BUT WHEN** the boat went dead and began sinking, Hodge's thinking became academic.

Duff Daily, a 19-year-old from Miami, Fla., knows what it's like to have a boat sink. But unlike Hodge yesterday, Daily also knows what it's like to become world champ.

Daily won each of the three heats in the Ski boat class to take that title easily—quite a different result than his first world attempt at Eastwood

last year.

In that one, "Golden Girl" took a bad hop on a turn a hit Daily's "Oh Mona V" tearing out the left side of the boat and sinking it. E "Golden Girl" wasn't here this year—only two other Ski boats were in fact—so Daily had clear sailing.

### WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

5 Liter — Burnett Bartley, Houston, Tex., boat no. F-60, elapsed three-heat 11:20.7, championship heat average 11:20.7, 79,330 miles per hour.

5K1 — Duff Daily, Miami, Fla., 11:00.7, 81,607.

Super Stock — Jimmy Gaskins, Denver, N.C., SS-11, 11:01.1, 80,584.

7 Liter — Gene Whipp, Dayton, 10:24.3, 86,496.

### ELIMINATION HEATS

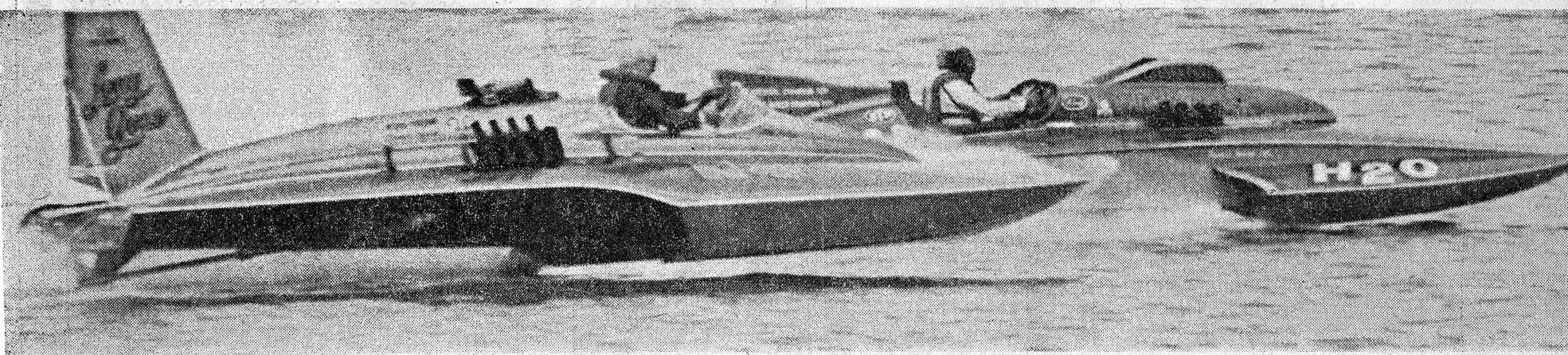
850 — F.C. "Doc" Moore, Hialeah, Y-17, 800 points.

145 — Willard Wilson, Wilmington, DE, 145, 800.

150 — Conley Snowden, Lexington, KY, 21, 700.

225 — Ted Panaretos, Birmingham, MA, N-3, 700.

280 — Chuck Thompson, Detroit, MI, E-22, 800.



Staff Photo by Skip Peter

Gene Whipp edges slightly ahead of closest competitor, Billy Hodge in 'Long Gone,' during 7-liter race

# Lil 'Lectron Full of Power

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15 seconds ahead of his second-place competition.

In the 150cc class, Dink Snider of Columbus, Ind. won handily in all three of the heats in his class. Snider amassed a total APBA point count of 800 for the day, and recorded a fine elapsed time of 11:56.6.

Snider's average speed for his final winning heat was 75.355 mph.

St. Louis' Johnny Woods, after finishing second behind Ted Panaretos in the first 225-class heat of the day, came back to win the second and third heat and walk off with his own world championship title.

Woods required 10:49.6 to complete the three laps, and averaged a blurred 83.179 mph for his final lap. This victory, by the way, points up the unique system employed by the Union of International Motorboating (UIM) in assessing world championship results. Woods ran second in the day's first 225 heat, first in the second and third, and was awarded the championship because his total elapsed time for the three heats was less than those of his competitors.

Chuck Thompson, Detroit, won the day's final world title by cutting his elapsed time in the 280 class to a brief 11 minutes, 55 and four-tenths seconds. Thompson averaged 75.482 mph in the final heat.

Oddly enough, Thompson,

who finished first in his first and third heats of the day, failed to pass the checkered flag among the first four finishers in the day's second heat. Thompson still managed to cut his total elapsed time below that of all competitors, however, and won the championship.

## WORLD CHAMPIONS

850cc — F. C. "Doc" Moore, Hialeah, Fla., boat number Y-17, elapsed three-heat time, 13:44.7.

145 — Willard Wilson, Wilmington Del., S-145, time 13:11.6.

150 — Dick Snider, Columbus, Ind., A-98, time 11:56.6.

225 — Johnny Woods, St. Louis, N-100, time 10:49.6.

280 — Chuck Thompson, Detroit, E-22, time 11:55.4.

## ELIMINATION HEATS

7 LITER Div. I — Gen Whipp, Kettering, 800 points.

SUPER STOCK — J. H. Matthews, High Points, N. C., 800 points.

5 LITER — Gordie Reed, Grand Island, N.Y., 800 points.

SKI CLASS — Duff Dalley Miami, Fla., 800 points.

Attendance: 3,000 est.