



Seven litre inboards like these will be racing today

# Inboards run today

By Leal Beattie  
Journal Herald Sports Writer

Charlie Long and Earl "Durb" King have been involved in boat racing much of their lives, but there's one thing that might eventually convince both to retire.

That's the specter of accidents, always a possibility when inboard boats are skimming across the water at over 100 miles per hour.

Long and King were at the Dayton Hydrobowl yesterday, testing their crafts for this weekend's World Inboard Championship meet.

A 41-year-old resident of Danville, Ky., Long had a nerve-wracking experience during last year's inboard competition on the two-mile course.

"I FLIPPED end over end here last year when I ran over that guy from Florida, Marty Niles (of Tavernier, Fla.)," said Long, winner of the 145 cubic inch hydroplane class at this year's Eastern Summer Nationals in Decatur, Ill.

"That's about the worst accident I've ever had. I hurt my foot pretty bad. It gave me a few thoughts about retiring."

King had a near miss more recently in a race at Columbus, running his boat over the top of fellow competitor Sam Guarino's craft.

"I've done everything you could do in them — flip them, roll them, everything," the Covington, Ky., resident says, "but I've never hurt anyone.

"IF SOMEONE got hurt because of my error, that would be it. It happened so fast I couldn't avoid him."

A discussion with Guarino later helped soothe King's

nerves. The Detroit racer said another boat had forced him into King's path.

King, 48, has been involved in the sport for 25 years. His boat won the Eastern Summer Nationals 225 cubic inch title this year, but Harry Turner was the pilot. This time, King will test his skills.

"This sport is a relaxation for me," he said. "But I've been doing it so long it's like a job. I feel like I have to do it.

"I don't know what I would do with my time if I gave it up, although I'm sure my wife could find me things to do."

**TODAY'S COMPETITION** will be divided into 10 classes, with the opening heat set for 11 a.m. The biggest boats, the seven litres, are expected to approach speeds of 150 miles per hour on the straightaways.

Grand Prix Restricted races, matching the top boats from various classes in four events, will top Sunday's competition, which begins at noon.

Handicap starts, determined by the boats' performances on the course over the past three years, will be used in the Grand Prix events. The system permits slower boats to hit the starting line sooner, and forces the faster boats to make up the difference during the three-lap races.

"It's a whole new concept in the midwest," Referee Ray Weber said of the Grand Prix. "I've seen one Grand Prix event, and a modified boat barely beat a stock boat. The man with a slower boat has a good chance to win."

In addition to the four regular Grand Prix races tomorrow, there will be two consolation GP events plus the Ohio Governor's Cup Invitational finale. The participants in the latter event are determined by the race committee.