

Scheidt will settle only for a title

By MARY ORMSBY
Daily News Sports Writer

Jerry Scheidt is reaching for the national title he so badly wants and that always has been just beyond his fingertips. This weekend he wants to put it in a full-nelson.

He stood in front of his 2.5 litre, Pinto powered boat, waiting to have it hoisted into the water for a test prior to this weekend's National Inboard Championships at the Eastwood Lake Hydrobowl.



Scheidt

"I'm edgy. I want to win out here so bad," he said, squinting into the setting sun over Eastwood Lake. "I've never won it. I've had a lot of bad luck as far as other drivers are concerned." Scheidt said two drivers

cut him off in last year's finals when he ended fourth.

THE EDGINESS Scheidt says he feels over his elusive goal is not apparent. He stands and talks as a confident, 38-year-old man — a 10-year veteran who is not willing to be shoved aside by younger drivers.

"I'm an egotist. Anybody who races is. You have to be if you think you're the best. If you don't, somebody else should be driving your boat," he said.

But, Scheidt says, he does tend to shy away from inexperienced drivers on the five-mile course. When there are 12 boats in a race and all boats turn at once, anything can happen.

Even with the possible dangers in the race route, Scheidt said fear is the farthest thing from his mind when his 125-mph engine is revved.

"You only have 3½ minutes out there. It demands total concentration ~~one mistake and you're out.~~"

THERE MUST BE something special inside Scheidt that makes him put on the helmet and jump in behind the wheel. While he rattled off the yearly expenses of his 900-pound WING Radio sponsored boat and the relative dangers of racing ("It's no fun to get hit with 150 pounds of water pressure"), he suddenly stopped.

"It's just fun," Scheidt said. "If you do something and you think you are good at it, then you're going to enjoy

a good start and watch my position."

VAN DEMAN WON the first heat, and had an eye on Bob Brown's *Avenger 10*, the man he thought could outrace him. Brown finished second to Van Deman in the first heat, but didn't go in the water when the final was called.

"I just wanted to finish strong," Van Deman said. "I just hung in there. It was getting bumpy out there and there was no point in taking chances."

Funny things happen, and Seattle's Ray West knows it. West won the national championship in the 7-I-liter class, the inboard heavyweights, with a third-place finish and didn't find it amusing.

The final heat was a comedy of errors. Three boats conked out and although two others finished in front of West, they were put back a place because of first-heat disqualifications for jumping the gun.

"Those guys were much faster than me," said a melancholy West. "I sure don't like to win this way — I'd rather win by being out front."

FELLOW COMPETITOR Tom D'Eath, a four-time national champion and 25-year veteran in various classes, and his Don Ryan's Lauterbach Special limped across the finish line after engine problems. He thought West had a smart race by not taking needless chances.

By MARY ORMSBY

Daily News Sports Writer

Sunday marked the end of a 30-year absence of national hydroplane titles in the Van Deman family.

Jack Van Deman Jr. raced his 2.5-liter boat Why in excess of 80 mph to win the Hydroglobe 1981 National Inboard Championships at Dayton's Hydrobowl.

His father, Jack, won his last championships in 1931 in the 91 and 48 cubic inch (now 850cc) classes. The elder Van Deman has been the crew mechanic since his son began racing 17 years ago.

This could be a big year for the younger Van Deman, who was national runner-up in 1978 and finished second by 37 points in high points in 1979.

THIS YEAR the high school biology teacher and newlywed of two months is ahead in the high points race with 6,000.

During the 2.5-liter final heat, Bob Murphy flipped his Two Twenty Two and was in the water for a time. The race was red-flagged and run again.

A red-faced Murphy said he hooked his boat going into the first turn of the 2.5-liter final and was airborne for several feet before landing in the drink. As he was lifted out of the ambulance, he said, "The only thing that's hurt is my pride. That's demolished."

Ray Miller, who flipped his Deuces Wild in the 225 final, was "fine," according to a Miami Valley Hospital official...

Van Deman stood by the crane in the pits, dripping water after the traditional dunking that winning drivers receive from their friends. He said the extra race did not bother him.

"Unless I messed up, I had complete confidence the boat would finish first or second," he said. "I just tried to get