



Daily News Photo By Chip Blacker

**JOHN STAUDACHER REPAIRS ATLAS VAN LINES U-BOAT
Boat Sank Friday, But Will Be Ready to Race Today**

Thunderbolts Ready and Waiting

By **DAVE BOWRING**

Daily News Outdoor Writer

Ignoring the awe-inspired stares of some 1,500 guided tour-goers walking through the pit area, crew members of the 15 unlimited hydroplanes scheduled to run at Hydrabowl this afternoon worked feverishly to get engines and accessories together.

Using power drills and wrenches, ear plugs and elbow grease, the several dozen crew members crawled over their stoic racing monsters like ants over a cache of food. The drivers, those jump-suited men who must depend on the mechanical know-how of their

associates, could do little but pace back and forth, hold tools when needed, and hope for an extension of the qualification period until 5 p.m. Saturday.

Ron Snyder, 35, climbed aboard his U-boat entry, named Just-A-Pest III, for the first time ever Saturday morning. The Piqua contractor has experience here in the smaller 280 and 150-cubic-inch hydros, but had never moved up to the thunderboats until the Pest's owner, Gene Benning, asked him to pilot the boat in Hydroglobe's closing event.

It was touch-and-go Saturday afternoon whether there would be enough time for Sny-

der to qualify his entry. The Pest was run over by another unlimited hydro six weeks ago at Owensboro, Ky., and her strut bearings and engine stringers were damaged. The Pest's engine was rolled out of the boat when Mr. Fabricator, also entered here today, struck it.

"I just hope we can get it all together in time," said Snyder. The moustachiod driver breathed a bit easier moments later when public address announced Bob Musson passed the word that qualification had been extended until 5 p.m.

RUSS BURKE, crew chief

for Bill Muncey's entry, Atlas Van Lines, said his hydroplane, damaged late Friday after sinking in Hydrobowl's west end, would be ready to run today as scheduled.

"Our crew worked on the underpanel (torn when hit by a prop) until 11 p.m. Friday, and we had the engine part repaired today. We'll be OK," Burke said.

As he spoke three Atlas crew members were putting the finishing touches on a new aluminum plate covering the

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