



JANUARY 2010

Seattle Outboard Association

# PIT PREVIEWS

Celebrating SOA's 80th year of Bringing Boat Racing Excitement to the Pacific North West

## A Conversation with Ron Jones, Jr.

Ron Jones, Jr., known to his friends and family as JR, is the third generation of the famous Jones family of boat builders and designers. His grandfather, Ted Jones, developed the air suspension, prop riding three-point unlimited hydroplane with Slo-mo-shun IV. It won the Gold Cup in 1950, 1952, and 1953, and the Harmsworth in 1950. It set the world straightaway record for propeller-driven boats in 1950, then raised the mark in 1952. Ted Jones designed numerous other successful boats over the next 15 years. Legendary outboard racer Hugh Entrop credited Jones with the design of his straightaway boats.

Ron Jones, Sr., designed and built many famous boats. One of his earliest was an X Outboard Hydro for Burt Ross that set a kilometer straightaway record of 115.547 mph on Lake Washington in 1960. He built George Babcock's famous 7-litre Record 7, the National Modified Stinger that Terry Troxell drove to several records, the 6-litre Sunset Chevrolet Special that Dave Villwock drove, Willard Wilson's 2.5-1 litre Stock Lil Lectron, and the 1-litre Stock Supply & Demand that Charley Wiggins drove. In the unlimited class, Jones built the winged Pay 'n Pak that won the Gold Cup in 1974 and '75, the Rolls-Griffon-powered Miss Budweiser that Dean Chenoweth and Jim Kropfeld drove to numerous

victories, 1976 Gold Cup winner Miss U.S., and the U-95, the first competitive turbine-powered unlimited. Jones pioneered the enclosed cockpit, and use of composite materials in hull construction.

JR was born in Renton, Washington, in 1957. When he was five years old, the family moved to California. He lived there until he was 18, when the family moved back to the Seattle area. He followed in the family tradition of building fast race boats. Among the inboards he has built are the 5-litre Misty Lady for Pat Patterson, the 7-litre Long Gone for Les Brown, the 5-litre Gladiator for Al Curtis, and the 225 class Magic for Mario Confliti. JR campaigned two unlimited hydroplanes during the 1990s. JR currently operates two companies in the town of Pacific, Washington. Strategic Composites, Inc., is the boat racing business, and Composite Laminate Specialties makes products for commercial applications.

Before the 2006 season, Troy Holmberg approached JR about building a D Stock Hydro. In the interview that follows, JR discusses the two outboard boats he built for Holmberg. Craig Fjarlie recorded the conversation on April 11, 2009.

Continued Page 4



# Meeting Minutes

24  
NOVEMBER  
2009

## Activity Reports:

### *Stock:*

Dave Anderson reported that Ed Hearn was elected Stock Vice President and will present an agenda soon.

### *PRO:*

Steve Greaves told members that he'd been elected for another term as PRO Commissioner. He noted year-end category statistics showing PRO category Growth, with a 5.5% increase in drivers and a 10% increase in races.

## OLD BUSINESS:

### *Event/Date reminders:*

A reminder was offered that the APBA National Meeting will be held January 25-30 at the DoubleTree inn in Tukwila. Members were reminded that they have to pay fees to attend meetings.

The SOA Commodore's Ball will take place February 20th at Emerald Downs.

The 2010 Northwest Safety Seminar will take place at the Hydroplane & Raceboat Museum on March 13th.

Western Divisionals for Stock, Mod PRO and J will be held at Oroville, CA on June 19th and 20th. The course will be a mile, but not a records course. Management style likely means that unlike the way Lawrence Lake is run, each class will run only once over the weekend. Howard Shaw asked if there was a way to extend to make Divisionals a 3-day event.

## New Business:

### *J-Project:*

Jim Nilsen announced that after a lay-off to complete the Hurricane IV restoration and the Wahoo replica the Hydro museum was restarting the J-hydro project and taking applicants. There appeared to be 3 families lined up to build new boats as of the meeting.

The museum board has asked that an outside group step up as a name sponsor. Several possibilities have been investigated including that SOA assume the role. By a show of hands, members attending the November meeting approved.

### *Spectator:*

Jim noted that Denise Johnson is putting the 2010 edition of the Spectator season review magazine together, and is looking for advertising support and subscribers. Those who want to advertise or who'd like a copy can contact Denise here:

**Denise Johnson**  
**7314 SE 19th Ave.**  
**Portland, OR 97202**

**Ph: 503-233-4753**  
**email: idzyne@comcast.net**

### *Fire Extinguishers:*

Jim Nilsen noted discussion from the recent board meeting regarding the lack of fire extinguishers on race trailers. Everybody should have one, whether on the road or at a race.

### *Election Results:*

The following members were elected to the SOA Board of Directors:

John Peeters  
Jamie Nilsen  
J.W. Myers  
Bill Diamond  
Sheryl Rucker  
Mike Perman

**Raffle:**

Clamp: Jason Seather

Candles: Kyle Bahl

SillyString & Candle: Rick Sandstrom

Candle holder & Funnel: Jan Shaw

Big Carabiner: Mike Cruver

Candle holder & light: Daren Goehring

Tarp & CMP Carabiners: Howard Shaw

Sissors & Safety Glasses: Dave Anderson

Tiedowns: Dave Cossette

Sweatshirt: Tony Perman, Dave Anderson

Duct Tape and Rope: Howard Shaw

Hammer: Dave Cossette

**Pass the Pot:**

Dean Hobart

Ken Kaiser

Al Benson

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*JR Conversation Continued*

**Going back a little, what was your first experience with outboards? Was it building the boats for Troy Holmberg, or had you built outboards before?**

I'd never built an outboard prior to the first boat. I don't know whether I'd even attended an outboard race. Troy was on the crew of my unlimited. He'd been a friend of mine for 15 years. He started drivin' JW's (J.W. Myers) runabout, and they went together and put a (Jon) Steen kit together. He went and bought an engine and came to me and said, "What do you think about building a composite outboard?" I said, "Well, I'm going to need some help with a couple of the dimensions." So he came up with a couple numbers and I did some math and calculated what it would weigh and built some little plugs and molds. We took the top half of a 5-litre cockpit without the lid, just to make the cockpit walls and side and deck molds, and the side of a 2.5 Stock mold for the air traps, little pieces of the deck, and put it all together. I think it was 16 or 18 different pieces. That's boat one. It was basically a stepping stone. It was fast.

**Mm hmm.**

I don't remember why we decided to build boat two. I wanted to try a couple of different things. Instead of leaving it with the long bottom in it,

I said, "Well, it's just a mathematical equation what the bottom should be. If I pull the nose back and make the boat wider..." So we used the old style cockpit that was a little bit rounder and made the tunnel wider and pulled the nose back. Kept the relationship from the sponson transom to the end of the outboard the same, tried a different skid fin, put a little trailing skid fin on it. A year ago at Lake Lawrence it was pretty loose, but by the end of the day we were over the world record and ran out of time. We were pretty eager to be back at Lake Lawrence in the fall. It was warm and the air wasn't as good so we didn't go as fast. The course was a little different, I think, than when we ran in the spring. It just wasn't as fast and I don't know why. I think the engine was tired.

So this year the engine was freshened up and we thought, well, we'll put this propeller on and it seemed to respond pretty good. He kind of got a bad start and ended up passing almost everybody but got the thing upside down. I think the reason is -- I know the reason why he got it upside down was -- he ran out of pitch. It was the first time the engine was turning 7,000. We were turning 6,600. Every time around he would slide back a little bit to keep the thing nice 'n free in the corner. I think he slid back a little bit too soon and ran out of pitch and over it went. You know, he's a little stiff and sore, but the boat came out fine.

**If we can go back to the first boat, that was originally built for the Mercury, right?**

Correct.

**And then he went to the Tohatsu.**

Mm hmm.

**He did make some changes to the boat, were any of them related to the engine, or was it just to improve handling when it was new? Did he have to adapt anything for the Tohatsu?**

We deepened the air traps. But, there's a rule for outboards that the air traps can't be over 5/8 of an inch deep and 7/8 of an inch wide, so you can't get creative. We put a little spray rail on the right hand rear of the nontrip to help keep the boat up more in the corner. He would go 82, 84 miles an hour. We were still learning about propellers for the Tohatsu, trying to find out what propellers to run. Then that winter we built boat two, so we started all over again.

**It seems the D Stocks with the Tohatsu have not done the propeller work that they need to do with that engine. There's a lot of work that could be done yet. The Mercurys, they've done a lot of work because they've been in use for 20 years or more. The Tohatsus are still rather new and the guys just haven't spent the money and worked on different props to come up with what's best for it.**



They don't even know they're out there. They have to order them. We've been all over the place lookin' for propellers. The Tohatsu has more torque, so it's a low end motor not a high rpm motor so you have to put some pitch to it, and diameter, to get it to go. But both boats, the way they were set up, both of 'em were prop riding. And it does require a whole different train to thought to keep the thing up and going and then stay on the water at the same time.

**Some of the outboard courses have rather sharp turns. Is it a problem to keep the boat up in those kinds of courses? More than, for example, the big ones at Lake Lawrence?**

Everybody drops speed on a small course, so we would just set the thing up for punch, acceleration.

**On Troy's second boat, you've done a lot more with the rounded sheer line,**

**more-so than the really sharp angles that the wood boats have.**

Well it's hard to do that in wood.

**Yeah...**

We learned a lot in the wind tunnel. And outboards, for the most part, a hydroplane all the way up to an unlimited, even though they go 200 miles and hour, is considered a slow speed craft. The bigger the radiuses on a slow speed craft the softer the boat reacts, it's not so instantly in your face, it's more forgiving. A sharp edge is commonly used on fighters and airplanes that go really fast and, you know, can snap roll to get out of their own way. A hydroplane with a standard sheer and a pointed sponson, in a wind tunnel, will pitch up about 18 inches before it wants to blow over. After radiusing the sheers and the tip of the sponson, radiusing the air traps and making everything soft, it will pitch up almost two feet

before it wants to continue to blow over. So, the pitch aspect increased to where you can run the boat a little freer and be more forgiving. The air wasn't so confused so the boat picked up a mile an hour. The more you can soften the air going around an object, the faster it's going to punch a hole through the atmosphere. Therefore, they tend to be faster. We've been doing it for so long that I was not gonna go back to the pointed, sharp deal because I know that the air is confused and pointy things hurt. Don't want to do that.

*This is the end of part one. Be sure to read part two in next month's Pit Previews when JR talks about laying down versus kneeling, and the use of composite materials in hull construction.*



# 2010

## SOA Commodore's Ball



I am currently working on budgeting for the SOA Commodore's Ball which will be held February 20th, 2010 at Emerald Downs. It is a very nice banquet room, and the dinner will be equally as nice. This past season was SOA's 80th year, so we would like to celebrate it in style. I am trying to keep the dinner fee's charged to the members as low as possible and in order to that, we will again be having a raffle and/or silent auction. I am asking for donations now, in order to get a better feeling for what I need to charge for dinners as the club will be assuming around 5\$ per person of the dinner charge. I know we are facing some tough times but if you can donate items that would be really helpful in celebrating a our big milestone. I am working on some fun events for the evening, any help would be great.

If you would like to donate an item, or would like to donate cash for me to go get an item (I will be sure to list everyone who donated and what they donated) please email me or send me the item/cash to my home and I will get working on it right away.

Also, class reps, part of your responsibility is to bring a raffle item to the party. It can be anything, and you can get your class members to chip in if you want. Please label each item with your class so we know who to thank!

I appreciate all the help I can get to make this a great event!

Sheryl Rucker

Contact Info:  
4410 217th St. SW #D Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043  
E-mail: [ruthierae@msn.com](mailto:ruthierae@msn.com)  
Ph: 425-698-5768



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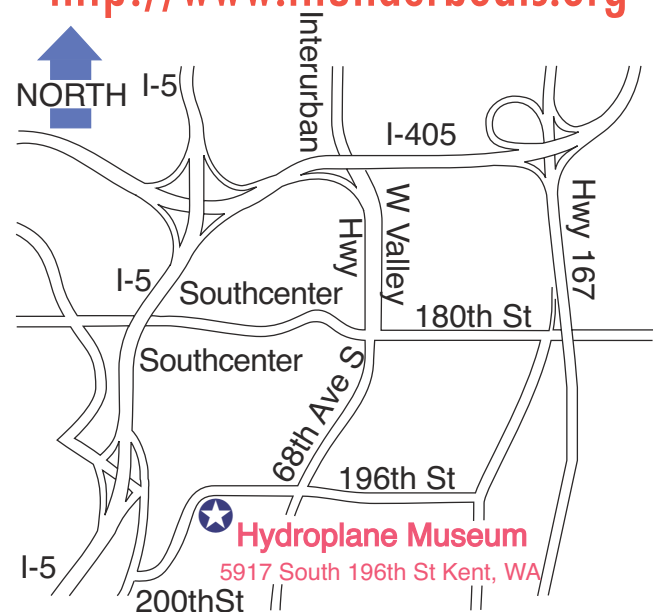
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Racers!...This would be a perfect time to step up with a \$100 or more Donation. The Museum does OK in summer when displays and activities bring an audience. Those can't be done in winter though, and costs to keep the shop and shelter the boats won't go away.

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**Michigan Brass;** 60J \$25

**Cary Brass;** 6 5/8 x10 30H Hydro \$25

**Oakland Johnson Brass;** 6 3/8 x12 20H Runabout \$25, 6 5/8 x 11 \$25

Call Ric Montoya @ 206-283-4773

E-mail: ricstr4@gmail.com

photos available via email

X-04/10

# CALENDAR

January 12th SOA Board meeting. 7:30 p.m., Kirkland Eagles, 258 Central Way Kirkland, WA.

January 26th General Membership meeting. 7:30 p.m., Kirkland Eagles, 258 Central Way Kirkland, WA.

## Floyd Givens Equipment Fund

Ashley and Colin Rucker have each donated money from their savings accounts to the club's equipment fund in memory of Floyd Givens, who maintained our radios and worked for the club up to his recent passing. All members are encouraged to follow Ashley and Colin's lead by contacting Sheryl Rucker:  
425-698-5768  
Email: ruthierae@msn.com  
with donations in Floyd's memory, and in remembrance of Brian Morgan.

\*\*\*\*\* FOR SALE \*\*\*\*\*

**OMC "A" motor**, Dark blue Evinrude, low hours, kick-out bracket, steering bars.  
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X-12/09

# 2010 TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Here's a tentative 2010 schedule. Nothing's firm, this is just a snapshot of current proposals, and could be revised before the season begins.

Apr 10-11	Lawrence Lake	Yelm, WA (inbd)
Apr 30-May 2	Mayfield Lake	Mossyrock, WA
May 15/16	Kitsap Lake	Bremerton, WA
May 29/30	Willamette R	Newberg, OR
June 5	Silver Lake	Everett, WA
July 9-11	Capitol Lake	Olympia, WA
July 24/25	Willamette R	West Linn, OR
Aug 28/29	Silver Lake	Eatonville, WA
Sept 4/5	Lake Lytle	Rockaway, OR
Sept 18/19	Moses Lake	Moses Lk, WA
Sept 24-26	Lawrence Lake	Yelm, WA
October 9/10	D-Lake Kilos	Lincoln City, OR



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# Seattle Outboard Association



## 2010 Region 10 Chairman:

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## 2010 Officers:

### COMMODORE:

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Membership applications can be Downloaded from the SOA Website or through contacting John Paramore at the address, phone, or e-mail address noted above.

General membership meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Kirkland Eagles, 258 Central Way, Kirkland, WA

The SOA Board meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Kirkland Eagles, 258 Central Way, Kirkland, WA

## 2010 Board of Directors:

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**SOA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22nd, 7:30 PM  
KIRKLAND EAGLES 258 CENTRAL WAY, KIRKLAND, WA**

The Next General Meeting is at 7:30 p.m.  
 Tuesday December 22nd at the Kirkland Eagles  
 258 Central Way, Kirkland, WA



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 John Paramore, Editor  
**Seattle Outboard Association**



Event Location \_\_\_\_\_  
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Date \_\_\_\_\_

**ENTRY BLANK**

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 Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Club Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_ APBA Member No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rider/Co-driver: \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Club Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_ APBA Member No. \_\_\_\_\_

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- I represent by my signature below that my Agreement of Release is on file with my current membership card number is as shown above.
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- In Consideration of their promotional efforts on behalf of the sport, I hereby assign all commercial communication and broadcast rights to the American Power Boat Association and do declare them as my lawful agents and representatives regarding such rights.
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Signed (Driver) \_\_\_\_\_ (L.S.) Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Signed (Owner) \_\_\_\_\_ (L.S.) Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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