

# *Hank Wieand Bowman* **STOCK OUTBOARD RACING YEARBOOK**



**35¢**

- MAJOR REGATTA COVERAGE
- MARATHON EVENTS
- CLASS RECORDS
- NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS



# INTRODUCTION

With an estimated 5000 stock outboard racers participating in more than 500 organized regattas throughout the country during the past year, it is impossible within the space limitations to do justice to all events and to the drivers who competed in them. Some form of stock racing competition occurred in nearly every one of our forty-eight states. No one reporter could be on hand for any but a fraction of the events.

During 1955 I travelled approximately 20,000 miles in order to attend a cross section of the major closed course and marathon events, yet I realize I witnessed only a small part of the entire scene.

In preparing materials for this book, I received assistance from other boating writers. I wish to acknowledge the help given me by Blake Gilpin, Tracy Ogden, Shannon Kelly, Shanon Place, Craig Mallory and Henry Hotchkiss who filled many of the gaps for me. I also received considerable assistance from the Executive Secretaries of the two major sanctioning bodies, Carl Johnson of A.P.B.A. and Claude Fox of N.O.A. I wish further to acknowledge courtesies extended to me by the Editors of BOAT SPORT Magazine and OUT-



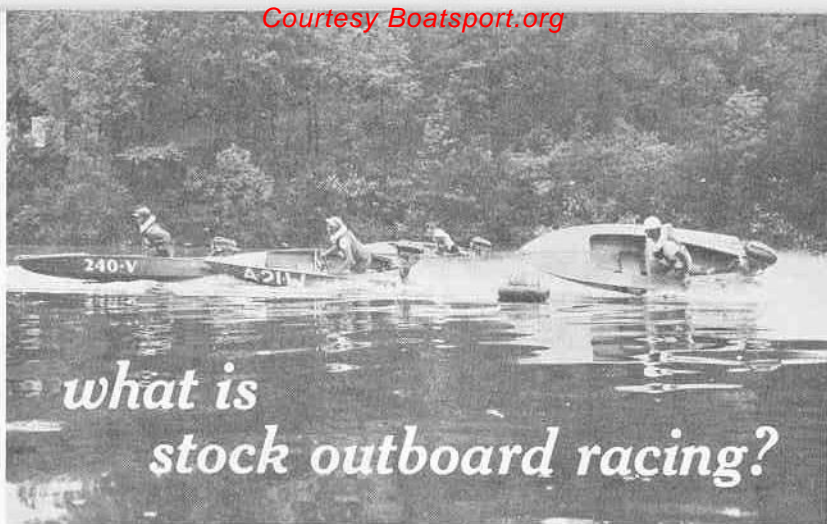
BOARD Magazine and also the help received from the City of Miami News Bureau.

The result I hope is a representative cross section of stock outboard racing action during the past season.

*Hank W. Paul Bowman*

Solebury,  
Bucks County, Pennsylvania





## *what is stock outboard racing?*

Stock outboard racing is many things at many times to the same participant. It is a sport that offers the thrill and excitement of high speed motor competition, replete with all of the pleasures, hopes, suspense, disappointment and satisfaction that is found in any motorized sport. Yet because of the rules of the game, it need not be the fashionable play toy of the well to do.

Stock outboard racing rules strictly limit permissible modifications to equipment. Both the boats and motors are readily available and do not require special and highly costly added components or mechanical refinements to make them winning combinations. Sometimes, and aptly, the sport has been referred to as "out-of-the-box racing," relating to the fact that the motors are raced in exactly the condition they arrive from the factory.

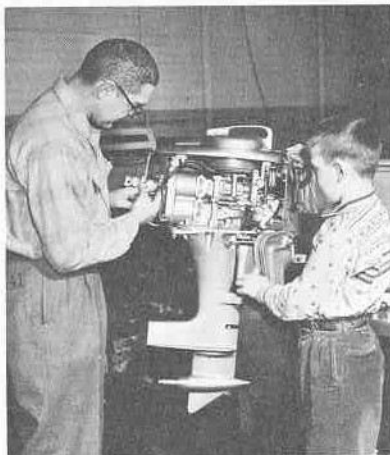
In either runabout or hydroplane version, stock outboard racing is by far the least expensive motorized sport to engage in. It has gained tremendous popularity in a relatively short span of years since it offers an opportunity for the individual wholly without mechanical training and without previous boating experience to race on a near parity with the highly skilled veteran.

By this don't think that races are won by sheer fluke. They are won by a combination of excellent driving ability mated with a well-designed and set-up boat and a well-engineered and tuned motor. Experience pays winning dividends as in any sport.

All of the pleasure of stock outboard racing is not limited to the race course and enjoyed only by the driver. Family participation is an important part in the game. Fathers and sons frequently work



together on their racing equipment. On some occasions father-son combinations compete against one another in closed course or marathon events. Mothers and daughters



... the do-it-yourself-fun of grooming the motor ...

have been seen at the helms of racing outfits, too. More frequently, though, the women of the team are found helping in the pits, taking their part in the hobby by helping to maintain the boats in peak condition or perhaps handling the inventory of equipment for a future race weekend—and this part in the family teamwork invariably includes preparation for the family picnics or camping meals along the road.

Blended with the satisfaction of a race well run are the new acquaintances and friends gained through the sport; the social activities, dances, dinners and just plain bull sessions before and after races; and the new cities, towns and states visited en route to regattas.

Stock outboard racing is all of these things and more—and above all it is America's fastest growing spectator and contestant sport.



... moments of supreme suspense ...



Photo by Bob Ruskauff, Courtesy BOAT SPORT Magazine

In order to enjoy an outboard race, as with any other sport, it is necessary to have a basic knowledge of the rules. In the stock classes of both major sanctioning groups, three types of motors are most popularly used. These are the

stock A, B and D motors. Each of these motors has different requirements. Since horsepower is a variable, in order to give each driver within any class an equal opportunity, the motors are classified according to their cubic inch piston

displacement. This simply means that in each class the motors are restricted to a maximum cylinder size and relationship between that requirement and the movement of the piston. Even more simply you can consider that each motor consists of a barrel or large can or group of barrels and cans and that the determining factor of class distinction is the combined maximum content of these containers.

Class A motors are used on both A runabout hulls and A hydroplane hulls. The same applies to the B class and the D class. The motors used on hydroplanes and runabouts are the same. Class A motors are restricted to a maximum displacement of 15 cubic inches; Bs, 20 c.i. and Ds, 40 c.i. Less popular than these three is J Class which was established to provide a beginner racing category. JU motors under American Power Boat Racing Association rules are limited to a maximum of 7.5 cubic inches; under National Outboard Association rules the class is limited to motors of under 12.5 cubic inches. As a result the class and its records in both associations are not comparable. Under A.P.B.A. rules, a JU driver must be at least nine years old to compete and is ineligible for further JU racing after reaching his or her fifteenth birthday. Under N.O.A. rules there is no minimum age limit for J but a maximum age of fourteen is imposed. Under both sanctioning groups a minimum age of twelve is imposed for Class A competition and fourteen years in all other classes.

Under the A.P.B.A. another class known as "36", which is restricted to motors of 36 cubic inches, was accepted under probation in 1955 and has become popular enough to be approved for 1956. Three other classes, C, E and F with cubic inch restrictions of 30, 50 and 60, respectively, are included within the A.P.B.A. rules though the latter two are seldom scheduled because of the few racers registered. The only slightly more active 30 c.i. class C is in 1956 expected to be strongly revived due to the introduction of a new motor, the four-cylinder-in-line Mark 30H. With the introduction of this new 30 c.i. motor, it is expected that a probationary C Stock Hydroplane class will also make its appearance and should achieve quick popularity.

Motor restrictions have been imposed in order to level the competition in the various classes. As a further means to accomplish this even matching, the boats raced in each class are restricted as to size and design and overall minimum weight for hull and driver. This means that if a lightweight driver does not meet his class overall weight requirement, he must install permanently secured ballast to bring his equipment up to the minimum requirements so that a small driver does not have an unfair advantage over a heavier driver.

The two sanctioning organizations' requirements of runabout designs and dimensions vary somewhat. Under A.P.B.A. rules, boats must have two cockpits though in marathon racing the forward cock-





Under any sanctioning group, each class has an established minimum overall weight allowance for boat and driver. Texas speedster Deanie Montgomery weighs in with his A Runabout.

pit may be covered by a securely fastened fabric. N.O.A. permits single cockpit runabouts. Other minor variations exist between the rules of the two groups but each requires a monoplane or unbroken single planing surface for runabouts and permits single or multiple steps or planes on hydros.

In the interest of safety, each sanctioning group limits the number of starters in any heat. Because of the popularity of stocks, elimination events frequently precede the final heats to pare down the starting field to the maximum allowable. A "race" in outboarding customarily consists of two heats of competition, the winner determined by the highest number of points amassed in the two heats with first place being awarded 400,

second 300, 225, 169, 127, etc. In the event of a point tie, final position will depend on least total elapsed time for the two heats. Should a tie still exist, then the faster time recorded in either of the two heats breaks the tie.

One of the most confusing things to the new spectator and one of the most important aspects of outboard racing is the clock start. A preparatory gun is fired five minutes before the start of any heat. At this time a red flag and four one-minute indicators are displayed. As each minute elapses, one of the indicators is removed or blanked out. In this way the drivers on the course can keep track of the passage of time. Exactly 60 seconds before the start the final indicator is removed and a white flag is displayed. Simultaneously a one-minute warning gun is fired. A large sweep hand clock, not less than 6' in diameter, is set in motion. When the clock hand reaches 60, the starter drops the white flag to indicate that the race has officially started. The starting gun is also fired, but the official start is indicated by the dropping of the flag.

The drivers start to move out onto the course after the five-minute gun has sounded. Considerable skill will be noted in the timing of each driver who attempts to hit the starting line just as the clock reaches the 60 second point. Should any driver pass the starting line before the clock reaches 60, he is subject to disqualification. When more than half of the eligible starters cross the starting line be-



In marathon racing, auxiliary fuel tanks are carried. The auxiliary fuel system on this AU is clearly visible.



Most popular hydro class is the 20 cubic inch B Stock. Three point hulls are generally used. Note the two forward sponsons free of the water.



Bob Parish, Bakersfield, California, A. P. B. A. Stock High Point Champion in 1954, helms this Class A Runabout powered by a 15 c.i. motor.

Photo by Don Lamb

fore the official start, the referee may at his discretion display a red flag which annuls the start, recalls the entire starting field and the racer who led the pack across the line is disqualified. Only one restart is permitted under A.P.B.A. rules; under N.O.A. rules a second restart is allowed. On the final start, any boat crossing the line ahead of the official start is disqualified.

The most proficient drivers will not only reach the starting line a fraction of a second after the official start but will endeavor to have timed their approach in such a manner that their boats are running at peak speed. Races are frequently won or lost at the starting line. One mark of distinction of the veteran is the manner in which he makes this all-important approach.

Heats of racing usually consist of five miles though in some of the smaller classes a three-mile distance may be raced. Buoys outline the circuit and the number of laps is dependent upon the accurately surveyed distance which may vary from one mile to a mile and two-thirds.

Fans who desire more information on the various classes of boats and rules of the conduct of races can obtain a copy of the A.P.B.A. Yearbook and Racing Rules for \$2.00 from that association's national office at 700 Canton Ave., Detroit 7, Mich. The N.O.A. official yearbook is available on request from that association's headquarters, 707 Market St., S.W., Knoxville, Tenn.



## *how to get started in stock outboard racing*

Unquestionably there are a large number of individuals who would like to know how to get started in stock outboard racing. The question, "How do I get into boat racing?" is for them about on a par with the question, "How do I make a trip to the moon?" It isn't wholly a matter of 'you pays your money and you takes your choice'. This would simplify the problem. How to make your choice, to whom to pay your money, how to go about entering your first races are the important questions.

First you must understand that you can race in a variety of different ways. If your interest lies in racing in organized competition so that at the end of a given year you may have the satisfaction of knowing how you stood in points, as compared to the champions — or probably you are even hoping to become a champion yourself—then you will want to compete at sanc-

tioned affairs. This means racing at events conducted by a nationally recognized rules governing body. The two largest, the American Power Boat Association and the National Outboard Association, already mentioned in the previous chapter, offer the racer such national recognition. Each organization maintains carefully documented speed records for both straightaway and closed-course competition. Both groups carefully tabulate points to establish winners of the high point season awards. To be eligible for honors from either or both groups, you must be a registered member with equipment of a type approved by these associations.

It may be that you do not plan to race except on a local scale. Inquiry in your own neighborhood may reveal that there is a strong local or sectional independent sanctioning body. One such organization



is the Lone Star Boat Racing Association of Texas which conducts a regular schedule of events, largely concentrated along the Gulf Coast area. There are other similar strong local groups throughout the country. Many local boating clubs also sponsor events, but this type of activity will be covered in the next chapter.

Paid-up membership in either A.P.B.A. or N.O.A. is a must in order to compete at events sanctioned by either of these two rules governing bodies. The membership fees are not a form of taxation on the boat racer. The institution of a governing body is extremely necessary in any sport and funds are required to handle administration work. From the governing bodies comes uniformity of rules so that all sanctioned races are conducted on equivalent terms (the rules decided upon by membership vote) with the sanctioning body acting as a clearing house in recognizing records, keeping points to establish championships and providing the proper officials to see that the rules are carried out.

Neither major sanctioning body sponsors nor conducts regattas. The regattas are sponsored and conducted by local clubs which in turn, in order to gain a sanction, must be member clubs of the parent group. You, too, in order to compete in a sanctioned race must join a member club of the sanctioning group you select prior to being accepted for racing membership. Member clubs vary from small groups of racing drivers banded

together by a common interest, meeting only periodically at one another's homes or at a public meeting place, through the range of clubs with modest club houses to the lushest of yacht clubs. Your choice of a local club can be determined by your budget and your social requirements and local club dues may vary from \$2 to \$200 or more annually.

Let's look at what the governing body offers you in return for your dues. Both A.P.B.A. and N.O.A. have a contributing membership costing \$10 a year. These are not racing memberships. However, the contributing membership entitles you to a copy of either of the association's year book and racing rules which cover motor and boat specifications for all classes, full information governing starts, general racing rules, special racing rules plus the organization's periodic news bulletin. It is advisable for the newcomer planning to enter racing, prior to buying equipment, to become wholly familiar with the rules of the sport, the various classes of boats and motors and then to observe at close range several regattas. Look over the types of equipment in the pits and let this study guide your choice. You will find that the drivers and their pit crews will be glad to answer any questions — at least at all times other than the frantic minutes while they are trying to get out on the race course in time for the starting gun or perhaps just after some unfortunate driver has flipped and is still in a pretty dis-

gruntled state.

I cannot tell you what make of motor or boat to buy, nor even what type. Your decision between a hydroplane and a runabout will largely be one of personal taste, though in general if you elect marathon racing as a specialty, you've already committed yourself to a runabout since with a few isolated exceptions, runabouts are exclusively used by the long distance drivers. The make of boat will be partially one of personal choice. You will, however, after a few afternoons at regattas notice that at least in the area where you are an observer, one certain make of hydroplane or runabout appears most consistently in the winner's ranks. Here again be guided only after careful consideration. Remember that it is not only the boat and motor which win races, but also the consummate skill of the winning driver. It's wholly possible, that in certain instances, a winning driver could swap rigs with a tailender and still bring the equipment home first. Study the riding characteristics of the various make hulls. There have been instances of boats consistently winning which might be too tricky for the beginner to handle. If you can't as yet recognize differences in handling of different hulls, ask questions of their owners. Don't be satisfied to ask merely one owner of one make of boat. Ask a number of different drivers the same questions and form your own conclusions.

Once you have made your decision to go ahead and buy racing equipment, then you apply for a

racing membership. It is possible to pay the difference between your existing membership and the more costly racing fee and have a transfer made in the records. The A. P. B. A. racing membership costs \$15 annually which includes the publications mentioned, plus competition privileges and an accident insurance policy covering you while you are competing at any sanctioned race. An N.O.A. racing membership costs \$14.00.

The motor class, make and serial number as well as the boat type, make and weight are required on the racing membership application form. Your official racing boat number is assigned when your application is approved. Even racing numbers are assigned to professional drivers; odd numbers to amateurs. Drivers of both categories race together at the same events but the amateur may not accept cash prizes. The amateur may accept merchandise or trophies. If only cash should be awarded, the amateur is given a receipt for the cash money and the cash is forwarded to the sanctioning group's national office to the amateur's credit. The amateur driver may authorize merchandise to the amount of the prize money to be purchased for him by the sanctioning body. Retention of an amateur status is important to those who are still in school or engaged in or planning to engage in any form of amateur athletics.

How much will the equipment cost is another question asked frequently. The cost of a motor or a boat



will vary considerably depending upon whether new or used equipment is considered. The larger and faster classes in general require more expensive equipment. A new Class D stock motor for example costs \$650, a new C \$550, a "36" class \$462, a new Class B Mercury Mark 20H, \$411 or a Class B Champion Hot Rod \$425. Class A stock motors can no longer be bought new and must be bought second-hand. Prices range anywhere from \$100 to \$300 depending upon condition and the established record of the motor. A new J motor costs \$230. Boats range in price from approximately \$250 to \$600 depending upon the type, size and make.

To enter racing with new equipment a minimum budget of \$500 should be allotted the smallest classes and to enter one of the larger classes, you should plan on a budget of \$1000 or more. In addition to the boat and motor you will need an approved crash helmet. Don't cut corners here; buy an approved auto-racing type which will range in cost from \$20 to \$35. A good vest type life preserver equip-

ped with a collar is also required. Plan \$10 to \$15 for this. Since you will ride on your knees and use your body weight for balancing, a good boat cushion at \$5 to \$10 or knee pads at \$3 to \$4 or both will add considerably to your comfort.

At your first race remember that you will be expected not only to file an application but to register yourself and equipment at the registration tent when you arrive. Get in the habit of filing your applications well in advance and registering early.

Remember, too, that your boat and motor must conform with the specifications and requirements outlined in the rule books. Failure of your equipment to so conform will lead to disqualification and can cause your suspension from future events sanctioned by either of the rules governing bodies. Don't win races only to lose them in the inspection tent.

Also don't expect to learn all there is to know about boat racing in your first race. It is a game that requires skill and the skill will come with practice and experience.



Runabouts, such as these BUs, are wild riding, slower than B Hydros but less prone to flipping. Their bottoms are monoplane design.



# *racing is for everyone*



Organized stock outboard racing competition, though basically inexpensive by comparison to racing in any other form of automotive sport, does require specialized equipment. Yet any group of outboard boaters can compete in club contests with any type of boats and motors they may own. For many individuals the organized form of competition requires too much time, travel and physical effort. More and more pleasure boating clubs are conducting local boat races on a handicap basis so that everything from the smallest single cylinder to the largest four or even twin-motor installations can compete on equal terms.

Methods of organizing local club handicap regattas are countless but the equipment required is limited to a few sheets of paper for scoring, a pencil or two, a couple of stop watches, some form of buoys and a signal to indicate start and finish. Handicapping methods used may be based on boat weights, overall length, motor size or all club boats may be raced in a free-for-all and future handicaps established on the basis of that performance.

However, the handicap form of racing almost invariably results in

gripes concerning the handicapping methods used. Clubs conducting such affairs almost invariably wind up with a set of ifs, ands, buts and wherefores and a batch of rules almost as voluminous and all-encompassing as those under which the sanctioned drivers compete. As a result of the complications involved and the general dissatisfaction and lack of spectator interest in handicap form of racing, more and more outboard owners have taken a tip from the inboard cruiser clan and shifted their competitive interest to Predicted Log Contests.

The illustration here shows a theoretical predicted log course. The rules of this type contest are very simple. Any boat owner can enter a P.L.C. with the final result depending fully upon his own navigational skill. In the outboard Predicted Log Contest, a local course such as the one shown is drawn up. Mimeographed copies of the course are given to all contestants well in advance of the race. Customarily, too, modest entry fees are charged, the proceeds to be used to offset clerical cost, prizes and a cookout, picnic lunch or beer bust at the finish line.

The pilot of each contestant boat,

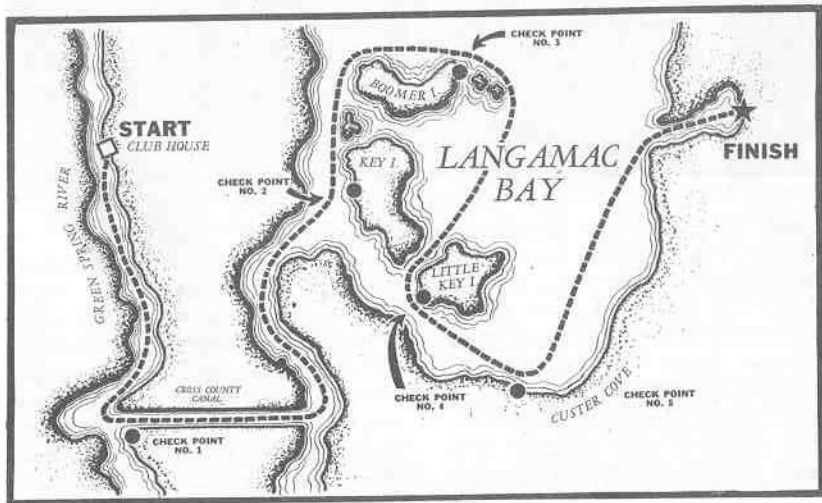
after being given an opportunity to study the chart of the route, possible wind, current, other navigational problems and the locations of the check points, predicts the elapsed time that he will require to navigate the distance between each point. The pilot then turns over to the officials a list showing the exact number of minutes he expects to require to cover the water between each of these points.

Scoring can be done in one of two ways. A passenger official may be assigned to each boat, that official to record the exact time his pilot departs from the starting point, passes each of the check points and arrives at the finish.

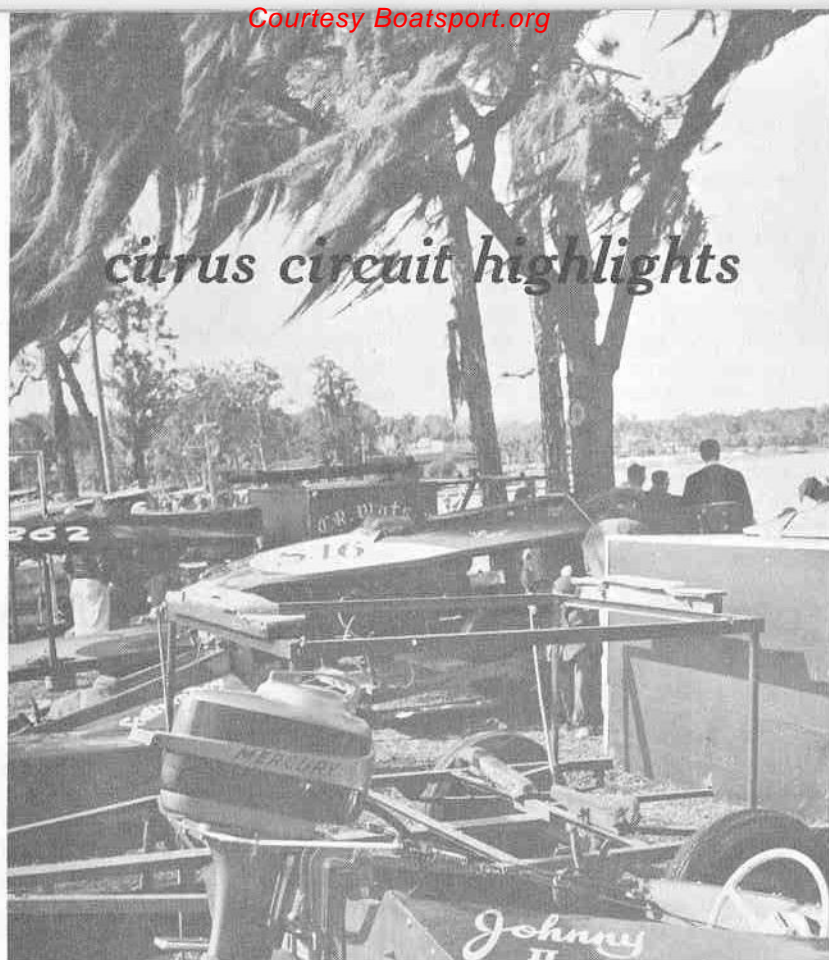
Another variation is to have officials stationed at the start and finish and at each check point. These officials record the exact time of passing of each of the contestant boats.

Scoring consists of calculating the variation or time error between the predicted times of each pilot and those recorded by the official timers at each point and totalling these errors. The final winner is that pilot with the least overall margin of error for the entire distance.

Generally in this type of contest the only instrument permitted aboard is a compass should the course be such as to require one. No pilots or their passengers are permitted watches, and tachometers and water speedometers are usually excluded since if only a few boats are so equipped it would prove a handicap to those contestants without such equipment. The greatest asset of the Predicted Log Contest over a club handicap event is that there can be no complaints about advantages given or unfair disadvantages imposed.



Typical Outboard Predicted Log Course



Scarcely had Comet, Blitzen and the rest of Santa Claus' deer power pranced north again when an estimated 178 stock outboard racers from ten states, Canada and Cuba trailered south into Miami and Miami Beach. Many had brand new equipment, courtesy of Saint Nick, with which to take a crack at a rough water marathon, mile trials, a closed course event and a Nine-

Hour enduro.

Lead-off event was a 24-mile Around Miami Beach Marathon open to anything with a motor, inboard or outboard, whose helmsman was willing to risk the white-capped 10-mile Atlantic Ocean stretch. For the spectators who rimmed the torturous route, the outboarders stole the show. Particular focus was on one-time outboard stunt driver,



Buddy Boyle, Fond du Lac, Wisc., who topped the outboarders jockeying a 14' hull powered by a 40 horsepower Mercury. In taking the measure of the other two-cycles, Boyle led into camp more than a dozen inboards which outpowered his outfit anywhere from three to eight to one in horsepower.

About 125 miscellaneous stock runabout and hydro contestants wet their lumber for a go at top spots in the mile and two-thirds closed course events. Don Baldaccini, Miami, Fla., gave an accurate forecast of the type of driving ability that was later in the season to carry him to two APBA national titles when he won four competition heats and placed second in another to make the home town rooters proud of their boy. Disappointments which were to wreck the most meticulous plans of drivers throughout the season were in store for four entrants. The hapless drivers included Will Coburn, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and Bruce Desmore, Sea Breeze, N.Y., who each contributed to the excitement with conventional flips. However, Dick Lang, a Michigan driver, and Larry Erickson, who races out of Illinois, provided the 10,000 spectators jamming the shoreline with a once-in-a-lifetime crack-up that qualified easily for a believe-it-or-not-category.

Lang was leading Erickson when his motor took in a gulp of water and died precipitously. Erickson, blinded by the hosing down he was receiving, plowed right into Lang at full throttle. Uniquely, when the churned up waters returned to nor-



Jim Wynne, outboard victor in the Nine-Hour U.I.M. Enduro, is congratulated by co-driver Bob Cozzens.

mal, Erickson's boat was perched high and dry on top of Lang's piggy-back fashion. A rescue boat pulled the drivers and hulls in like a floating club sandwich. Lang to the surprise of the fans crawled unscratched from the lower deck to shake Erickson's hand at the denouement of their unusual first meeting.

Novel on the racing calendar was the Nine-Hour Endurance run. This met with such popularity by the fifty-one competitors, of whom twenty-eight finished in the allotted time, that the event, sanctioned by the Union of International Motorboating, has become a regular fixture on the racing calendar, providing a combination proving ground for motor, boat and driver stamina.

Ironically, outboard winner Jim Wynne, Oshkosh, Wisc., had been the sole capsizing casualty in the twenty-four miler Around Miami Beach, but Wynne staged a real



A group of A Stocks on the Citrus Circuit illustrates the popularity of the Charlton hydro among many Florida drivers.

comeback by chalking up four new U.I.M. long distance marks with his Mercury 40H mounted on a Raveau runabout. Most impressive of his records was a one-hour average of 40.204 m.p.h. In the first six hours (the longest period recognized for a U.I.M. record) Wynne splashed over 225.036 miles and covered 323 miles averaging nearly 36 m.p.h. for the nine hours including refueling stops.

The Miami Enduro was a Mercury day with the 36 cubic inch U.I.M. Class II captured by George Thompson and Bill Hatfield in a sleeved-down Mercury Mark 50 and the 20 cubic inch class (similar to the American BU) taken by Marcel Raveau in one of his own hulls with Don Baldaccini as his co-driver, throttle squeezing a Mercury 20H.

On January 23rd, the racers moved to a course on Miami's South Biscayne Bay. Skipper Ritter, Hallandale, Fla., a relative newcomer to the game, starred with three

firsts, two seconds and two thirds driving in AU, BU, ASH, and BSH. Baldaccini had one of the worst days in his career, flipping twice, demolishing two hulls, injuring his right arm and scoring naught.

From ocean and bay the competitors turned to Lakeland's Lake Hollingsworth in what was close to a pure frost bite affair with a frigid 16 m.p.h. northwest wind chopping up the mile and two-thirds eight-buoy circle. So many stock outfits had been hauled in from the West Coast, Great Lakes region and New England, not to mention the bevy of Floridians, that thirteen heats were required for the four stock classes scheduled. Baldaccini was pitted against a field of twenty-six entries in ASH, shooting for per class total point pay-offs of \$60, \$40, \$20 and \$10. Skip Ritter took the initial ASH elimination with Baldaccini and Ross Bennett II, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., both taking their respective cantos in the three

heats that whittled down the starting field for the final to twelve boats. In the decisive heat, Baldaccini hit the starting line wide open and was never challenged. The real race was between Bennett and Dean Chenoweth, Xenia, Ohio, with Bennett taking second spot away from the Ohioan in the final lap. Chenoweth, one-time holder simultaneously of three National Stock Championships in AU, ASH and BSH, came into his own in BU, garnering straight heats from nineteen entries.

The first elimination for B Stock Hydro was won by transplant Long Islander, Al Cali, now of Lakeland, who helmed a Mercury 20H on a radically-designed four-point Hadley Hull. Skip Ritter won the second elimination heat. Dave Alsop drove a spanking new Christmas present to win the third. Alsop, a Fort Lauderdale high school student and tyro in hydro competition, was beaten by Baldaccini in the final though his first and second gave him sufficient total points to score his first major class win, with Cali second.

Herb Bentley, Mt. Carmel, Conn., copped two straight heats in DSH to round out the regatta.

At Lake Alfred, Fla., only two classes of stocks, A and B Hydro, were scheduled. Skip Ritter dominated the seventeen entries in the smaller class, taking straight heats ahead of Frank Goodwin, Hanson, Mass. Ross Bennett II outran fifteen BSHs though he was beaten in his initial elimination by John Wehrle, Hackensack, N.J. Wehrle

was to become a dominant figure on the 1955 summer circuit in the Northeast.

On the 19th of February the outboarders returned to Miami. There Ritter split first places with Charlie Lovelace, Tampa, but came out on top with the most points in AU. Baldaccini, though beaten by Chris Erneston, Jr., West Palm Beach, in



Al Cali helmed a four-point Hadley to a BSH heat victory at Lakeland and an overall class win at Tampa.



Don Baldaccini used the Citrus Circuit as a winter training ground that led to two victories in the A.P.B.A. Stock Nationals.



the first heat and Charlie Lovelace in the second, scored with consistent driving to win BU on total

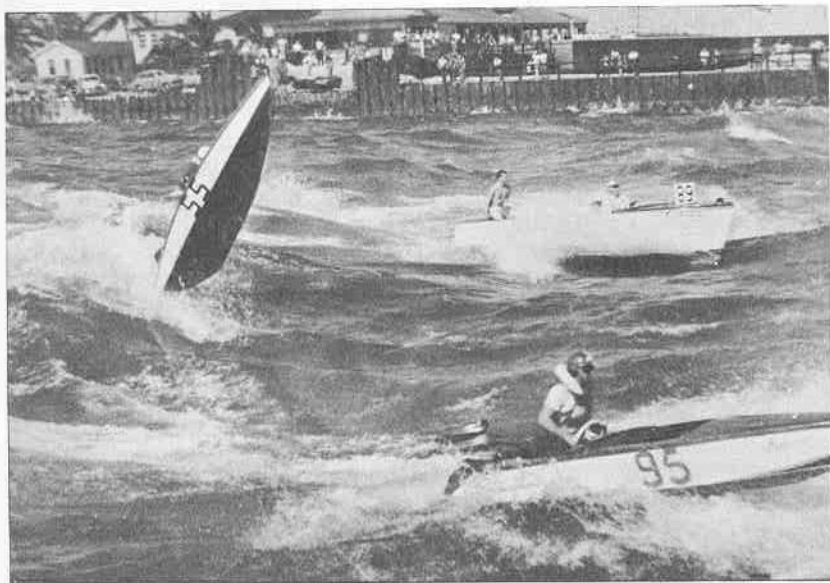


Dave Alsop made good the promise he had shown during the winter months by being high-point Southern scorer in the N.O.A. North-South Championships at Clarksville, Tenn. He is being presented with the Linneaus Norfleet trophy by its donor.

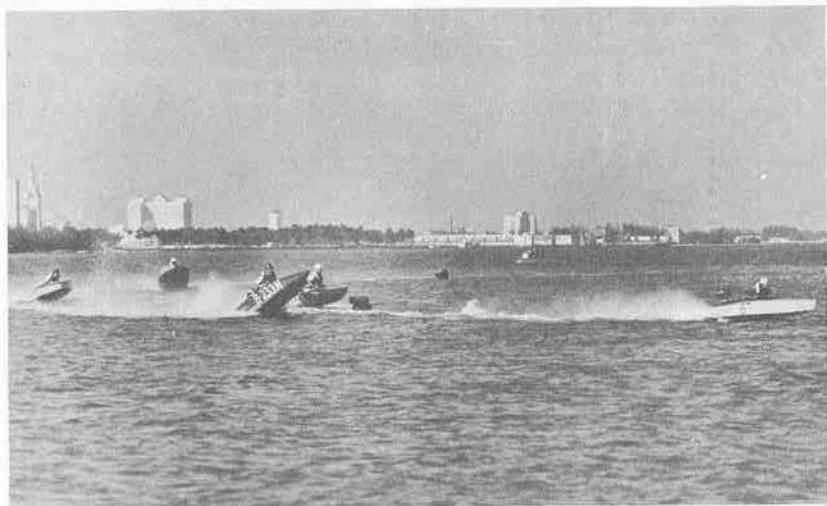
points. Baldaccini then moved into his stock hydro, took straight heats in ASH to dominate a field of thirteen. In BSH newcomer Dave Alsop merged a first and a third for another important win.

The Dixie Outboard Regatta at Tampa, February 20, found local driver, Charlie Lovelace in top form with two class wins. Two straight heats wrapped up AU. Another checker in ASH plus a second gave him the total to nose out Tony Collette, Knoxville, Tenn., who swapped 15 c.i. heat wins. Al Cali again came into the foreground with straight heats in BSH as another Tampan, Bob Neil, wrapped up BU with a perfect score.

February 26th over rough open



Roughest of the season's marathons was the Around Miami Beach. Boats took a beating from the ten-mile open Atlantic Ocean stretch and in the rough Haulover Government Cut.



John Mueller in B-233M finished second to Skipper Ritter in this runabout heat with Will Coburn, Fort Lauderdale, leading at this stage, finishing third.

bay waters at Punta Gorda, Fla., Charlie Lovelace with two first places in AU and Jack Sellers, St. Petersburg, Fla., with two wins in BU, starred at the annual Tarpon Regatta. A day later, action shifted to nearby St. Petersburg where on protected Lake Maggiore under a hot sun seventeen boats (an unexplained slip up since the rules called for no more than twelve) answered the gun for AU in the opener. Charlie Lovelace, Curtis Jackson of St. Petersburg and Don Baldaccini finished the first heat in that order in an exciting near blanket finish. Jackson wrapped things up with a second heat win, beating out Lovelace on lesser elapsed time. Baldaccini, Alsop and Erneston finished one, two, three in the four-

teen boat BU field.

Lovelace reigned supreme over the AUs at Clearwater, Fla., on March 13. He also split wins with Stu Gray, Miami, in BU only to have Al Cali merge two third place finishes in the 20 c.i. class to tally the most points. The final gambol of the winter-spring Florida rooster tail chase was at Fort Lauderdale on April 16 and 17. Baldaccini took two straight heats in AU with local driver J. B. Lamon merging two thirds for second in points. Ross Bennett and Skip Ritter split the BU events. Lamon beat out Chris Erneston, Jr., for top honors in ASH and Skip Ritter took the measure of nine other BSH starters to pluck the final winning fruit from the 1955 citrus circuit.

# marathons from coast to coast



Marathon racing is a highly specialized form of stock outboard racing. It requires all the skills of closed course racing plus a certain masochistic spirit that makes the contestants thrive on torturing their bodies for fifty or more miles and sometimes arriving at the finish line so stiff and bushed they must literally be hoisted out of their boats in a Z-shaped position.

This year with three exceptions, only runabouts raced in long distance stock outboard events. The hydros were carried on the Norfolk, Va., and Winneconne, Wisc., marathon class listings though only a slim handful of the frail shingles actually competed. At the annual Sammamish Slough event, the world's snakiest of all long distance

grinds, hydroplanes are a customary part of the program and from among a bevy of miscellaneous hydros and runabouts emerged a three-point multi-stepper as overall winner.

Outboard marathon racing is not new. As early as July 4, 1929, a 200-miler was scheduled at Peoria, Ill., and the famous though now defunct Albany-New York Marathon was at least partially responsible for giving the public its initial insight into the durability of the detachable two-cycle motors.

Of all of the events on the stock outboard racing marathon schedule, the Milwaukee Sentinel-Winnebagoland 88-miler from Fond du Lac up Lake Winnebago to Oshkosh, through the Fox River, Lakes



Butte des Morts, Winneconne, Poygan, along the Wolf River to Fremont and return and the 115-mile Colorado River go from Needles, Calif., to Parker Dam and back, are today the most widely known. The Colorado River junket is the older of the two, having eight an-



Bob Murphy, Springfield, Ill., drove a Johnson-powered Shamrock hull to "36" class victory in the WinnebagoLand grind to finish at an average of 37.24 m.p.h.



Double winner, Les Kahn, New York City, helmed a Mercury-Raveau to top spot at Norfolk and Alexandria Bay.

nual marathons to its credit with seven scored for WinnebagoLand. The latter, however, is the most important of any season, in 1955 attracting 252 entries, well over 200 starters, of which 178 passed the first check point and 136 went the entire distance.

Close rival to the Wisconsin event was the Seventh Annual Top O'Michigan marathon where the course includes a dash across Mullett Lake, through Indian River into Burnt Lake, over Crooked River and across Crooked Lake to Conway, back over the same route and across Mullett Lake, up the Cheboygan River, northward to a turn below Cheboygan at Paper Mill Dam and back to the starting point at Hotel Top-in-a-Bee. The entry list showed 222 rigs but the rough water looked forbidding and of the list 163 boats in four classes, AU, BU, DU and "36", hit the starting line. At Needles in the Colorado Marathon, 107 contestants left the pits for the start.

Several new marathon events made tremendous strides in popularity during 1955. Jumping into the big time was the 50-mile Detroit Times - Belle Isle Outboard Club Marathon on the Detroit River. At this year's event, the third annual, 123 boats moved across the rough wind-swept waters. Had better weather conditions prevailed, it is possible that even more boats might have made it since the scheduled May 29 starting gun was never fired until May 30 and after a look at the angry rolling waters, many would-be competitors packed their

gear and left. The Second Annual 1000 Islands Marathon at Alexandria Bay, N.Y., drew 86 starters to the St. Lawrence River course.

Disappointing in number of entries but interesting as a new fixture on the long-distance schedule was the First Annual Stockton-Redding 316-miler which drew only 35 boats in four classes but showed promise of a solidly growing future.

Behind the scenes at any marathon is a vast network of technical detail calling for many times the number of non-contestant participants to make the event a success and safe for the racers. Communications, which at a closed-course regatta is a relatively simple affair, is highly complicated for a marathon which calls for a central communications nerve center, linked with official check points along the route, countless rescue craft assigned to tow in the hapless, linkage to aircraft which follow the race, reporting the leaders at different stages and notifying rescue boats



Bud David, Modesto, Calif., first in AU in the two-day 316-mile Stockton to Redding marathon, comes in for fueling in his Rockholt hull at Red Bluff, Calif.



At water's level the ruggedness of the start of the WinnebagoLand event is apparent.



The year's twistiest is the Sammamish Slough in Washington, open to hydros or runabouts. Overall winner was Bud Sullivan, Seattle, cornering in a Mercury-powered Swift.

of any competing craft in distress. Other volunteer craft must be assigned to patrol the course to prevent over-eager boating spectators from endangering themselves and the drivers. Charts of the course must be made. Facilities to load and unload a vast number of boats and fueling facilities must be provided.

Officiating chores are ultra-complicated for some means must be worked out to check each boat at the start, not so easy when they snarl through in droves, many buried in spray. At larger marathons this recording is accomplished by having each driver leave a card at a drop point shortly before the five-minute gun is fired. This pre-



Ray Lenk, Detroit, relaxes after driving a Raveau-Mercury combination to victory in the Twice Around Manhattan marathon.



cludes any possibility of a driver attempting in an unsportsmanlike manner to put his boat overboard at a location remote from the starting point and steal time and distance from the rest of his competitors. Trained scorers are required at a series of check points along the route. No boat is declared official winner until each check point's score sheets have been tallied. The winning boats must have had their time of passage recorded at each check location.

Though no serious injury occurred at any stock marathon event in 1955, treatment for minor cuts, bruises and fatigue were required. First aid facilities must be located

at the start and finish point and along the route. These, too, are linked in by radio with rescue craft and planes. Housing for the drivers, crews and the influx of spectators must be arranged in advance.

There is no more thrilling spectacle than a mass start of fifty or more high winding, bounding stock outboards converging on the starting line in a lacework pattern of spray. During 1955 enthusiasts of long distance racing had opportunities to compete in nearly every section of the country from Lake Chelan, Wash., in the northwest to Miami, Fla., in the southeast; from Augusta, Me., in the northeast to Needles, Calif., in the southwest



Class winners of the Belle Isle event included William R. Smith, Cleo, Mich., AU, later a class winner at Top O'Michigan; Dave Werner, Jeddo, Mich., BU; Dominic Martines, DU, receiving trophy from Mrs. Horace Dodge and Larry Freeman, Milwaukee, Wisc., "36" class.



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**PLUS 3 STOCK OUTBOARD COMPETITION MODELS**





Jack Abraham, Fremont, Wisc., averaged 47.03 m.p.h. as over-all winner of the Winnebagoland event in a Mercury-powered Thompson.



Craig DeWald, Reading, Pa., in a Mercury-powered homemade hull was the season's outstanding long distance contestant.



Two time AU winner Tulio Celano, Sr., New York City, victor at Alexandria Bay, holds aloft his class trophy at the end of the Around Manhattan marathon.

and Top O'Michigan to St. Joseph, Mo., to the south.

As in every year one outstanding participant overcame tremendous odds to emerge victor in more than his share of wins and near wins. In 1955 it was 16-year-old Craig DeWald, Reading, Pa., who with a home-built, Hal Kelly-designed AU Runabout, **Flying Chips**, powered by an under 15 c.i. Mercury garnered firsts at Norfolk, Va., Hague, N.Y., and repeated his 1954 victory in the Winnebagoland marathon. Craig added three second place finishes at Detroit, Solomons Island, Md. and Alexandria Bay, N.Y., with thirds at Hartford, Conn., and Eastmanville, Mich., a fifth at Top O'Michigan and a seventh in the Around Manhattan. DeWald made no excuses for his two poorest finishes. These races were probably his season's tops as far as sheer guts and ingenuity are concerned. At Top O'Michigan, Craig celebrated his sixteenth birthday midway through the race, and shortly beyond the half way point of this rugged event in which only 26% of the starters went the whole dis-





One mile from the start of the Eighth Annual Colorado River Marathon with 114 treacherous miles ahead.

Photo by Kent Hitchcock  
courtesy OUTBOARD Magazine.

tance, DeWald appeared to be in fair shape for another victory when his steering cable broke. His boat swerved, vaulted a bank, and impaled itself on a jagged limb of a fallen tree. DeWald didn't quit. He jumped from his landlocked boat, broke off the limb leaving it stuck like a huge cork in the bow of his hull. Though he lost nearly ten minutes, he dragged his beached rig to the water and got underway again to finish a very respectable fifth. He was leading the Around Manhattan at about the quarter mark when he crossed paths with

a ferry boat, vaulted a five-foot swell and again broke a steering cable and also his throttle wire. With jury rigged repairs to the steering lash up, he drove more than 40 miles to finish seventh and maintain a perfect completion score of ten finishes in ten starts. Not bad for a youngster who in mid-1954, shortly after his first Winnebago land victory, was run over by a following boat in a closed-course event, was so badly cut he required over 100 stitches and was chalked up as a has-been at 15.

There were other outstanding

performers during the past season. William R. Smith of Clio, Mich., who also helmed a Mercury-powered home-built AU romped home ahead of 19 other class contestants to capture class victory in the Belle Isle Marathon at Detroit, beat out 16 others in his class on July 24th at River Rouge, Mich., and emerged class winner again August 7 at the Top O'Michigan. There were also some outstanding double victory winners. Tulio Celano, Sr., of the Bronx, N.Y., finished third in his Mercury-powered Raveau on May 15 at Solomons Island, then raced to a class win against 18 other competitors in the International 1000 Islands Marathon and made that victory more convincing when he won the 57-mile Around Man-

hattan event on September 11.

Jerry Van Amber, Lansing, Mich., scored two impressive wins in BU driving a Mercury-powered Sid Craft. Van Amber was first home of 21 in his class in the 104-mile Eastmanville Marathon and scored his greatest success in the Top O' Michigan where the going was so rugged that only 17 of the 79 BU starters went the entire way. Les Kahn, New York City, driving a Mercury-powered Raveau DU scored twice with class and overall wins at Norfolk on April 24 and again at Alexandria Bay on June 12. Kahn was well up in contention in at least six others, finishing second in the Around Manhattan.

Fred Snyder, Lancaster, Pa., a veteran marathoner and 47-year-old sporting goods dealer, helmed his Mercury-powered Speedliner to impressive wins in DU at Hartford and Eastmanville. Robert Moore of Royal Oak, Mich., was another of the season's double class winners driving an Evinrude-powered home-made hull in "36" class with victories at River Rouge, Mich., and Top O'Michigan.

Of all the season's marathoners, however, the hardest earned victory went to Arvin Nyleen, a logger of Wilamina, Ore., who elected to go the entire Stockton to Redding, Calif., 316-miles non-stop. He drove the distance in 7 hours, 9 minutes and 36% seconds to take the crown in the year's longest and richest event, racking up \$1000 in cash, a batch of merchandise prizes plus the custody of a \$2000 Perpetual Diamond Cup trophy for the year.



Nick Chapman, East Moriches, N. Y., drove a Mercury-powered Raveau to class victories at Solomons, Md., and in the Around Manhattan grind.

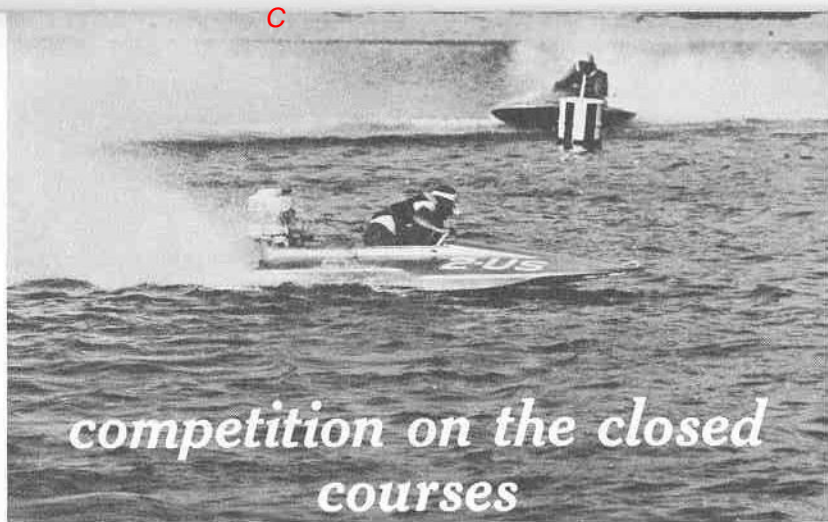


Photo by Richard W. King

Stock outboard racing during 1955 continued on the upswing and became even more firmly entrenched as America's most popular speed-boating activity. During the year through to November 1st under sanctioning by the American Power Boat Association, stock outboards had 280 scheduled events, of which 258 were closed course regattas. This was an increase of 50 opportunities to compete over the previous year during which the stocks had 230 scheduled events, 212 of them closed course affairs. This is far from the entire picture, for the National Outboard Association, the rival rules governing body, carried a schedule closely approximating that of the A.P.B.A. for its stock and modified stock racing members and numerous local groups scheduled non-sanctioned stock racing programs.

As an indication of the continued increase in interest in stock out-

boarding, A. P. B. A.'s registered driver membership in the "out-of-the-box" classes climbed to 2005 of its overall 3759 membership, including inboard, outboard and stock outboard members. Stock outboard drivers within the A.P.B.A. registered 4807 pieces of racing equipment. The most popular single class was BU in which 850 runabouts were listed with B Stock Hydro second in popularity with 590 boats carried on the official registry rolls. AUs increased from 413 registered boats to 464 during 1955 and A Stock Hydro showed an increase of 85 pieces of equipment over the 312 registered in 1954.

Major events were scheduled in all sections of the country as well as in Mexico. There, largely due to the spade work of Elgin Gates, Surfside, Calif., the fourth international Mexican-United States competition took place on successive February weekends, at Iguala



and Acapulco. Ten United States drivers tangled rooster tails with twenty-two Mexican stock outboarders in fourteen combined team and individual events. The United States contingent emerged victorious with an advantage of eight first place victories to their Mexican rivals' six. The individual high-point scorer for the United States team was Johnny Craven, Pasadena. Emilio Zamudio starred for the Mexicans. Other United States team members to score victories in the events run under A.P.B.A. rules included Biff Parker, Bart Woodruff, Fred Richmond, Jr., and Ronnie Rima.

Though the Citrus Circuit held the spotlight during January, February and March, West Coast drivers got off to early starts in April. In the northwest Glen Kasch, of Portland, Ore., topped a large field

of BUs on his home waters with Gib Wards of Salem taking straight heats in BSH, Gil Allen leading the DUs home and strengthening the Salem contingent's claim to strong racing competition, with Jim Young of Tillamook, Ore., winning straight heats in DSH at the wind-chilled affair.



Tennessee speedster Parker Smith of Winchester was a constant threat in the A Hydro brackets at N.O.A. events.



In A.P.B.A. 397 15 c.i. A Stock Hydros were registered and bow-to-bow competition made the class an exceedingly popular one.



Some of the season's most spectacular outboarding competition was witnessed at the Long Beach Marine Stadium, California, where crowds as large as 50,000 watched the rooster tail competitors.

Photo by Kent Hitchcock

Farther to the south at San Fernando and Santa Barbara in April, Californians burst into action. Dave Hart, one of the spark plugs behind the development of the new "36" class, carried Temple City into the winners' brackets in four straight heats and Howard Thompson continued his winning ways in DSH. Vic Bonham, Pomona, emerged top of the ASHs; Ray McKean of Riverside led the BSH operators home in successive heats and Jack Corner, San Diego and Bob Parish, Bakersfield, swapped firsts and seconds with a pitched battle regularity in AU.

At Lakeside, Ore., Arvid Nyleen, the Willamina logger who later was

to win the year's longest marathon, began to show his mettle in DU, taking straight heats at a regatta with an early season turnout of 58 boats in five classes. At Wenatchee, Wash., on May 1st two drivers, later to feature prominently in the A.P.B.A. stock nationals, Bud Sullivan, Seattle and Paul Woodroffe, Salem, Ore., started to impress spectators with their throttle and helming techniques in front of their four-cylinder-in-line Merc D power plants. Drivers such as Chuck Boring Jr., and Bud David, Modesto; Eddie West of Berkeley, Calif.; Dick Job of Covina; Lee Burris, Gardena, started to crop up in the California winners' brack-

ets as did Ron Loomis of Santa Barbara who was later to take the CU Nationals.

In the Northeast, action got underway in mid-May with New England drivers such as Bill Chilton, Seymore, Conn.; Robert Robbins, Springfield, Mass., and his father Walt Robbins, along with Jim Loomis, Hamden, Conn., starting out in a winning fashion and continuing the tempo throughout the season.



D. H. Parker, Selbyville, Delaware, in a cab-over design beat out Ray Miller, Elizabethtown, Pa., in a DSH Swift at the Millville, N. J., A.P.B.A. Regionals in two very closely contested heats.



Roger Q. Smith and O. B. Aylor, both of Houston, battle at close terms on the Neches River near Beaumont, Texas.

Driving well out of his own territory, John Wehrle of Hackensack, N.J., took two straight heats from eleven competitors in ASH at a Hanson, Mass., event on May 15. This was probably a warm up for things to come for the Jersey kneepad jockey who by the season's end was destined to cop the stock outboarders' two most coveted awards.

Early season closed course highlight under N.O.A. supervision was the North versus South Modified Stock and Stock Championships. At Cairo, Ill., on the Ohio River, Jim Griffin, Quincy, Ill., emerged high-point scorer for the Yankees who won the meet, with Dr. G. W. Reichardt, Nashville, Tenn., topping the losing Rebel contingents' scoring. This placed these two drivers as team leaders for the 1956 events and unseated former Yankee leader Earl Renfrow, Boonville, Mo., and defending Rebel Champion, Bob Terry, Jacksonville, Fla. The real crowd pleaser of the event was fourteen-year-old Billy Seebold, Granite City, Ill., who held the dis-



Bob Jones, Richmond, Virginia, moves through the first turn with his BU Speedliner at Clarksville where twenty-two A.P.B.A. BUs were topped by Fred Deal, Newton, N. C.





Traffic jams on the closed circuit sometimes provide hair raising action. This BU broached and makes like a snow plow as the oncoming field passes over the submarining bow.

tion of taking the first spill in the championship finals but after being towed to the pits, the youngster got his rig under way in the second A Hydro event and finished third to get an ovation larger than that bestowed on the winning driver, George Christner, Quincy, Ill.

At Clarksville, Tenn., on the Cumberland River, N.O.A.'s Division III stock drivers tangled in another Yankee-Rebel battle with the Southerners coming out victorious in points, sparked by young Dave Alsop of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., who emerged top man of the meet, to win the Linneaus Norfleet Trophy and the title of "General Lee" for 1956. Top scorer for the



South of the Border a group of United States drivers competed in the fourth International Mexicana races. Elgin Gates, one of the originators of the event, tail rides through the mile in his DU at Acapulco.



Augie Weber, Lake Zurich, Illinois, catches a chine with his DSH, and is catapulted from the cockpit.

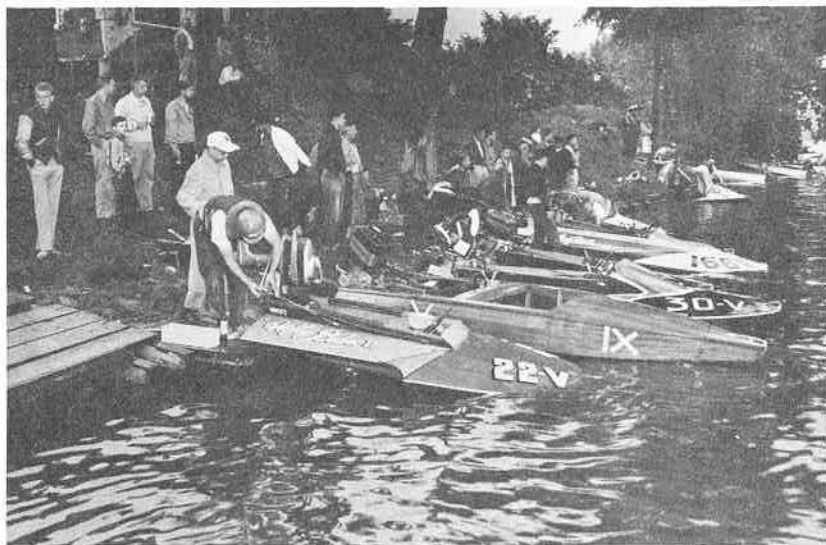
Yanks was Carl Peterson, St. Joseph, Mo. Other winners included Ralph Scott, Lee Boyd, Knoxville, and Jim Doty, Camden, Tenn.

Most active of the smaller independent groups was the Lone Star Boat Racing Association which sanctioned nearly a score of events along the Gulf Coast of Texas, with standout drivers such as Lonnie Kelly and Doyle Rains, Corpus Christi; Floyd Appling, El Campo; Lee Richter, Pasadena; O. B. Aylor, Red Riley and R. Q. Smith, Houston and Eddie Poole, Freeport, frequently appearing in the front ranks.

In the midwest, A.P.B.A.'s Dean Chenoweth, Xenia, Ohio, who first burst into fame as a fifteen-year-

old in 1952 when he won three A. P. B. A. National titles, turned in his best year despite failing to garner a championship. In the month of June, as an example, Chenoweth racked up twenty-one heat wins, at locations such as Eastmanville, Monroe and Pawpaw, Michigan. At Dayton, Ohio, he hit his month's peak with eight straight heat wins to make a clean sweep of AU, BU, ASH and BSH.

Throughout the Midwest, drivers such as Bob Hovermale, Jamestown, Ind.; Clarence Norgal, Hales Corner, Wisc.; Bill Janz, Chicago; Lee Dingman, Peewaukee, Wisc.; Bill Schrewe and Bob Herring, Sheboygan, Wisc.; Bill Leutner, Dick Vande Plasch and Gerry Waldman, Milwaukee and Earl Granath, West



Lakes and waterways throughout the entire United States were settings for pit scenes where groups of America's more than 4000 registered stock outboard drivers tested their wares. In the foreground with a BSH is Chicagoan Bob Seeger.

Allis, Wisc., were dominant factors.

The sport suffered a loss when one of its outstanding racing stars, Larry Krueger, Celina, Ohio, died as a result of a diving accident. Gene Aubrey and Skip Forcier of Detroit with Frank Huebner, Bay City and Jerry Van Amber, Lansing, were potent threats wherever they appeared on Michigan courses as were two Ohio racers, Bill Holloway, Tipp City and Jon Culver, Dayton.

Along the southeastern seaboard, young Garry Girton, Baltimore, Md., topped a revived JU class. Buddy Fleming, Edgewater, Md.; Reggie Rivenbark and Guy Hamilton, Jr., New Bern, N.C.; Jack Holt, Fort Belvoir, Va.; Scotty Straus,

Baltimore; Bill McClung, Portsmouth, Va.; and Tommy Young, Wachapreague, Va., were usually in the thick of competition.

Johnny Schubert, Clifton, N.J.; Jim Ware, Hasbrouck Heights, N.J.; Stan Mankovich, Oakland, N.J. and Dr. Jim Tower, Clarks Green, Pa., figured in numerous eastern events. Ronald France occasionally slipped down over the Canadian border from Toronto to give upstate New Yorkers such as Allyn Guerin, Webster; Bob Gokey, Herings and Vince De Berto, Newburgh, a tough time.

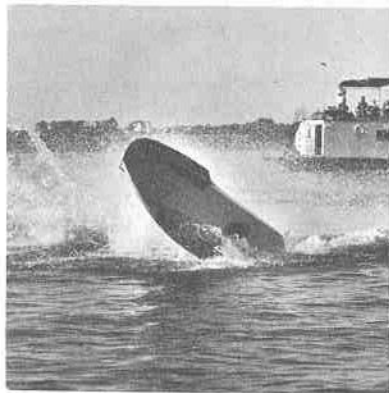
One major development was apparent during the stock outboard season. Turnouts at major regattas, particularly in A and B classes,



were frequently so numerous that two or more elimination heats had to be run in order to cut the heat fields down to the legal maximum allowed number of drivers. Fre-



John Jordan, Freeport, Kansas, established a new A Hydro record for N.O.A. modified stocks of 43.689 m.p.h. at Corpus Christi, Texas, in late March in this Merc-powered Blue Star aluminum hydro.



A graphic illustration of what can happen when a hydro crosses a cruiser's wake.

quently programs originally scheduled for six classes of competition in twelve heats would feature as many as eighteen heats. Some spectators and sponsors were pleased to receive more than the advertised quota of shingles bounding, but the officials universally found the added heats a tremendous burden. At some meets where the 60 m.p.h.-plus DSHs were scheduled as the wind-up features, programs had to be changed since the final heats could not be expected to be run until dusk, when it was rightly considered that the scorching Ds would be operating under exceedingly hazardous conditions.

What the solution for this ever increasing popularity of stock racing will be is undetermined at this stage. Some persons close to the sport strongly recommend that stock drivers be classified in two categories: novice and expert. Novice drivers would be those who on a point basis had still to score sufficient points in the winning brackets to receive the higher rating. At major regattas, experts only would be slated for the finals. In addition to alleviating the cumbersomeness of ever-growing fields, such a division of drivers in the two categories would also give the newcomer an opportunity to pit his skill against others who did not hold an advantage of the driving proficiency that comes only with vast experience. Perhaps 1956 will see some concrete move to iron out what seemingly is the only major problem in closed-course stock outboard competition.



Local closed course victories, regional titles and even divisional championships lose their lustre when it's time for the big decisive year-end championships which are annual fixtures on the racing calendars of both major sanctioning groups. With every crown at stake, drivers point for the big ones, the World Series regattas of the kneepad jockeys.

During each calendar year, the A.P.B.A. conducts a championship race meet in each of its sixteen geographical regions. The first three place winners of these qualify to move on to the next step upward toward national fame, the Divisional Championships in each one of the country's five divisions. Those drivers placing first, second or third in the Divisionals are eligible to compete in the National Cham-

pionships as is the previous year's defending champion. In the event that all of the qualified drivers do not appear, then pre-championship elimination heats are raced by non-qualified boats to make up the A. P. B. A.'s maximum national championship field of sixteen finalists.

N.O.A.'s method of qualifying boats for its annual championships is similar to that used by A.P.B.A. N.O.A.'s membership is divided geographically into sixteen districts and six zones. Under the N.O.A. regulations, the first place class winners of each Zone championship automatically qualify for the year-end title events as do the high-point drivers in each of the six zones. The previous year's defending champion is also automatically qualified. N.O.A. championship heats are limited to thirteen contestants. If

any vacancies are available, these are filled by the winning boats from elimination heats.

N.O.A. in addition to its Division III stock classes, which with minor rules variances correspond to the A.P.B.A. stock classes, also conducts year-end title events in Division IV competed for with modified stock motors whose drivers are permitted to use alcohol-based racing fuels rather than tank gasoline as required by A.P.B.A. stock racers and those in N.O.A.'s Division III.

So, in 1955 two sets of stock outboard racers and one set of modified stock outboard drivers were crowned.

The first of the season's championships was that sanctioned by



Paul Woodroffe, Salem, Ore., took straight heats to win the DU title in his Mercury-powered Calkins runabout.



N.O.A. Division III A Hydro crown was captured by Chris Erneston, Jr., West Palm Beach, Fla., helming a Mercury-powered Swift hull.



Art "Bud" Sullivan, Seattle, Wash., scored two second place heat finishes to win the A.P.B.A. DSH crown on a high point basis.



the American Power Boat Association on August 26-29 at Devil's Lake, a sea level, fresh water, isolated and wind protected bowl-shaped waterway near Delake, Oregon, a small resort community about 60 miles west of Salem. The site was perfect for record breaking and at this writing, three new stock racing marks had been approved and four other unofficial marks were pending from the Devil's Lake Championships.

The star of the A.P.B.A. meet was 12-year-old Billy Schumacher who helmed his Mercury-powered JU to straight heat wins and in AU scored a third and a first place to gain the AU title as well as the Virgil Muckdin Memorial Trophy awarded to the high point winner of the meet. Billy, a Seattle, Wash., junior high school student, averaged 28.239 m.p.h. in his fastest heat of JU to top the August record set by Garry Gerton at Norfolk, Va., of 24.317 m.p.h. by nearly four



Billy Schumacher, Seattle, Washington, scored with two national titles: JU and AU, and was high point winner at the A.P.B.A. Nationals.

miles per hour. However, due to a serious illness on the part of one of the key race officials which led to a delay in the filing of proper documentation, this mark will not be recognized until the paper work is cleared up.

Schumacher's victory in AU was particularly impressive since in winning his title he defeated such stellar drivers as Don Baldaccini,



A start of BU runabouts at Devil's Lake shows Curt Gonstead, Monroe, Wisc., leading, followed by eventual title winner Baldaccini in 76-F, Art Knotty, Redding, Calif., in 83-C, Dean Chenoweth, Xenia, Ohio, in 2-S.

Miami, Fla.; Ted Moberg, Jr., West Allis, Wis.; Bud David and Chuck Boring, Jr., Modesto, Calif.; Bob Parish, Bakersfield, Calif.; John Wehrle, Hackensack, N. J., and Dean Chenoweth, Xenia, Ohio. Not only were these racers the hottest in their class in the country but on



Don Baldaccini, Miami, Fla., in his 20H-powered Holt Craft which carried him to the A.P.B.A. BU crown. Baldaccini drove a Swift hydro to the BSH title.



Don Benson, Seattle, Wash., merged a first and second place heat finish to take the A.P.B.A. ASH title in this Jacobson hull.

an average they were about twice as old as young Billy and nearly to a man had an edge on the young schoolboy in racing experience.

Rivalling the amazing tyro Schumacher as a doubles winner was Floridian Don Baldaccini who though unable to do better than fourth and fifth in final positions in AU and ASH in which he was defending champion, came into his own in the 20 c.i. class when he helmed his Mercury 20H-powered Holt runabout to a combined fourth and first place heat finishes to take the BU title and repeated the same combination to take the B Stock Hydro crown.

In BU Johnny Sangster of Seattle, Wash., riding a Calkins took the first heat followed in by Dean Chenoweth in a Speedliner and Bill O'Malley, McMinnville, Ore., in another Calkins in third. In the second heat, however, Sangster failed to start and Chenoweth and O'Malley along with eight other boats were disqualified for jumping the gun. Though Sangster had to be contented with a second position overall, his name will go into the record book via a new A.P.B.A. mark of 47.493 m.p.h. for the five miles in his first heat, Baldaccini parlayed his fourth in the first heat with a nicely paced start in the second to go on to a heat victory and the class title.

In BSH the opening heat went to Robert Brownell, Corvallis, Ore., who drove a Mercury-powered Pabst. Second spot was captured by New Jersey's John Wehrle in a Jacoby and third went to Bob Par-



Paul Woodroffe performs a back flip in DSH. Leading Woodroffe in 158-R is Hubert A. Entrop, fourth in final standing who drove a radically designed Jones hull.

ish, defending champion, who drove a Terrill hydro. Baldaccini got the combination in the second heat, this time splashing out a scorching



Dr. Charles Hursh. Goshen, Ind., 1955 N.O.A. Division III title holder in B Runabout.

49.157 m.p.h. average for the distance to lead in Parish and Wehrle in second and third spots. The 400 points garnered in the final added to his 169 points for a fourth gave Baldaccini a total of 569 for the high point BSH score and his second title.

In A Stock Hydro, Don Benson, Seattle, Wash., a 15-year-old, combined a first and a second for title honors. However, in the second heat he was beaten to the tape by nearly six full seconds by Wallace Granberg, Orinda, Calif., who in his Mercury - powered Beeliner hydro **Atomizer** averaged 43.186 m.p.h. to break an ASH record which had stood in the books for more than three years.

Defending CU champion Ron Loomis, Santa Barbara, Calif., drove his Evinrude-DeSilva to straight heat wins in the 30 c.i. class, establishing a new record of 40.559 m.p.h. in his first heat win. This class which was sparsely com-



peted for with only six entrants and five boats completing each heat should become one of the strongest of the competition classes by the end of this year with the introduction of the new Mercury four-cylinder-in-line Mark 30H.

In DU, Paul Woodroffe of Salem, Ore., decisively took both heats with a Mark 40H powered Calkins Craft. His closest competition came from Dick Gallagher, Detroit, Mich., with Harvey DeMartin, Crescent City, Calif., tagging Gallagher closely in the first heat and Ken Ferguson, Seattle, Wash., riding the Michigan driver's rooster tail in the second.

In DSH, new DU titleholder Paul Woodroffe performed a sensational spill at the start of the first heat. Surprisingly, Woodroffe was able to bail out his rig in time to move onto the course again for the second heat, finishing a very respectable fifth. The initial DSH go around went to Wild Bill Holloway of Tipp City, Ohio. Holloway might well have gone on to a title had not a cloud bank descended on the course in the second heat. Wild Bill, driving without instruments, lost his way, wound up in a tangle of weeds and yet managed to get back on course again in time to finish



An early morning view of the pits at Devil's Lake, Ore. Starting clock is visible at upper right.



Mike Lemon, Anderson, Ind., scored an upset in dethroning Earl Renfrow to capture N.O.A.'s Division III D Runabout title.



Dr. George Reichardt, Nashville, Tenn., took N.O.A.'s Division III A Runabout crown with two straight heat wins.

fourth and overall runner-up position. The title on the basis of two second place heat finishes went to Art "Bud" Sullivan, Seattle, Wash., who had won the 1955 Sammamish Slough marathon. The second heat was won by Dick Brunes, Seattle, Wash., at a fast clip of 57.142 m.p.h. However, Brunes who had finished fourth in the first heat had to be contented with third spot in final position.

Dean Mahoffey copped the 50 c.i. title in EU class with straight heat wins driving an Evinrude powered Calkins uniquely enough against a field comprised wholly of Oregon racers.

Two weeks later at Cairo, Ill., the Ohio River provided a less perfect location for the N.O.A. Division IV



Herman Keith, Kansas City, Mo., successfully defended his N.O.A. Division IV B Runabout crown.

Championships for modified stock hydro and runabout campaigners. On the initial day of the meet weather conditions were perfect though driftwood and debris left water conditions somewhat wanting. On the second day high winds and swirling whitecaps forced a one-day postponement and eliminated possible assaults on straightaway records.

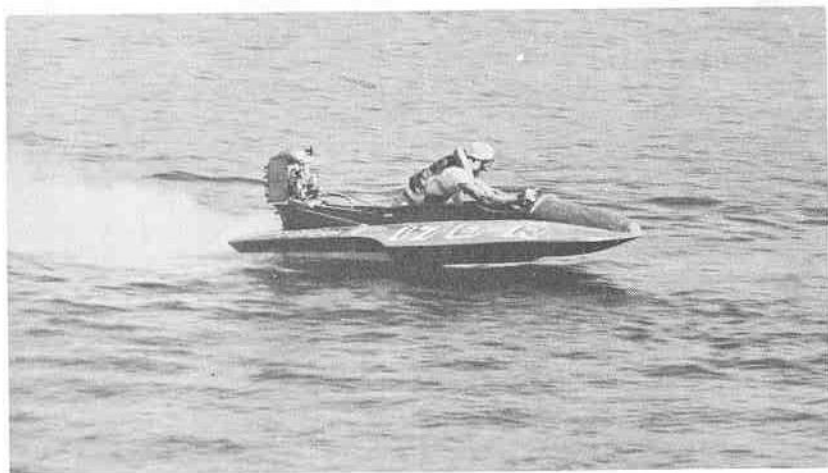
Of the six champions crowned, three in runabouts and three in hydros, only one previous title holder,

Herman Keith, Kansas City, Mo., was able successfully to defend his title. To the spectators on the bank at the end of the first heat Keith looked like a poor bet to retain the crown. Ralph Scott, Paducah, Ky., who in both 1954 and 1955 has been the N.O.A. high-point champion, had taken Keith's measure in the first canto although only by .1 of a second in a near photo finish, but the 100 point margin in their relative 400 and 300 point scores looked big at the halfway mark. In the



N.O.A. Inspector Bud Harvey checks the lower unit measurements of the Mercury 20H helmed by Ralph Scott, Paducah, Ky. Though Scott finished third with this rig, his modified Mercury A. carried him to an N.O.A. Division IV hydro title.





Cliff Bond, Barker, Ore., was unable to qualify but his Jones-type hull was one of the design sensations of the A.P.B.A. Nationals.

second heat Scott jumped into an early lead by about a half a boat's length over Keith but in trying to hold off a challenge by the B Runabout defending champion, Scott

cut too close to a buoy, struck it, spun out and Keith went onto an easy two-boat length win. Freddy Gail, Quincy, Ill., took runner-up spot, combining third and second place finishes.

The A Runabout crown was captured by Bob Snider, Mission, Kan., a 16-year-old high school boy who prior to his two heat wins at Cairo, had been riding an unbeaten streak of twenty-two straight victories. Defending title holder Deanie Montgomery, Corsicana, Tex., dropped from contention in the first heat when he encountered steering troubles. Veteran Clyde Davie, East St. Louis, Ill., finished in runner-up spot with a third and second place.

In D Runabouts, Arthur Kennedy, a 40-year-old Negro of St. Louis, Mo., helmed a modified to alcohol Mercury 25 on an Ashburn hull to two straight heat



Bob Snider, Mission, Kans., extended his unbeaten streak to 24 straight wins when he copped the N.O.A. modified A runabout title at Cairo, Ill.

wins. In the second five-mile event Bill Talley, Tulsa, Okla., nearly took the new champion's measure. Talley led to the final turn where, pressed hard by Kennedy, he spun out and flipped. Not only did Kennedy win the distinction of being the only member of his race ever to take a major outboard racing title but in so doing, Kennedy distinguished himself by setting a new N.O.A. five-mile record of 51.428 m.p.h.

Ralph Scott, a veteran of stock competition, in his first try for modified stock laurels defeated Johnny Jordan, A Hydro defending champion of Wichita, Kans., with straight heat wins, leading home Vern McQueen, Springfield, Ill., in the first heat and Pete Norton, Vinita, Okla., in the second.

The best defending champion in B Hydro, Clyde Davie, could manage a first and a seventh to finish up in fourth final position. Larry Rogers, Minneapolis, Minn.,

and Bill Owens, Centralia, Ill., each scored firsts and fifths to wind up in a point tie with the title going to Rogers who had the lesser elapsed time for the two heats. Rogers' victory proved to be an upset since the Minneapolis driver helmed a Champion motor, the five other titles in the modified stock division being captured by Mercury-powered outfits.

The final Cairo championship for Modified D Hydros went to Ronald Williams, Keokuk, Iowa, who scored a first and a second. Runner-up in the class was Bud Jones, Sioux City, Iowa, with a first and a fourth. Defending champion C. B. Norton, Jal, New Mex., was dethroned when the best he could produce was a pair of sixth place finishes.

On the last weekend in September, N.O.A.'s stock Division III drivers met on beautiful Lake Loudoun on the outskirts of Knoxville, Tenn. Chris Erneston, Jr., West



Ken Ferguson, Seattle, battles down the stretch with Harvey DeMartin, Crescent City, Calif., in DU at the A.P.B.A. stock events. DeMartin had a final finish position of fourth, Ferguson third.

Palm Beach, successfully defended his A Stock Hydro crown with a Merc-powered Swift against the onslaught of such front rank throttle squeezers as Charlie Lovelace, Tampa, Fla., who finished in runner-up spot; Ralph Scott; Robert Miles, Louisville, Ky., and Earl Humes, Yorktown, Ind.

Lovelace, who had not previously qualified for the A Hydro events, established a new N.O.A. competition mark of 40.314 m.p.h. during his qualifying elimination heat.

In BSH, 1954 title-holder Erneston faired poorly racking up a pair of poorer than average eighth place finishes. The new title went to V. J. Lloyd, Bocalusa, La., with a first and a second with runner-up spot being taken by Jerry Flynn, Crossville, Tenn., with a fourth and a first.

In D Hydro, defending champion Dick McCulloch, Fort Worth, Tex., failed to finish in the first heat and couldn't get started for the second. The initial heat was won by Jack Crissinger, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, with Bob Hovermale, Jamestown, Ind., second. However, in the second



Dick Gallagher, Detroit, Mich., one-time winner of the Winnebago Marathons, took two seconds in DU to finish runner-up in that class, at the A.P.B.A. Nationals.

heat Crissinger was disqualified for jumping the gun and Hovermale went on to take the heat and the title. A doctor, G. W. Reichardt, Nashville, Tenn., took the A Runabout events in straight heats although he received tough competition from Charlie Lovelace and Chris Erneston, Jr., who scored a pair of seconds and thirds, respectively.

In B Runabout at the end of the first heat bets were running heavily on Chris Erneston, Jr., who had romped away in the first five miles with a record breaking win at a new average speed of 42.644 m.p.h. However, Erneston failed to get underway for the second heat and Dr. Charles Hursh, Goshen, Ind., who had finished second in the first heat, had things pretty much his own way to bounce in for the checker and the title.

The N.O.A. D Runabout field has long been dominated by Earl Renfrow, Boonville, Mo. Renfrow holds the N.O.A. one-mile mark for the class. The Missourian, however, failed to finish the first heat which was taken by Mike Lemon, Anderson, Ind., and though Renfrow captured the second go-round, Mike Lemon with a second place finish easily topped the field in points and became the new title holder.

During time trials the day following the championship, Renfrow made the two-way average run of the N.O.A. permanent half-mile straightaway course at an average of 58.065 m.p.h. to shatter his own former record by more than 2 m.p.h. and regain some of his lost prestige.



# straightaway and 5 mile records



## AMERICAN POWER BOAT ASSOCIATION

Stock Outboard Records as of 12/31/55

**1 MILE STRAIGHTAWAY** (average of two consecutive one-mile runs, one in one direction, the other in the opposite direction)

### RUNABOUTS

Class	Speed m.p.h.	Date	Where Made	Driver	Boat	Engine
JU	26.985	8/9/54	Seattle	Jim Benson, Seattle, Wash.	Jacobsen	Mercury
AU	46.401	8/29/55	Devil's Lake	Billy Schumacher, Seattle, Wash.	Benson	Mercury
BU	53.753	8/9/54	Seattle	Bill Larsen, DeLake, Ore.	Calkins	Mercury
CU	41.532	2/17/53	Lake Alfred	Bernard Abrams, Wilmington, N. C.	Abrams	Elto
"36" (Probationary Class until 1956—hence no records to date)						
DU	59.367	8/9/54	Seattle	Robert Batie, Seattle, Wash.	Bloom	Mercury
EU	43.021	8/29/55	Devil's Lake	Dean Mahoffey, Salem, Ore.	Calkins	Evinrude
FU	44.280	9/18/50	Dallas	Roy Buie,	Speedliner	Evinrude

### HYDROPLANES

ASH	50.858	8/10/53	Seattle	Jack Leek, Tacoma, Wash.	Swift	Mercury
BSH	60.482	8/9/54	Seattle	V. J. Spinner, Jr., Mercer Is., Wash.	Jacobsen	Mercury
DSH	69.739	8/11/52	Seattle	Burt Ross, Jr., Seattle, Wash.	Swift	Mercury

## NATIONAL OUTBOARD ASSOCIATION

Division III (Stock) Records as of 12/21/55

STRAIGHTAWAY (average of two consecutive one-half mile runs, one in one direction, the other in the opposite direction)

### RUNABOUTS

J	40.909	9/20/54	Indianapolis	Bill Holland, Cleburne, Texas	Martin
A	46.392			Dr. G. W. Reichardt, Nashville, Tenn.	Mercury
B	52.326	9/20/54	Indianapolis	Lynn Warren, Fort Worth, Texas	Mercury
C	42.553	9/27/52	Dallas	G. G. Slack, Dallas, Texas	Johnson
D-1	36.923 (30-37 c. i.)	9/26/55	Knoxville	Bob Keller, Anderson, Ind.	Evinrude
D-2	58.065 (37-40 c. i.)	9/26/55	Knoxville	Earl Renfrow, Boonville, Mo.	Mercury

### HYDROPLANES

A	52.786	11/1/53	Knoxville	Gene Hilton, Newton, N. C.	Mercury
B	58.632	9/20/54	Indianapolis	Jim Griffin, Quincy, Ill.	Mercury
D-2	63.717	10/5/53	Hot Springs	Raymond Owen, Fort Worth, Tex.	Mercury

## NATIONAL OUTBOARD ASSOCIATION

Division IV (Modified Stock) Straightaway Records

### RUNABOUTS

A	51.355			Arthur Kennedy, Jr., St. Louis, Mo.	Ashburn	Mercury
B	59.406			Freddie Gail, Quincy, Ill.		Mercury
C	53.651	3/28/55	Corpus Christi	Bob McGinty, Corpus Christi, Tex.	DeSilva	Johnson
D	64.286			Ronald Williams, Keokuk, Ia.		Mercury
E	53.524	10/5/53	Hot Springs	Jess Rose, Tulsa, Okla.		
F	63.158			Jud Davis, St. Louis, Mo.		Evinrude

### HYDROPLANES

A	56.250		Myer, Ill.	Arthur Kennedy, Jr., St. Louis, Mo.		Mercury
B	65.392	9/20/54	Indianapolis	Jim Griffin, Quincy, Ill.		Mercury
C	60.000	10/11/54	Knoxville	Richard Earl Griffin, Eldorado, Ark.	Neal	Johnson
D	72.435			Ronald Williams, Keokuk, Ia.		Mercury

## AMERICAN POWER BOAT ASSOCIATION

Stock competition records as of 12/31/55

### RUNABOUTS

JU	24.317	8/6/55	Norfolk	Garry Gerton, Baltimore, Md.	Homebuilt	Mercury
AU	40.477	5/10/52	Devil's Lake	Jerry Coons, Seattle, Wash.	Jacobsen	Mercury
BU	47.493	8/26/55	Devil's Lake	John Sangster, Seattle, Wash.	Calkins	Mercury

CU	40.559	8/26/55	Devil's Lake	Ron Loomis, Santa Barbara, Calif.	DeSilva	Evinrude
DU	50.934	5/10/52	Devil's Lake	Alan G. Wyman, Portland, Ore.	Kean	Mercury
EU	40.655	9/6/53	Devil's Lake	Dick Scandling, Salem, Ore.	Redding	Evinrude
FU	36.344	9/17/50	Dallas	Roy Buile,	Speedliner	Evinrude

### HYDROPLANES

ASH	43.186	8/28/55	Devil's Lake	Wally Granberg, Orinda, Calif.	Beeliner	Mercury
BSH	49.261	10/17/54	DeLake, Ore.	Fritz Hofmann,	Swift	Mercury
DSH	58.027	9/6/53	Devil's Lake	Burt Ross, Jr., Seattle, Wash.	Swift	Mercury

## NATIONAL OUTBOARD ASSOCIATION

### RUNABOUTS

#### Division III (Stock) Competition Records

J	33.866	9/21/53	Dallas	Jim Chmel, Eau Claire, Wisc.		Martin
A	38.478	7/14/53	Kingston, Tenn.	Gene Hilton, Newton, N. C.		Mercury
B	42.644	9/24/55	Knoxville	Chris Erneston, Jr., West Palm Beach, Fla.		Mercury
C	36.900	9/21/53	Dallas	E. Ted Davey, Oakland, Calif.		
D-1	34.495	9/21/53	Dallas	George Early, Springfield, Ill.		
D-2	44.621	8/30/53	Boulder City	Ronald Rima, Riverside, Calif.		Mercury

### HYDROPLANES

A	40.314	9/24/55	Knoxville	Charles Lovelace, Tampa, Fla.		Mercury
B	44.655			Deanie Montgomery, Corsicana, Tex.		Mercury
D-2	48.648	9/18/54	Indianapolis	Richard McCullough, Ft. Worth, Tex.		Mercury

## NATIONAL OUTBOARD ASSOCIATION

#### Division IV (Modified Stock) Competition Records

### RUNABOUTS

A	41.667	3/28/55	Corpus Christi	Deanie Montgomery, Corsicana, Tex.		Mercury
B	44.444	10/3/53	Hot Springs	Cecil Wagner, Quincy, Ill.		Mercury
C	42.107	10/3/53	Hot Springs	Jim Skidmore, Longview, Tex.		
D	51.428	9/10/55	Cairo	Arthur Kennedy, Sr., St. Louis, Mo.	Ashburn	Mercury
F	47.493	10/3/53	Hot Springs	J. N. Hunt, Ft. Worth, Tex.		Evinrude

### HYDROPLANES

J	40.268	3/27/55	Corpus Christi	Bill Holland, Houston, Tex.		Martin
A	43.689	3/28/55	Corpus Christi	John Jordan, Freeport, Kansas	Blue Star	Mercury
B	49.315	3/27/55	Corpus Christi	Fred Simmons, San Antonio, Tex.	Simmons	Mercury
D	52.848			Raymond Owen, Ft. Worth, Tex.		Mercury



## high point winners

If any one stock outboard racing driver could be singled out as the top driver of the year, it's more than probable that John Wehrle of Hackensack, N.J., would be selected for that honor. In 1954 Wehrle was definitely a threat in both hydroplane and runabout brackets. He finished fourth in professional stock runabout ranks and third in professional hydro ranks and behind the 1954 A.P.B.A. High Point Stock Champion Bob Parish in overall points for the season, totalling 13,716 to the Bakersfield, Californian's 16,183. In hydro brackets Wehrle was third in line to the 1954 John and Flora Blank award winner, Howard Thompson, Huntington Park, Calif.

In 1955 Wehrle left no doubt of his supremacy. He won both the A. P. B. A. National High Point Championship and the A. C. Kiekhaefer award for total points scored during the season in all classes and the John and Flora Blank Memorial trophy for the highest total number of points scored in any one class. In winning the high point championship Wehrle racked up an amazing 27,687 points for the season. His closest competition came from Floridian Don Baldaccini who totalled 21,274 with the former high-point title holder Bob Parish outstripping his 1954 performance but winding up third with 19,811.

Uniquely Wehrle took both first and second positions for the John and Flora Blank trophy, scoring 8540 points with his A Stock Hydro



John Wehrle

to win the award and 8,213 in his A Stock Runabout to take second position. Bill Chilton, Seymour, Conn., placed his AU third in high total points for a single class by scoring 7188 points.

In N.O.A. competition, Ralph Scott, a 34-year-old steamfitter from Paducah, Ky., continued to dominate his sanctioning body's stock competition, driving A and B Hydro and A and B Runabout.

Texan Ray Owen, Fort Worth, proved to be the high-point Modified Stock driver on N.O.A. circuits, rolling up the bulk of his points with his Class D modified hydro and runabout. Owen holds the 5-mile modified stock competition mark which he established with an open-stacked Mercury KG-9 at 52.848 m.p.h.



Mark 20H  
King of Class B Competition

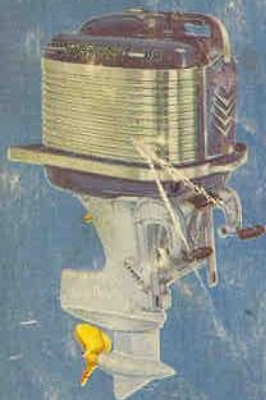


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