



Wally Nelson/Daily News

Bruce Whited of Piqua waves from Flying Tiger after winning heat in 2.5-liter class

# Trailblazer Ann Deuschle can race boat with any man

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Anne Lee Deuschle didn't start out to be a trailblazer. It just happened. As a result, she became the first woman to drive a racing boat.

That was back in 1963. Now 13 years, 400 trophies and a world championship later, the Ft. Thomas, Ky., mother of four teenage daughters, is still doing her thing.

No, Anne didn't take the overall 850 cubic centimeter class title Saturday at Eastwood Lake. That honor went to Cincinnati's Tom Kropfeld.

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Kropfeld, piloting Lip-Ship III, captured both three-lap heats, while Anne finished fourth in the first heat, and third in the final event.



Deuschle

**THE ENTRIES** from this class will be back at Eastwood today, starting at noon. So will more than 70 boats representing six other classes.

Saturday's inboard action kicked off Hydroglobe '76. It will end with next Sunday's unlimited hydroplane race over a two-mile course. The inboards competed over a 1 1/2 mile layout.

Deuschle didn't mind her third place performance, not one bit. "I think it's just great, especially when you consider the engine block I'm running is 30 years old. It's the original block made by Crosley. Everything else, however, is new.

"Next week, Paul (boat owner-chief mechanic-teammate Paul Bauer of Deer Park, O.) will install a brand new Sunbeam. It will take awhile to get sorted out. Paul has worked on Crosleys for the past 25 years. It's the same kind of engine that Butch (Kropfeld) is running."

Until two years ago, there was a \$1,000 limit for engines. Then the limit was removed. As a result, she maintains, the sky is the limit. "They've got \$20,000-\$25,000 tied up in Butch's 13-foot boat. Last year, they did nothing but race. They competed in 40 races across the country and won the national champion-

mind losing. I do mind breaking down." Her Kat-N-Nan didn't break down Saturday.

**HOW ANNE LEE DEUSCHLE** began racing is quite a story. "My husband was crewing for several teams, including Paul's. Back then they wouldn't even let women in the pits. I'd stand outside the fence and be bored to death.

"We went to a race in Florida, and that day Paul had a disagreement with his driver. The driver quit. We were sitting in the yacht club drinking cocktails, and Paul asked me if I wanted to drive for him. I thought he was joking, and I said yes. Maybe it was the liquor doing the talking."

Apparently, Bauer was dead serious. When he returned home, he allowed the petite brunette to test drive the boat. Growing up on the river, she wasn't exactly a stranger to boats. But a speed boat capable of hitting 100 miles an hour?

"Even if I wanted to chicken out, I couldn't. I found the press and television people waiting for me. Paul told me to just run it wide open. I did, and really enjoyed it. I must have been hitting 70 miles an hour.

"I admit I was terrified during my first race. It was different running with other boats out there." By her fourth race, Anne had captured her first victory trophy.

In 1971, she captured the 850 CC world championship. Two years ago, she clocked 93 mph for the kilo, which is still a world mark for her class.

When she isn't racing, Anne sells boat and airplane insurance. Her twin daughters, Jennifer and Gena will be attending college this fall. They were both track stars in high school, as is 16-year-old Celeste.

**WHILE ENCOURAGING** her daughters to compete in athletics, Anne Deuschle does not proclaim herself a women's libber. "I did it because I enjoy racing. I met resistance at first. The official who supervised my rookie test didn't want to do it. He said it was against his principles.

"A couple of years ago, one official disqualified me because I was five minutes late for a driver's meeting. I've never seen a man disqualified for the same reason."