

Oberto Championship Series Presents

RCU Newsletter

April/May 2009

Notes From The Chair

Everywhere I look now on the internet everyone is buzzing with race talk. Everyone seems to be one upping the next guys latest smack. It appears everyone enjoys talking the talk. Well guess what folks?, it's time to walk the walk. That means Atomic Cup at Two Rivers Park, April 17-18 in the Tri-Cities.

I'm pleased to tell you your contest board has been busy since the banquet trying to get things ready for the season. A big "Thank You" to the board for all your efforts and a real attaboy, Chet Lepinski for your untiring efforts in support of RCU.

This Newsletter is pretty much all informational and does not have the bells and whistles look that others are so good at making. Please read on and I look forward to hitting the start with you real soon.....Bill Brandt

Decibels An article brought to us by Brian Lepinski

Decibel (Loudness) Comparison Chart

Here are some interesting numbers, collected from a variety of sources, that help one to understand the volume levels of various sources and how they can affect our hearing.

Environmental Noise	
Weakest sound heard	0dB
Whisper Quiet Library	30dB
Normal conversation (3-5')	60-70dB
Telephone dial tone	80dB
City Traffic (inside car)	85dB
Train whistle at 500', Truck Traffic	90dB
Subway train at 200'	95dB
<i>Level at which sustained exposure may</i>	<i>90 - 95dB</i>

<i>result in hearing loss</i>	
Power mower at 3'	107dB
Snowmobile, Motorcycle	100dB
Power saw at 3'	110dB
Sandblasting, Loud Rock Concert	115dB
<i>Pain begins</i>	<i>125dB</i>
Pneumatic riveter at 4'	125dB
<i>Even short term exposure can cause permanent damage - Loudest recommended exposure <u>WITH</u> hearing protection</i>	<i>140dB</i>
Jet engine at 100', Gun Blast	140dB
Death of hearing tissue	180dB
Loudest sound possible	194dB

OSHA Daily Permissible Noise Level Exposure	
Hours per day	Sound level
8	90dB
6	92dB
4	95dB
3	97dB
2	100dB
1.5	102dB
1	105dB
.5	110dB
.25 or less	115dB

Perceptions of Increases in Decibel Level	
Imperceptible Change	1dB
<u><i>Barely Perceptible Change</i></u>	<u><i>3dB</i></u> as i Quoted can you here the difference
Clearly Noticeable Change	5dB
About Twice as Loud	10dB
About Four Times as Loud	20dB

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Sound Levels of Music	
Normal piano practice	60 - 70dB
Fortissimo Singer, 3'	70dB
Chamber music, small auditorium	75 - 85dB
Piano Fortissimo	84 - 103dB
Violin	82 - 92dB
Cello	85 - 111dB
Oboe	95-112dB
Flute	92 - 103dB
Piccolo	90 - 106dB
Clarinet	85 - 114dB
French horn	90 - 106dB
Trombone	85 - 114dB
Tympani & bass drum	106dB
Walkman on 5/10	94dB
Symphonic music peak	120 - 137dB
Amplifier rock, 4-6'	120dB
Rock music peak	150dB

NOTES:

- One-third of the total power of a 75-piece orchestra comes from the bass drum.
- High frequency sounds of 2-4,000 Hz are the most damaging. The uppermost octave of the piccolo is 2,048-4,096 Hz.
- Aging causes gradual hearing loss, mostly in the high frequencies.
- Speech reception is not seriously impaired until there is about 30 dB loss; by that time severe damage may have occurred.
- Hypertension and various psychological difficulties can be related to noise exposure.
- The incidence of hearing loss in classical musicians has been estimated at 4-43%, in rock musicians 13-30%.

Statistics for the Decibel (Loudness) Comparison Chart were taken from a study by Marshall Chasin, M.Sc., Aud(C), FAAA, Centre for Human Performance & Health, Ontario, Canada. There were some conflicting readings and, in many cases, authors did not specify at what distance the readings were taken or what the musician was actually playing. In general, when there were several readings, the higher one was chosen.

RACIN' AT "THE ROCK"

**A History of Model Boat Racing in the Wenatchee Valley
brought to us by Gentleman Jim Latimer**

By "Rockin' Rod Bender
Special Correspondent
R/CU Radio Network

The 2009 R/C Unlimiteds schedule is ready to go! Test sessions are being planned, special hydro shows and displays are in the works, and on those rare "pre-spring" days that we are blessed with all too infrequently, you can almost smell, dare I say, "NITRO"!

When this years' edition of the Oberto Championship Series rolls around there are some notable omissions. Woodland, Tacoma, and Longview, have gone the way of previous scheduling casualties such as Yakima, Moses Lake, Soap Lake, Olympia, and Spokane. For you "legacy" guys, even the "Brown Bowl" couldn't escape extinction. Alas, such lies the current fate of racin' at "The Rock".

Rock Island, Washington...population 865, is located eight miles south of Wenatchee on the Columbia River. For the better part of the last three decades this former industrial "boomtown of the '30's" has hosted primarily the Apple Blossom Regatta and later a second summer race, the displaced Diamond Cup. This spring the nitro will not mix fragrantly with the blossoms along the shores of either the "Hydro Bowl" (aka Juvenile Fishing Pond, The Pit, etc.) or it's larger neighbor to the south, Batterman Pond (aka The Water Hazard, Golf Course Lake, Brian Lepinski Reservoir!). Yes, gone (for this season, anyway) but certainly not forgotten, let's look back, as some famous guy once said, "to those thrilling days of yesteryear" and how it all got started at the Rock Island ponds.

IN THE BEGINNING

“One energetic person with a mission and a newly acquired fascination with radio controlled hydroplanes”. That lofty definition describes the original “commodore” of the Apple Blossom Regatta, Doug Simon.

Simon, a resident of East Wenatchee, Washington for many years was an avid R/C airplane guy, and an active member of the local organization, the Red Apple Flyers. Most of the other “flyboys” were pretty “ho-hum” when it came to R/C boats, but Doug took a liking to the hydros in the summer of 1976.

“I was over on the coast somewhere, Seattle or Kent, yeah, probably “the Brown Bowl”, recalls Simon fondly. “There were a bunch of guys racin’ these very scale looking unlimiteds”, he continued. One in particular caught his eye, the 1/8th scale version of the ’59 Maverick, and it’s very skilled driver, Les Ruggles. “After watching them most of the day, I was hooked.” he replies, and the rest, so they say is history.

Simon went back to Wenatchee and began touting what he had seen regarding the 1/8th scale hydros, and it’s growing organization, R/C Unlimiteds. Doug decided right then to contact Ruggles about getting a boat, and maybe trying to line up a spot to hold a race in the Wenatchee valley for the 1977 season.

After some serious arm twisting with his Red Apple Flyers club members and the acquisition of a potential race site, Simon joined R/C Unlimiteds, acquired Ruggles’ ’59 Maverick, and began to put together a plan for the ’77 Apple Blossom Regatta.

The site was not Rock Island; that would come a few years later. The location chosen was on property which is now known as Daroga State Park, just north of Orondo on the Columbia River.

The 1977 R/C Unlimiteds Apple Blossom Regatta made a successful debut in north central Washington with victory going to Ron Erickson and his lightning fast '72 Notre Dame. Monte Steere was second with his beautiful Slo-Mo-Shun V and Ken Meckem was right behind with the '72 Atlas Van Lines. Although racers battled wind and debris for most of the day, Simon and his Red Apple Flyers mates were praised for their organization of the first time event. "We operated a concession stand, made a little money and had a lot of fun" Simon remembers proudly. "It was all Les's fault, he got me into this"!

Bill Smiley and his "Pak" won in 1978, Erickson followed up his '77 victory by repeating in '79, and Gale Whitestone broke through with a win in 1980 with his '79 Miss Circus Circus. During these years, Simon continued to direct the race, moving to several locations along the Columbia River before finally settling on the Rock Island ponds for the 1981 regatta, won by Roger Newton with the "Griffon Bud".

Simon also operated Columbia River Hobbies catering to R/C enthusiasts of all kinds, including planes, boats, trains and cars. "I remember selling my "Ruggles Maverick" to this guy in '82 who had just moved back here from Illinois", Doug recalls. "He really wanted my '72 Notre Dame, because he always liked that hull", he went on. "He liked obscure boats and wanted to make a Captran Resorts out of it". Future and current R/CU member Jim Latimer chose the Maverick instead, which would later become Mike Walcker's first R/CU entry, the 1960 Miss Reno.

In 1983, not unlike this year, Rock Island disappeared from the R/CU schedule. Over time, Simon had developed some depth perception issues which he felt did not allow him to safely compete and retired from R/CU racing.

Strangely, Doug Simon's name does not appear anywhere in the career points listings. Sadly, it also is nowhere to be found in the incomplete or missing statistics portion of the archives, although he was able to garner a couple of consolation race victories along the way.

Today, Doug still lives in the East Wenatchee area and operates Simon's Fifth Street Service in Wenatchee. The next time you pass through town, stop in and say hello to him, it will be time well spent. Oh, and tell him thanks for bringing R/C Unlimiteds to the Greater Wenatchee area.

The Apple Blossom Regatta would return to "The Rock" in 1993 for a successful ten year run. Doug Simon's vision would be realized in full.

NEXT ISSUE: "Midland Mafia & Country Cats"

Here's a little article from Jimmy Gilbert and the U1 Crew

Chet Lepinski has asked me to write a note describing my involvement with unlimited hydroplanes. I'm really glad to oblige.

There are many things that led me to becoming involved with unlimited hydroplanes. My involvement began, like many, with model boats. I've always had model boats, even in high school. I remember that for my 17th

birthday, I received an American Jr. Thriftway Too kit (check it out! ... American Jr. sold -- I think -- their boat line to Dumas sometime after 1961). I still have that boat! I built it in the conventional configuration rather than a cab-over. I also recall that I had a Monogram (plastic) hydroplane with a K&B Seafury .049 outboard that I ran several times as a free-runner. I also had a Cox air-boat that was also run as a free-runner. My cousin and I spent a lot of time paddling around retrieving those boats.

College took a lot of time since I was majoring in physics and running track as a scholarship athlete so I didn't get much modeling done in that four year period, to say the least. After college, I began work with NASA in Houston, Texas. I resumed building model boats and a few airplanes as time permitted. You can imagine, we were pretty busy with Apollo. Radio control was beginning to become solid state (transistorized), much more reliable than before, and affordable. Galloping Ghost was still quite popular but it didn't lend itself to the model boat environment -- lacking escapement power and torque. There were model boat clubs here in Houston at the time but as I say, I was pretty busy with Apollo. At NASA I was one of the scientists assigned to the onboard computers on the Command Module and Lunar Modules. That's when I was first exposed to

computers on vehicles! After Apollo, I worked on digital image processing where we developed many of the algorithms for enhancing images that you now find in most digital cameras. I ended my career at NASA writing computer programs for Shuttle experiments and for uplink/downlink and laser altimeter data processing on the crew escape vehicle (the program was cancelled after I retired).

In the early '70's, I again acquired a Thriftway Too kit (this time from Dumas) and built it for electric power and radio control. This was my first radio controlled boat. I've since converted my original Thriftway Too to electric power and radio control. I built several kits of other boats (including a sail boat that never worked to my satisfaction) but I never got around to joining a formal club (until 1993).

In 1982, 1983, and 1984, the unlimiteds raced in Houston. I attended the races as a spectator only, but I became an avid fan. At the '84 race, a foot race was held in conjunction with the boat race and I ran in the foot race. Close to the finish line of the foot race, a model unlimited race was being held so I naturally wondered over to see what was going on. I'd never see such outstanding models! I met quite a few folks there and several of them stand out -- Roger Newton, Steve Muck and Steve Reynolds. Roger gave

me his address in Renton and we began corresponding via mail and telephone. With Roger's help and encouragement, I built several other models over the next few years, including Jim Clegg's U-95 turbine.

The unlimited race returned to Houston in 1989 and I spent every waking moment I could at Clear Lake where the race was being held. I met Art Oberto, walking up and down the beach handing out samples of jerky, Oberto buttons and stickers. (Who would have ever believed that some 18 years later I would be on the team that helped Art get his first win in Seattle?). At the '89 race I met Scotty Pierce and George Woods, two guys who are still really good friends.

The unlimited races returned to Texas in 1993 in Dallas and again I spend as much time at the race site as I possibly could. I met Ken Muscatel and Steve David at the race. Roger Newton was becoming involved with Ken's team but somehow or the other didn't attend the Dallas race that year. Roger and I were still telephoning and he encouraged me to attend the San Diego race later in September. I showed up in San Diego on Thursday (before the Sunday race) and Roger put me to work ... not formally but assisting Bill Fritz putting decals on Ken's boat. Roger encouraged me to join the team but I hesitated -- it's not like I had a whole lot of experience with these

things!

Again in 1994, the race returned to Dallas and I arrived on Wednesday (before the Sunday race). There were very few people there, except for one limited boat so I ventured over to talk to them. That's when I met Bill Macklin (later of the U-19 Fendler team). The T-Plus rig pulled up later and I met Jim Bakke. Jim was by himself and wanted to wash the boat and truck. I had nothing else to do so I gave him a hand ... not doing much but I was doing something that was fun to me! Bill Macklin called me aside and asked me about the badge I was wearing (basically an all-access \$100 "bought" badge that at least gave me access to the pits). He told me that since I was "working" I should look into joining a team ... at least it was cheaper to get a \$20 badge from the URC than a \$100 badge from the race site. He did reaffirm the seed in my mind about actually becoming a part of a crew. At that race I met Don Mock and Harry Gatjens, and both became good friends. Later Roger encouraged me to attend the San Diego race again and I did. It was at that time that I began helping Ken Muscatel's team as one of the crew.

I worked for Ken for a couple of years and he brought in Rick Campbell. Rick wanted a new crew for Ken's team so basically all of the old crew were "fired". I was already going to the

Madison race that year and found out that Ken did, in fact have a new team. While I was pondering what I might do, Pat Berryman (Ken's old crew chief) saw me and asked me to join him on Mike Jones' team (Miss Exide). Jim Bakke and Rick Klontz were also on the team (Klontz was the crew chief) and both asked me to join. So I did! I attended most of the races, learned a lot and I began scheduling my vacation time around the unlimited schedule.

I stayed with Jones for several years. One year (1999, I think), Michael Hanson was hired by Jones to lend a hand at the Evansville race. I had met Michael in 1994 in Dallas when he drove the Miss Budweiser boat -- Chip Hanauer was hurt at the Gold Cup earlier. Following the Evansville race, we went to Madison but the race was postponed because of high water on the Ohio. We spent the week at the Madison shop, working under Hanson's direction. Later that year in Hawaii, Hanson drove Jones' boat because Mike Weber couldn't attend. Hanson became the Jones' driver at that time. The next year or two, we ran OK and had mostly podium finishes owing to a lot of hard work by the team.

I retired from NASA in 2001 and went on the circuit full-time during the racing season. At the second race of the year in Madison, the

boat received a lot of damage. Michael Hanson and the team rebuilt the boat in Jim Sedam's pole barn in Hanover, outside Madison the next week. I never knew that I could work a 100 hour week (during Apollo, there were rarely any weeks over 70 hours)! It was rough to say the least. We finally got to Detroit late Friday with the boat unpainted. We rolled Imron on with rollers, like we were painting a wall in the house! On Sunday, Michael won the Gold Cup! It was really a great, great feeling, especially after such a trying week in Hanover.

We finished the year OK, second to Miss Budweiser but the Gold Cup was ours!

In 2002 we won the race in San Diego. That too was a most satisfying win ... but aren't they all!

2003 marked the last year for the full-season Jones team. The team then went its separate ways ... the Hansons returned to the Madison team, I went to Miss Budweiser, Rick Klontz stayed with Jones at the boat shop, and most of the other folks either quit racing or found other niches to fill. With the Bud team I learned a lot ... mainly to stay out of the way! They were such a polished team and just watching them operate was like being at a ballet! However in 2004, Budweiser ceased racing also. There was some talk of the team operating under a different sponsor but it just

didn't happen. So again I was looking for a team where I could participate.

For several years I've attended, strictly as a spectator, the off-shore World Championship race in Key West, Florida. I'd seen Steve David at the races before when he was driving the Rio Roses boat. In 2004, while at the off-shore race, I ran into Steve again. He asked me to come to work for the Madison team. I'd heard from Michael Hanson earlier in October but I hadn't given him a definite answer at that time. The persuasion of Michael and Steve convinced me to join the Madison team. At the first race as a Madison crew member, we won (Evansville, 2005). And we've won several races since. Of course, the high point is the ABRA National Championship for 2008! And we'll do everything we can to repeat in 2009! Plus the Gold Cup! We all want all of those bad.

Specifically for the Madison/Oh Boy! Oberto team, I do the electrical, computer and data analysis jobs. I've also written several computer programs to give Hanson prop/gearbox ratio combination options as well as a weight and balance program (that we've seldom used!). The data analyses are used to look at the recorded data to ascertain that we haven't exceeded the ABRA's fuel flow and N2 (high speed turbine) RPM limits during a race or qualification. The

electrician job involves primarily the onboard batteries but if something goes awry between heats (or during a heat), things can get hectic there also.

I have to say that I owe a debt of gratitude to Roger Newton, Bill Macklin, Jim Bakke, Pat Berryman (forgiving me a chance to be on the Muscatel team as well as the Jones' team later) and Michael Hanson (for all he's taught me about hydroplanes). And there are hundreds of other people: Larry Hanson, Dave Knowlen, Larry Oberto, Bob Hughes, Mark Smith, Carl Joshlin, Tommy Alfano, Dawna Gross, Danny Walters, Jeff Minar, Jeff & Mike Campbell, John "Fish" Rice, Rick Klontz, Owen Blauman, Jerry Hale, Dixon Smith, Rick Corella, Steve David, Scott Raney, Charlie Grooms, Ryan Mallow, Kelly Stocklin, Mike & Lori Jones and Dave Villwock (to name but a few), all who've helped me become a better crew person.

The Oberto team is a great team to work for. I have to say that everyone supports each other and there isn't a person who won't jump and lend a hand to whatever task it is -- from mopping the floor to changing engines. Michael Hanson has assembled a team is and will be hard to beat ... especially on the water!

Unusual information about me: In 2004 I "volunteered" to become a referee for the APBA Outboard Performance Craft category. The region chairman "suggested" that all referees should go through the same training that drivers do so he insisted that I go through capsule training. My tenure as a referee lasted only one year (the perception was, and I agree, that referees should be drivers or at least ex-drivers ... I was neither). I had been a track and field referee at the NCAA National Championship level on several occasions but I've never raced a full-size boat (or car or anything else for that matter). My motivation simply was to save the APBA region some money -- flying-in a referee from out of town, the motel bill plus the rental car. Darryl Beauleau, a local here in Houston, eventually stepped up and filled the bill. But in the meantime, my APBA card says CAPT (for capsule training). I've long since dropped the OPC category but kept the R/C Models category for membership. So I'm one of the few members that have a CAPT designation on my APBA card with R/C models as the "only" category. People ask me, "What's going on?". My simple reply is, "You ever try to get out of one of those little things?" "Try it sometime!"

Marc gets us off on the right note.

I have been thinking about Roger a lot lately. Probably because the new season is coming right up and it will be our first without him. But that's a funny thing that I have discovered over the years: those who make the biggest impression me seem to stick around, somehow, long after they slip away. I certainly feel that way about Roger. In fact, when I faced the inevitable- that restocking my paint and clearcoat supply required to shoot my Atlas wing set was going to be nudging 400 bucks- I pulled down the Carbon Knife and gave it a once over. Sure as day, I could hear Roger say "That paint is no good. POS. You gotta clean that up." So I did.

Roger always wanted us all to invest enough energy in the scale aspect that the fleet looked good on the water. That is one of a thousand important little things that we will miss about Roger Newton. I know for a fact that he did not like POS boats, so I gotta pick it up a notch here.

So now, every time the sun glints off the decks this season, I will think of Roger. And when that sun glint temporarily blinds me, and I hit the entry pin to turn three dead on, that's when I will get to hear Rog laugh again. I really liked that sound.

Stripped and refinished, my Newton Marine Karelson classic is 9 oz. lighter than before. Maybe it is her year to shine.

This one's for you, Rog!

Marc