

Bo's boat junks jinx at Hydrobowl races

By Greg Simms
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Centerville's Alan "Bo" Schide finally beat the Dayton jinx Sunday afternoon at the Hydrobowl.

Driving the Shopsmith 31 in the second straight day of "Thunder on the Lake" power boat races, he won the overall competition by winning one heat, finishing second in another and having the best combined times in the 5-liter class.

Before Sunday, Schide and Ron Brunner of Dayton, owner of Shopsmith 31, had won one race in Dayton since 1966. "It seems that historically, no one from Dayton has ever done well in this race," Schide said before his first heat. "We've had some bad luck with the boats."

"It's never anything serious," said Brunner. "Just little things that knock you out of the race."

The same thing nearly happened Sunday.

Schide, the 1987 American Power Boat Association national champion, and Brunner had repaired the damage that knocked them out of Saturday's races before the 5-liter competition got underway.

Some object in Hydrobowl waters knocked the Shopsmith's steering column loose.

But on Sunday they were ready.

In the first heat, Schide got off to a good start and he won easily. Still, when he got back to the pit area, he found that his boat's propeller had cracked.

Schide and Brunner replaced the cracked propeller with a thicker one, more suited for races with longer straightaways than those at the Hydrobowl.

"We're putting in the next best propeller for the final heat," Schide said between races. "I've got to time my start a little different."

He couldn't depend on his usual quick start with the thicker blades, so he depended on his driving skills and managed to pick up 500 points, which put him 2,000 points ahead of all 5-liter drivers in the nation.

"The win was super," Schide said after Sunday's competition. "The black cloud is behind us. We had the big propeller on, so coming off the corner I was a little bit slow. I almost hooked it. I knew I couldn't let up.

"We have a 2,000-point lead. That's about the equivalent of five races ahead of the field."

Schide averaged about 75 mph in the first heat over the 4-lap, 1¼-mile course.

Grayson Jones of Cambridge, Md., had the fastest time of the day. He pushed the F-16 Heartbreaker, a 7-liter hydroplane, to a 5-mile time of three minutes, 24.6 seconds, averaging 88.106 miles per hour.

Like all the other powerboat drivers at the Hydrobowl, Jones said he was participating just for the competition. It's a weekend hobby.

"I made \$700 for the championship," Jones said. "And we've got a lot invested in the boat."

He said he got into power boat, or hydroplane, racing because it is a Cambridge, Md., tradition. "We were probably the first town in the country to hold power boat races, back in the early 1900s," Jones said.

Other winners Sunday were Dutch Dwyers of Lakewood, Colo., in the 2.5 liter stock class. Dayton's Jerry Scheidt finished third in that class.

Cincinnati's Steve Kuhr won the 7-liter stock class and Mario Maraldo won the 7-liter modified. John Schroeder of Okeana, Ohio, won the Cobra Grand Prix class; Dick Felsner of Detroit came from behind to nip Ray Dong of Detroit in the 1-liter class and Henry Lauterbach Jr., of Richmond, Va., won the 2.5-liter modified competition.