

E-RCU News

www.e-rcu.org

Volume 1, Issue 3

NOVEMBER 2005

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec. 4 ERCU MEMBER MEETING
Hydroplane Museum, 2 p.m.

YOU GOTTA SEE THIS!



"Big Dave" rolls up the pant legs and gets into the action to help out.

FEATURED WEBSITES

Miss Bardahl Home Page
home.att.net/%7Ebardahl_u40/

Miss Elam Hydroplane
www.u16hydro.com

A special thanks to Jim Clark for the photos used in this newsletter

Hornung stakes his first career race victory

A new record turn out of 24 vintage and 10 modern boats made their way to Shady Lake in Renton to compete in the 3rd E-RCU Lilly Brothers Brewer's Cup. The weather was hit and miss throughout the day as it drizzled off and on for much of the event. The wind was minimal so the course was fast.

Special thanks should be acknowledged to the following people: **Dave** and **Jim Lilly** for CDing and organizing the event, **Jeff Campbell** and **Monte Steere** for setting the course, **Ron Daum** for setting up his computer and amazing scoring program, and finally **Steve Vacarro** and Offshore Electrics for providing support and prizes for the event. **Jerry Courtway** and **Kirk Pagel** donated a smartly framed photograph for the raffle also. Sheltered Productions provided Brewer's Cup T-Shirts to all participants, officials, and even the spectators.

Racing for the day was fast, but a tad inconsistent for some boats. It appears the long season has taken its toll and allowed some of the electrical gremlins to enter



Ron Hornung (foreground left), prepares for the launch of the final heat of the Brewers Cup, which he won, marking his first career win.

and affect a few of the fleet. There were a few more DNFs for some boats that are typically more consistent. Two new boats hit the water: **Mike Campbell's** Karelson Notre Dame, and **Kirk Pagel's** Hurricane VI.

Advancing to the final on points were **Jeff Campbell's** Lil Buzzard, **Bill Smiley's** Miss Thriftway, **Ron Hornung's** Skip-a-long, **Monte Steere's** Slo-mo-shun IV and **Gary Hansen's** Muvalong.

Advancing from the consolation was **Mike Campbell's** Miss US 1, and **David Gardner's** Thriftway Too. The two boats advancing from the consolation format was due to the fact that there were three boats tied for on spot in the final. All ran in the consolation for two spots.

The boats milled for their starting position as is now standard for E-RCU events. At the start the Buzzard was

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Huge crowd turns out for joint Awards Banquet

Nearly 100 racers and their guests turned out in force at the ERCU and RCU joint awards banquet on November 12 at the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum in Kent.

Dr. Ken Muscatel was the honored guest of both clubs this year, and during his time on the podium — which by the way very much resembled the cockpit of the Miss Thriftway — he presented movies of some of his more famous flips over the years.

The Good Doctor spoke a little about each of the flips and shared a little bit of the experience of what it's like when the boat goes over.

Muscatel also spent some time talking

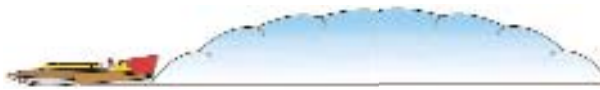
about the promising future of the sport, and what we can each do to help shepherd the sport's continuing success in future years.

Doing things like supporting the museum, supporting races, and supporting the sponsors of the unlimiteds to give proof to the sponsors that their investment pays off. It's then that sponsors will have good reason to return to the sport in droves.

Then it was time for ERCU Chairman **Ron Daum** to take to the stage to present our club's awards for 2005.

The Top-10 in each class was honored

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NEWSBRIEFS

Q&A on Winter Battery Care

Thanks to the folks at www.rcraction.com, we have a brief article on some of the more commonly-asked questions about NiMH batteries, and the editors of the newsletter thought the questions were appropriate to the ERCU membership as we all look toward the winter, and offseason storage of our batteries. Thanks to Steve Pond of RC Car Action for these answers. The entire article can be found at: www.rcraction.com/rc/articles/NiMHbatcare1.asp

Which amp rate should I use to charge the batteries?

After initial testing, Jim has settled in on a 5A charge rate for the Trinity team drivers. Though this is a little higher than the rate recommended for average users, he's comfortable that it doesn't harm the batteries. He has tested at higher rates (up to 9 amps!) but found higher rates unproductive. As with all rechargeable batteries, higher charge rates work the cells harder. The higher rates don't appear to have any positive effect on performance, so stick to the lower rates; 3 to 5 amps is best.

Will trickle-charging help or hurt my NiMH cells?

Trickle-charging should be avoided when charging NiMH packs. Most chargers default into a trickle mode when fast charging has been completed. This mode was designed to keep Ni-Cd packs at their highest voltage until they were used, but it seems to have a "flattening" effect on the Panasonic cells. If your charger's trickle-mode can't be turned off, just be sure to disconnect the pack from the charger as soon as it's peaked.

What about long-term storage?

If the batteries are to be stored for more than two weeks, Jim says it's wise to charge them to at least 50 percent of capacity. All rechargeable batteries lose their charge if left unused for long periods — a condition we already know isn't ideal for NiMH batteries. For lengthy storage, it's best that packs have a significant level of charge. A note for those who use battery "bugs," or cutoff devices: if they're designed for use with Ni-Cd batteries, they will discharge a NiMH pack to below a safe level. Seek out a device that's intended to be used with NiMH packs. With all of the information already, it should go without saying — but I'll say it anyway — that you should never store packs with a dead-short lead.

News & Rumors

Here are the reported new boats in progress and who will be running them. Just for fun, see if you can match the new boat to the builder/new driver.

'63 Notre Dame	.....	Mike Campbell
'03 Llumar	.....	Scott Fedderly
?? Miss Everett	.....	Robbie Roberts
'61 Miss Madison	.....	Rick Lentz
'58 Coral Reef	.....	Henry Marvin
'56 Shanty I	.....	Dave Lilly
'74 U-95	.....	Ron Daum
'58 Miss Bardahl (new)	.....	Ron Daum
'93 Frosted Flakes	.....	Rick Lentz
Country Boy (new)	.....	Bob VandenAkker

Red Man Changes Hands: Despite a third-place finish in Modern Points this year, **Rick Lentz** has sold the Red Man to **Nelson Holmberg**, one of the three drivers to run the boat in 2005. Nelson has committed to a full-time switch from RCU into ERCU next year. While he's in Arizona this winter, he'll be making repairs, fine-tuning, and practicing as he's got a goal of being the ERCU Rookie of the Year in 2006. He'll join the tour a little late, and will also run some with the Portland gang. Rick has a couple of new boat projects in the works, so he'll still be competing both in the modern and the vintage classes.

A Moment With . . .

BOB VANDENAKKER


- Name: Bob VandenAkker
- Family: . . . Mother Catherine, owner of the Nitrogen Too, 2 older brothers, Robert "yes it's true" and Emile, younger sister Carole.
- City he calls home: Bothell
- Job (when not boating): . . . City of Bothell — "Curb Appeal" Worker (Parks).
- College Football Loyalty: Washington State
- Favorite Current Unlimited Hydro: "Cooper's" U-3
- Favorite Unlimited Hydro of the past: . . . Any boat Rex Manchester drove
- Boats he races in ERCU: . . ."66" Notre Dame, "60" Nitrogen Too
- What was your first car? "57" VW Bug
- What was your first job? Weed Puller at age 10 for Father's Nursery (25 cents an hour).
- When and how did you get involved in scale racing? Started racing in 2001. Bought the "52" Such Crust IV from Roger. Seems the boat was involved in a wedding. Upon setting it up I discovered what I thought was a loose piece of styro-foam. It was petrified wedding cake.
- Have you ever had a manicure/pedicure? (Come on manly-man ... admit it!): Foot massage count?
- Coke or Pepsi? Coke.

Elections Upcoming

Elections for the 2006 ERCU Contest Board will be held at the December 4 membership meeting, those nominated for the three open positions include:

- Roger Newton
- David Newton
- Jim Clark
- Henry Marvin

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A big thank you to all of our sponsors, especially this year's E-RCU title sponsor, Twardus Iron & Wire Works.

Big Boat News

While there's not a lot going on in the ABRA so far this winter, there's all kinds of potential for big news.

Of course the biggest news we heard at the banquet was that Dr. Ken Muscatel is pretty much leaning toward shutting it down for his boat racing career. He did say there are some ongoing talks with potential sponsors, and something might work out that would get him back in racing next season, but as of right now, there are no plans to run a U-25 in 2006.

Muscatel did, however, speak passionately about the two newest race sites on the ABRA schedule — Nashville, Tenn., and Valleyfield, Quebec. Muscatel called the Valleyfield site the "most exciting" race course he's ever been on. Plans are being made on how to race unlimiteds around the tight course. Sounds like it will be very exciting for the fans in attendance.

The Association is currently seeking a new executive director, as **Emily Estes** is going to spend more time with her six year old daughter and tending to her business at the Maurer Group.

Fred Farley is contributing articles to the ABRA website during the offseason. His most recent, a remembrance of **Bill Waggoner**, is currently online at www.abrahydroplanes.com.



Minutes of the November 6, 2005 Membership Meeting

Chairman **Ron Daum** opened the meeting with 27 members in attendance. The minutes of the April meeting were approved as submitted. Treasurer **Dave Lilly** reported that the club treasury stands at just under \$1300, with no outstanding bills due. As a reminder, 2006 membership and boat registrations will be due starting January 1.

A review of the race sites visited during the 2005 season indicated that the courses used were generally acceptable. The board is in discussion with the Seattle Parks Department to be able to use the waterway at the southwest corner of Lake Union in conjunction with the development of the South Lake Union Park. As many as five races could be scheduled at that location, as well as being set up as an alternate course in case of last-minute problems with another site during the year. It was recognized that the Bellevue course, while a good site for exposure, may be too small for continued use. New sites under discussion include Lake Tye in Monroe, Long Lake in Kitsap County and Lake Pleasant in Bothell. It is anticipated that two races will be held at Lake Wilderness, with the rest of the schedule to be negotiated over the coming months.

The board is considering preparing a 12 race schedule for 2006, with 10 races counting for season high points. In addition, a non-points exhibition race in Chelan in conjunction with the RCU Gold Cup may be scheduled again. In response to comments, several Saturday races will be scheduled in 2006.

Bob VandenAkker has arranged for the Leo Vandenberg Challenge race to be held at Lake Pleasant on June 4, and **Henry Marvin** will sponsor the Bill Brow Memorial race in the new year. Sponsors for the remaining races will be

determined over the next few months.

The board has authorized the purchase of a new computer and printer for use during the season. The software for race-day operation and record storage is being updated. A club-owned generator is being considered for purchase.

Dave Gardner has arranged a connection with Hobby Lobby to provide a 10 percent discount for E-RCU members. The orders need to be made by phone, identifying yourself as a member of E-RCU.

Several rule changes were identified. The one-minute mill start will be formalized for all races. To keep the race day moving, it was proposed to use the three-minute clock to set the heat in motion, with boats to be in the water and moving by the one-minute mark. The requirement to be "on plane" during the mill will be changed to be "in continuous motion".

An extended discussion was held regarding the inclusion of lithium polymer batteries as an additional approved power source. Following information on safety precautions and performance, the members present agreed by advisory vote to allow the li-pos as an option to the presently-accepted Sub-C battery cell. A special arrangement has been made by Jeff and Mike Campbell to procure the batteries at a special low cost, and they have agreed to make the initial cash outlay to purchase them. In response to this generous offer, the club will limit the use of li-pos to these club-provided packs until the original stock has been depleted. At that time the issue can be revisited. An order procedure will be worked out by the board to allow club members to reserve packs until their delivery, estimated to arrive around the first of the year.

Following the members meeting, the board

agreed to allow this addition to the power source rule. The wording for the official rule will be determined, but the intent will be to allow Sub-C and club-approved li-po batteries with a rating of up to 4,000 mAh to be used as a power source for the club for the coming year.

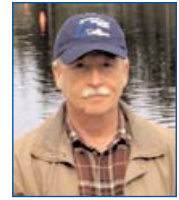
The li-po battery packs would be available for use in both classes. In discussion it was felt that a limit of 12 cells would be acceptable for the modern class, in order to keep the battery power comparable. This would also be more convenient for those who run a boat in both classes. An advisory vote by the modern boat owners in attendance indicated concurrence with this concept. After the members meeting, the board approved this change to the rules.

Kirk Pagel is making arrangements to hold an open house at the museum sometime in February. One of the functions would be to have a swap meet-type format, with all model boat clubs invited to set up tables, browse and mingle. More information will be forthcoming.

Voting for the three open board positions for 2006 will be held at the December members meeting. Nominations so far include **Roger Newton**, **David Newton**, **Jeff Campbell** and **Jim Clark**. Additional nominations are encouraged prior to the next meeting. Notify **Rick Lentz** of additional names.

The meeting was closed following News and Rumors from the members in attendance.

The next members meeting is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 4, at 2 p.m. at the Hydroplane museum in Kent.



From the Secretary's Desk
Rick Lentz

Update on new batteries

As you are aware by now, the ERCU Board has approved club-supplied Li-po batteries for use next year, this in addition to "... up to 12 sub-C battery cells of any rating", which had been the rule.

A special low-cost purchase had been arranged that would provide li-po cells with a similar voltage rating to the current Nimh cells, but at a discounted price. When the order was placed several days ago, it was discovered that the price quoted was wrong.

To make up for the error, the supplying company has offered to provide the cells at their absolute cost. Also, the cells offered are slightly better than the original offer, with a rating of 4,200 mAh instead of the previous ones listed at 4,000 mAh.

The voltage remains the same, so they are still comparable to the Nimh cells, but the slightly higher amp rating means that it is likely that two heats of racing could be run on one pack without the need for recharging. (At 4,000 mAh, it would have been a push to get two full heats).

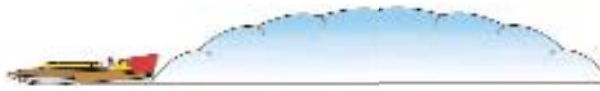
So a possible solution now, for those still interested

in pursuing the li-po power, could be ordering three packs per boat instead of five, if the desire to avoid recharging on race day is a goal. The cost of a pack is now arranged at about \$75. This is the absolute cost of the pack, with no mark-up added by the supplier, distributor or the club.

For those of you with some knowledge of our batteries, you are aware that we are abusing the Nimh cells on both charging and discharging cycles (filling them up too fast and draining them down WAY too fast, for those of you in Rio Linda).

Because of this, the Nimh cells only retain their full power for a limited period of time, rather than the 500 +/- cycles that are listed. In fact, the currently used Nimh cells last for about 5-6 races before they start to noticeably lose their power.

The li-pos, on the other hand, are able to be charged and discharged within their design limits, so cell life is greatly prolonged, with a possible life span of two years or more, depending on use and care.



Statistics — End of Season

Vintage Driver Points

Place	Boat	Driver	Total
1.	Miss Thriftway/Maverick	David Newton	13,113
2.	Lil Buzzard	Jeff Campbell	12,014
3.	Miss US 1	Mike Campbell	10,311
4.	Notre Dame	Bob Vandernakker	9,568
5.	Such Crust III	Ron Daum	7,979
6.	Miss Exide	Henry Marvin	7,946
7.	Hawaii Kai III	Roger Newton	6,240
8.	Miss Bardahl/Miss US 5	Miss Wahoo Rick Lentz	5,997
9.	Muvalong/Timex	Jason Hartley®	5,809
10.	My Gypsy	Jim Lilly	5,619

Modern Driver Points

Place	Boat	Driver	Total
1.	Pride of Pay 'n Pak	Jeff Campbell	12,125
2.	Country Boy	Mike Campbell	11,748
3.	Miss Vernors/Country Boy/Olympia	David Newton	8,284
4.	Squire	Mike Gossler	7,228
5.	Twardus Fleet	Steve Twardus	5,429
6.	Red Man	Rick Lentz	4,785
7.	Notre Dame	Mark Hansen	4,390
8.	Pay 'n Pak	Gale Whitestone	4,363
9.	Squire Shop/Vernors	Gary Hansen	3,936
10.	Natural Light	Jerry Johnston	3,442

Vintage Boat Points

Place	Year	Boat	Driver	Total
1.	1970	Lil Buzzard	Jeff Campbell	13,014
2.	1960	Miss Thriftway	David Newton	12,319
3.	1957	Miss US 1	Mike Campbell	10,311
4.	1965	Notre Dame	Bob Vandernakker	9,568
5.	1956	Slo-mo-shun IV	Grady/Monte/Nigel Steere	8,079
6.	1955	Such Crust III	Ron Daum	7,979
7.	1964	Miss Exide	Henry Marvin	7,946
8.	1954	Muvalong	Jason Hartley/Gary Hansen	6,711
9.	1957	Hawaii Kai III	Roger Newton/David Newton	6,640
10.	1959	Miss Pay 'n Save	S.Twardus/G.Whitstine/M.Hansen	6,340

Modern Boat Points

Place	Year	Boat	Driver	Total
1.	1971	Country Boy	Mike Campbell	13,348
2.	1970	Pride of Pay 'n Pak	Jeff Campbell	12,125
3.	1973	Red Man	R. Lentz/N. Homberg/M. Steere	8,417
4.	1978	Squire	Mike Gossler	8,222
5.	1976	Olympia Beer	David Lilly/David Newton	7,071
6.	1976	Miss Vernors	D. Newton/Marvin/Twardus/Hansen	6,854
7.	1977	Squire Shop	Twardus/VandemAkker/Newton/Hansen/Hartley	5,720
8.	1972	Notre Dame	Mark Hansen	5,490
9.	1971	Pay 'n Pak	Gale Whitestone	4,683
10.	1977	Natural Light	Jerry Johnston	4,136

Mike Campbell's Country Boy wins Brewer's Cup Modern final

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called for a lane infraction before the field hit the line and into turn one, the US 1, Buzzard, and Slo-mo-IV battled for the lead. The Skip-a-long and Thriftway were still in the hunt, with the Muvalong and Thriftway Too slightly back. It would be a close race for a lap and a half until the Slo-mo-IV spun in turn 2. Unfortunately, the Slo-mo IV and the Thriftway Too tangled and were piggybacked and out of the race. The US 1 and Thriftway continued on, only to have the US flip and the Thriftway cut a buoy. That left the final survivor, Ron and the Skip-a-long to hold on for the win, **Bill Smiley** was second in the Miss Thriftway, and **Jeff Campbell** and the Lil Buzzard were third. **Gary Hansen** and the Muvalong were fourth.

Filling out the consolation field with the Thriftway Too and US. 1 was **Kirk Pagel's** Hurricane VI, **Jim Lilly's** My



Gypsy, **David Newton** with **Kerry Kjos'** Miss Thriftway, and **Jason Hartley** and the Miss Timex. The boats hit the line and entered the first turn with the Miss US 1 in front and the rest of the field in hot pursuit. The Hurricane hooked and in front of the Gypsy, putting both boats out of commission. The Miss US and Thriftway Too, and the Thriftway battled close for a lap until the Thriftway flipped in lap 3. The Miss Thriftway Too and US 1 held on for the spots in the final.

The second consolation was won by **Roger Newton** and the Hawaii Kai III, second was **Ron Daum's** Such Crust III, 3rd was **Bob VanderNakker's** Notre Dame. Rounding out the field were **John Williams'** Miss Bardahl, **Robbie Roberts'** Miss Vernor's, and **Henry Marvin's** Miss Exide. Other entries were **Jeff Campbell's** Hallmark Homes, **Craig Bradshaw's** \$-Bill, **Rick Lentz** in the Miss Wahoo, and **Bob VanderNakker's** Nitrogen Too.

In the modern class **Mike Campbell's** Country Boy was the class of the field. Even when he made a mistake, like jumping the gun, he had the speed to lap the entire field in preliminary heats. The final was a runaway, but some good racing for second. **Mike Gossler** took second in the Squire Shop by out distancing "Battery" **Dave Sacrey** in the Circus Circus. **Rick Lentz's** Red Man took fourth with **Monte Steere** at the helm. Also in the final were **Jerry Johnston** and the Natural Light, **Mark Hansen** and the Notre Dame, and **David Newton** driving **Jerry Courtway's** Olympia Beer.

Other entries included: Miss Vernor's with **Gary Hansen** driving, **Steve Twardus** and the Squire, and **Gale Whitestone** and the Pride of Pay and Pak.

This concludes another fine year of competition for E-RCU. 54 boats appeared at races (34 vintage and 20 modern). Clearly, E-RCU is the premiere scale fast electric hydroplane club on the planet.

Awards banquet results

Continued from page 1

first, followed by the presentation of this year's individual awards.

Those who were honored by the club this season include: Vintage boat champion: **Kerry Kjos'** Miss Thriftway; vintage driver champ: **Jeff Campbell**; and vintage rookie of the year **Jason Hartley**. In the modern class, the boat champ was the

Country Boy; and driving champ was **Mike Campbell**. The modern class Rookie of the Year was: **Mark Hansen**.

Other awards recipients include: **Henry Marvin**, Most Improved Driver; **Bob VandemAkker**, Race Sponsor of the Year; **Bob VandemAkker** and **Roger Newton**, Sportsmanship Award; and Contribution Awards to **Jeff Campbell**, **Rick Lentz**, **Jim Clark**, **Jim Lilly**, **Monte Steere**, **Jerry Courtway**, **Stephanie Gardner**, and **Ron Daum**.