

Gold And Glory : The Final Year of the Dragon
By Jon Osterberg

The warm August sun dropped behind Mount Baker Ridge. Die-hard race fans, weary from a week of excitement, plodded toward the Genesee parking lot toting lawn chairs, ice chests, and transistor radios.

The Big Event was over. A Green Dragon, tamed by a diminutive jockey wearing yellow and black coveralls and a crafty smile, still reigned supreme in the premier class of powerboat racing. The Gold Cup would stay in Ballard.

When Ron Musson, crew chief Leo Vanden Berg, and the *Miss Bardahl* team won the 1965 Seattle race, they achieved something unheard of since the Depression-era days of George Reis and *El Lagarto*: three consecutive Gold Cup victories. Despite racing with a patched-up boat and temperamental equipment, and despite facing the fastest fleet in Gold Cup history, Musson successfully defended his title against the best in the sport — Bill Brow, Rex Manchester, Chuck Thompson, Warner Gardner. Other names making headlines that week included Bill Muncey, Bill Stead, and Norm Evans.

Today, all are dead. Musson, Manchester, and Thompson never even made to Seafair in 1966.

In many ways, 1965 marked the end of unlimited racing's age of innocence. Never again would race fans watch passively as thunderboats rocked on their sponsons or nosed skyward; not for years would drivers again throttle their mounts beyond the 120-mph barrier or consistently race at pre-1966 speeds.

As 1965 waned, so, to a degree, did the sport of unlimited hydroplane racing.

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Coeur d'Alene's Diamond Cup on July 11, 1965, stirred excitement for that year's Gold Cup. Sportswriters covering the Idaho race reported it as "the greatest Diamond Cup ever . . . the racing was superb."

And it was.

The winner, *Miss Exide*, hit the water for the first time in 1965 just two days before the race. Burien's Bill Brow guided the Happy Hydro home to first place money despite bringing only one engine to Coeur d'Alene. ("Happy Hydro" referred to *Exide*'s use of nitrous-oxide — "laughing gas" — an engine coolant and power booster first adapted for hydro use by crewman Bernie Van Cleave in 1964.)

Heat 1-A saw Bill Cantrell in *Miss Smirnoff* come from behind to nip Warner Gardner and *Mariner Too* by three boat lengths at the finish. In heat 1-B, Brow used nitrous to smoke past Rex Manchester and *Notre Dame*. When Musson and *Bardahl* overhauled *Notre Dame* and pressured *Exide* on lap three, Brow hit the nitrous button again. Goodbye, *Bardahl*. At the finish, Manchester squeezed by Musson to snatch second — barely. *Exide* averaged 110.882 (with one lap at 114.165); *Notre Dame*, 108.173; and *Bardahl*, 108.129.

Minutes later, a crane hoisting *Bardahl* out of the lake slipped its brakes. *Bardahl* dropped to her trailer and bounced three times before settling, a gaping hole punched through her bottom. Ninety minutes of frenzied work followed. With Chuck Hickling's help, Vanden Berg and crew patched the 15-inch hole in time to send Musson out for heat 2-A.

Bardahl led *Exide* until the final turn of the last lap when Brow nudged ahead on the outside, then cut to lane one. Musson nicked a buoy and claimed Brow chopped him off. The officials disagreed, leaving *Exide* with 800 points for the day. Brow averaged 108.564 for the heat; Musson checked in at 107.100.

Notre Dame took heat 2-B, and again racing was close: the U-7 clocked 103.369, *Budweiser* 101.809, and *Madison* 100.896. *Tahoe Miss*, suffering auxiliary-blower woes (she fried her experimental turbocharger two weeks earlier in the Dixie Cup), failed to start and scored zero points for the day.

Bardahl charged to an early lead in the final heat and never looked back. *Exide* followed until lap two when Manchester powered *Notre Dame* into second. But third place was all Brow needed to secure his second consecutive Diamond Cup victory. At the finish it was *Bardahl* at 105.820, *Notre Dame* at 103.633, and *Exide* at 101.694 — again, tight racing.

Seattleites ballyhooed the fact their hometown fleet finished one, two, three in the final standings: *Exide*, 1,025 points; *Notre Dame*, 1,000; and *Bardahl*, 925, plus the fastest race average of 107.008.

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Over the next four weeks (including a no-contest race at New Town, North Dakota), the hydro camps rested, patched hulls, and repaired equipment for the Gold Cup. *Exide*'s crew built more engines. The *Tahoe* team pieced its turbocharger back together. Dixie Cup winner *Miss Madison*, eager to reassert itself as one of the hot dogs, languished in a lot at the *Bardahl* plant in Ballard along with *Miss San Diego* and the four-seat *Miss Budweiser*.

A few yards away, behind a big roll-up door, the *Bardahl* crew worked feverishly to restore the Green Dragon to its 1963-64 form. It was literally a last-minute effort. The reason: on the floor, just behind and to the side of the U-40, sat a shiny new green and yellow cabover sporting the “Miss *Bardahl*” moniker on its deck. This was the Ron

Jones-designed hull the crew intended to race in 1965 but had to abandon at the last minute when a custom-made Casale gearbox wasn't ready in time.

And it was in this new *Bardahl* that, the following year in Washington, D.C., Ron Musson ran his final race.

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Qualifying for the 1965 Gold Cup opened with a roar. On Tuesday, August 3, Buddy Byers powered *Miss Madison* around Lake Washington's three-mile course to a three-lap average of 115.139 — the boat's fastest speed ever. Warner Gardner put *Mariner Too* into the race at a respectable 111.340. Six other boats qualified, including *Notre Dame*, *Savair's Mist*, *Miss Budweiser*, and *Such Crust IV*. Bill Muncey qualified the *IV* as a favor to owner Jack Schafer and then turned the wheel over to Red Loomis on race day.

Chuck Thompson provided most of Tuesday's thrills. Setting *Tahoe Miss* up for a qualifying run, he swept wide around the north turn, his eyes fixed on the gauges. *Tahoe* straightened out, Thompson stomped on the throttle — and charged directly toward the log boom that hugged the shoreline! Quickly he saw his mistake and backed off, swung behind the log boom and patrol boats, circled the north turn, and continued his qualifying run. He averaged 111.035.

Pre-race excitement peaked on Wednesday when Bill Brow blasted *Miss Exide* around the course at a world-record speed of 120.356 for three laps, including one scorcher at 120.536. The old mark, set on Lake Washington in 1958 by Bill Stead driving the *Maverick*, was 119.956, with a fast lap of 120.267.

Brow told reporters that damp weather, flat water, and quick cornering earned him the record.

"I hit about 165 mph going into the first turn," he explained. "After that, I never hit more than 160 in the chutes."

Bill Stead ambled up to congratulate Brow, then pretended to strangle him for "running off with my record." Brow and his crewmembers laughed. They were happy and confident — so confident that, before Sunday's final heat, they gave their wallets to a friend for safekeeping so their money wouldn't get wet in the victory dunking.

The rest of qualifying, though less spectacular, was dramatic. *Miss Bardahl* joined the field Thursday after suffering mechanical malfunctions for two days. That morning, Musson took aim at *Exide*'s record but broke his only qualifying engine. Late Thursday afternoon he made a conservative run with his race-day engine but still lost a magneto. *Bardahl* limped home with a three-lap average of 110.279 — slow, perhaps, but fast enough to qualify.

“It’s too late in the game to go for 120 now,” said crew chief Vanden Berg. “You don’t win races in qualifying.”

Eighteen boats now crowded the Stan Sayres pits. Thirteen had managed 104 mph or better for three laps, and five others waited for their chance to make the final 12. Some boats were sure to be “bumped” on Friday.

Budweiser fell first, then *Savair’s Mist*: Norm Evans pushed *Miss Lapeer* around the course at 109.238, *Mariner Too* driver Warner Gardner qualified *Miss San Diego* (the former *Coral Reef*) at 108.506, and there sat *Bud* and *Mist* on the outside looking in — with speeds of only 105 and 107 mph.

Other boats upped their speeds, including *Gale’s Roostertail*, *Bardahl*, and *Miss U.S. 5*, which bounced and leaped around the course at 114.407 mph.

Chuck Thompson played mind games with the other drivers before making a run on Saturday. He told KING-TV sportscaster Rod Belcher that *Tahoe* was faster than any boat in the pits and, what’s more, he would prove it by qualifying the *Gray Ghost* at 130 mph. (!!!) In the end, however, referee Bill Newton ordered him off the course for “wasting time” and robbing unqualified boats of their chance to run.

The final qualifiers weren’t decided until 3:59 p.m. Saturday when Warner Gardner raised *Miss San Diego’s* speed to 109.091. That put Walt Kade and *Savair’s Mist*, who had requalified at 108.724, on the beach for Sunday’s race. Joining the *Mist* were *Miss Budweiser*, *Savair’s Probe*, *Tri-City Sun*, *Berryessa Belle* (formerly *Slo-Mo V*), and the new *Blue Chip*.

The fastest Gold Cup field in history was set: *Miss Exide* (Bill Brow), 120.356; *Miss Madison* (Buddy Byers), 115.139; *Miss U.S. 5* (Roy DUBY), 114.407; *Miss Bardahl* (Ron Musson), 113.524; *Notre Dame* (Rex Manchester), 112.971; *Mariner Too* (Warner Gardner), 111.340; *Gale’s Roostertail* (Jerry Schoenith), 111.187; *Tahoe Miss* (Chuck Thompson), 111.035; *Miss Lapeer* (Norm Evans), 109.238; *Miss Smirnoff* (Bill Cantrell), 109.164; *Miss San Diego* (Gardner again), 109.091; and *Such Crust IV* (qualified by Bill Muncey), 108.871.

Collectively, the field averaged a record 112.193 mph, surpassing the 1964 Gold Cuppers’ average of 111.500 mph. At the 1966 Gold Cup in Detroit, a decimated field of 12 boats mustered only 106.910 mph collectively; the 1966 Seafair race, where qualifying wasn’t mandatory, featured a top test run of just 113.356.

One final comparison: *Such Crust IV*, slowest of the 1965 Gold Cup entries at 108.871 mph, would have been the third-fastest qualifier at Detroit the following year.

One of the largest crowds in Seattle’s 15-year history of hydro racing lined Lake Washington when the gun fired Sunday for heat 1-A. *Mariner Too* hit the line first in lane

three and led *Exide* by 100 yards exiting the south turn. *Tahoe*, *Madison*, *U.S. 5*, and *Gale's Roostertail* trailed.

Brow, on the inside, careened past Gardner in the first turn of lap two. Thompson followed suit at the exit pin and charged after Brow, cutting *Exide's* lead to four seconds at the end of the lap. *Tahoe* got no closer, though, as Brow throttled his mount to a blistering pace that earned him victory. *Exide* finished with a record 15-mile Gold Cup heat average of 112.172. *Tahoe* finished second at 109.800, followed by *Madison*, *U.S. 5*, and *Gale's Roostertail*. *Mariner Too* conked out in the north turn of lap three and did not finish.

When *Mariner* conked, *Miss San Diego* owner Bob Fendler felt more disappointment than *Mariner* owner Jim Herrington: Gardner was slated to drive both boats but, because of the long tow back to the pits, arrived too late to pilot *San Diego* in heat 1-B. Fendler withdrew his boat, putting Walt Kade and *Savair's Mist* back in the Gold Cup as the 12th entry.

The next heat saw *Smirnoff* roar to an early lead followed by *Bardahl*, *Lapeer*, *Notre Dame*, and *Savair's Mist*. *Such Crust* lagged far behind. *Bardahl* powered into first at the exit pin of turn one and quickly opened a big lead over *Lapeer* and *Notre Dame*, while *Smirnoff* faded to fourth.

Manchester overtook Evans on the backstretch of lap two. Then Cantrell made his move, passing Evans on lap four. At the finish it was *Bardahl*, 108.651; *Notre Dame*, 105.099, *Smirnoff*, 100.259; then *Lapeer*, *Savair's Mist*, and *Such Crust IV*.

Heat 2-A provided some bizarre excitement as two boats collided while dicing for the start. Halfway through the north turn, Norm Evans in *Miss Lapeer* veered in front of Roy Duby and *Miss U.S. 5*, causing the latter to climb over the stern of Evans' boat. *U.S. 5* suffered a punctured left sponson, while six feet of *Lapeer's* rear deck was ripped away.

For a moment the two vessels rode piggyback. Duby promptly killed his engine, but *Lapeer* kept running and the boats pulled apart. Evans, his shoulder badly bruised, steered an erratic course toward the official barge and signaled that his leaking boat needed a crane — quickly. After judging the *U.S. 5* was still seaworthy, Duby restarted and joined the race.

Meanwhile, *Notre Dame* slid past *Exide* and into the lead at the south turn, followed by *Such Crust*, *U.S. 5*, and *Lapeer*, which pulled into the pits after making one circuit. Brow, his boat misfiring, struggled to fend off Loomis and Duby and eventually fell to fourth on lap two. Manchester had a close call in the north turn on lap one when *Notre Dame* hooked badly, but he later ran away from the field and came within 1,000 feet of lapping *Exide* at the finish. The final order was *Notre Dame* at 100.037, then *Such Crust*, *U.S. 5*, and *Exide*.

Everyone made a near-perfect start in heat 2-B as *Tahoe*, on the inside, led *Bardahl* and *Mariner Too* around the south turn. Byers in *Madison* charged after Gardner, passed him in the north turn, then set his sights on *Bardahl*. Meanwhile, Thompson ran a 111-mph lap to stretch his lead to three roostertail-lengths over Musson. The Gray Ghost was on a tear, sizzling down the chutes, its turbocharger whistling and banging as Thompson backed off to set up for the turns.

Suddenly, *Tahoe* slowed to a crawl entering the backstretch on lap four. *Bardahl* quickly roared by on the outside and built a sizeable lead before *Tahoe* surged to life and took off in pursuit. But Musson throttled his boat to a 110-mph lap and maintained his lead to the finish. *Bardahl* averaged 107.355 to *Tahoe*'s 105.882. *Madison* finished a close third at 104.813, and *Mariner Too* nipped *Smirnoff* by less than a boat length to take fourth. *Savair's Mist* blew an oil cooler on lap three and did not finish.

Only five boats started heat 3-A as the *Mist* crew couldn't finish repairs in time. Bill Cantrell in *Smirnoff* led the field through the south turn and up the backstretch with *Notre Dame* charging hard in second. At the end of lap one Cantrell held a five-second lead over Manchester, *U.S. 5* edged past *Madison* to briefly take third, and *Such Crust* lumbered along at the rear.

Notre Dame swung wide through the north turn on lap two, poured on the power, and nosed past *Smirnoff* to take the lead entering lap three. Then *Madison* and *U.S. 5* closed on Cantrell until *Madison* sliced inside and gained second exiting the north turn. *U.S. 5* and *Such Crust* did the same thing one lap later when *Smirnoff* bounced badly entering the turn and bogged down. At the finish, *Notre Dame* posted 107.057 to win, followed by a fast-closing *Miss Madison* at 106.592 and *U.S. 5* at 103.966.

Three of the hot dogs squared off in 3-B: *Exide*, *Bardahl*, and *Tahoe Miss. Mariner*, *Gale's Roostertail*, and *Budweiser* — a late replacement for the crippled *Lapeer* — filled out the field. Race fans rubbed their hands in anticipation of a full-blown battle.

All six boats thundered toward the line in a tight pack. *Mariner* streaked across first on the outside — but too soon. Indeed, everyone jumped the gun except *Exide*. Brow backed off the pedal at the last moment to make a perfect start and assume a one-lap lead over his rivals, although none of them knew it yet.

Six abreast, they piled into the turn. *Exide* and *Bardahl* tore through it and sprinted up the back chute with *Tahoe* close behind. Brow, on the inside, kept *Bardahl* on his hip and led by two boat lengths at the end of lap one.

Musson noticed the clock on the official barge was partially blacked out, signaling someone had jumped the gun. Not knowing who was penalized and who wasn't, he leaned on the nitrous button (*Bardahl's* crew first experimented with nitrous at the Diamond Cup a month earlier) and kept his foot to the floorboard.

Together, Brow and Musson ran away from the field. Again they rounded the south turn and pounded up the backstretch, Rolls-Merlins blaring, their roostertails arcing high above the lake; again they charged toward the line with *Exide* still holding a slim lead.

Suddenly, *Bardahl*'s engine popped and went raspy. Musson eased off the throttle and watched Brow pull away, hoping *Exide*'s engine might blow from the strain. It didn't. As *Bardahl* exited the north turn on lap five, Brow took the checkered flag. Musson and the others took a green flag and had to run a penalty lap. *Exide* turned 109.223 to win the heat; *Bardahl* averaged 89.050 because of the extra lap. *Tahoe* finished third, followed by *Gale's Roostertail*, Chuck Hickling in *Budweiser*, and *Mariner Too*.

When Musson returned to the dock, his crew made an unusual discovery: some of *Bardahl*'s spark-plug cores were missing. Musson took the blame, saying he hadn't yet mastered the art of using laughing gas.

"I found out today you just can't push the nitrous button and run," he said. "It blows spark plugs right out of the boat."

But the true cause of the spark plug failure had little to do with nitrous. Rather, it resulted from the crew fitting *Bardahl*'s engines with innovative, high-compression (or "high-dome") pistons — something intended to give her a competitive edge, and something the crew wanted to keep secret. (The problem was corrected later when Champion Spark Plug custom-made a batch of heavy-duty plugs that *Bardahl*'s mighty Merlins couldn't destroy.)

Vanden Berg and crew changed *Bardahl*'s engine for the final heat, putting in the one they qualified with on Thursday. With 1,100 points, Musson was in good shape to defend his title. Eager to dethrone him were *Notre Dame*, also with 1,100 points; *Exide*, 969; *Tahoe Miss*, 825; *Madison*, 750; and *U.S. 5*, 619.

Because they were tied on points, Musson knew he had to beat Manchester to win, and vice-versa. Brow could steal the Cup if Musson and Manchester finished third or worse. Thompson and Byers had to hope the others would break. Only Roy DUBY and *U.S. 5* were mathematically out of the running.

The sun-soaked crowd cheered as the three Seattle boats led the pack across the line and into the first turn. *Miss Exide* cranked around the exit pin on the inside and scorched into the backstretch to open a lead over *Notre Dame* and *Bardahl*. Suddenly, near the middle of the chute, *Exide*'s Rolls-Merlin backfired and burst into flames, the victim of a ruptured fabric fuel line. Brow steered the red speedster to the infield and coasted to a stop. He jumped out, took one look at the fire and waved for help.

Meanwhile, *Notre Dame* roared by and into the lead with *Bardahl* and *Madison* trailing. *Exide* continued to burn. Brow tried to fight the blaze with a small extinguisher, but when that didn't work he waved his right arm in a frantic "come on!" gesture. Patrol boats nearby couldn't move, however, as long as the race continued.

And continue it did. Manchester, out front and in control of the course, opened a commanding lead over Musson and *Bardahl*. The Shamrock Lady was on her way to a Gold Cup win. At last, Manchester thought, he would savor victory. Five years earlier he had *Miss Spokane* just 17 seconds from winning the Seafair Trophy Race when Don Wilson jumped from a burning *Miss U.S. I* to halt the race. Bill Muncey piloted the *Thriftway* to victory in the rerun, and Rex had to settle for second. But not this time....

Splash! Bill Brow jumped into the lake. *Notre Dame* rocketed across the line to complete lap two just as the red flares pierced the sky. The boats slowed, circled, and returned to the pits. Much of *Exide*'s deck was ablaze when the patrol boats finally arrived. Though it later went unmentioned in most accounts of the race, much of the fault was Brow's: rules stated that a driver requesting immediate help must "wave a visible object" such as a helmet or life jacket; a driver waving his hands meant that "everything is under control." Unfortunately, Brow waved only his bare hands.

Fifteen minutes after it started (and after many ill-advised attempts to douse the gas-fueled flames with water rather than foam retardant), the fire aboard *Miss Exide* flickered out. A patrol boat towed the badly charred hull back to the pits where *Exide* owners Milo and Glen Stoen exchanged heated words with race officials over the handling of the fire. Meanwhile, the other camps prepared their boats for the rerun of the final heat.

Six hydros entered the course for the final, with *Such Crust IV* taking *Exide*'s place. In a mild surprise, Musson shied away from his customary spot — lane two — while dicing for the start, and instead moved *Bardahl* to lane one. The field approached the line a bit early, held back, and then Musson shot the *Bardahl* across it and into the lead. *Notre Dame*, *Madison*, and *Tahoe* charged after him, while *U.S. 5* and a sick *Such Crust* trailed.

The Green Dragon pounded through the turn, then screamed up the backstretch all alone as Musson poured on the power. *Notre Dame* ran at breakneck speed trying to close the gap, but couldn't. *Tahoe* held down third, while *Madison* expired near the end of the backstretch.

At the end of lap two Musson held a three-second lead. Manchester managed to gain ground the following lap but "fell in a hole" in the north turn; Musson, feeling the pressure, throttled *Bardahl* to 112+ mph to further secure his position. *Notre Dame* refused to give up, though, and thundered close behind.

Musson ran hard the final two laps to outdistance the field and even lapped *Such Crust* near the end of lap five. Finally, after 69 fast, grueling miles (including the penalty lap in 3-B and the two laps of the first final), Musson and *Miss Bardahl* streaked past the official barge to take the checkered flag and earn their third consecutive Gold Cup. *Bardahl* averaged 110.655 to win the heat, followed by *Notre Dame* at 107.612, *Tahoe* *Miss* at 94.869, *Miss U.S. 5* at 92.879, and *Such Crust IV* at 77.967.

An elated Musson flashed a wide smile as he coasted into the pits. Despite racing a boat that was supposed to be in mothballs — a boat that blew an average of three spark plugs

in every heat and still showed the scars of its Diamond Cup accident — Musson made modern-day hydro history. And this time he did it in front of the hometown fans.

Crew chief Leo Vanden Berg grinned as Musson climbed out of the lake following the traditional victory dunking. A much-used, battle-worn engine again had powered the Green Dragon to first place, and the crew couldn't wait to tell its driver.

“We've got an engine I don't like to use and the crew keeps sneaking it in on me — number 22,” said a dripping wet Musson after hearing the news. “They did it again today.”

“That's the engine Ron hates,” Vanden Berg added with a smile. “He always gripes about it, but he always runs well with it.”

“I've been trying to get rid of that engine for years,” Musson complained.

“All that engine does is win,” countered Vanden Berg.

The final Gold Cup standings showed *Bardahl* posting 1,500 points to take first, followed by *Notre Dame*, 1,400; *Tahoe Miss*, 1,050; *Miss Exide*, 969; *Miss U.S. 5*, 788; and *Miss Madison*, 750. *Notre Dame* had the fastest 60-mile race average — 104.864 — while *Bardahl*, because of her penalty lap, averaged only 103.132. Had Musson not jumped the gun in 3-B, it's likely *Bardahl* would have averaged close to 107 mph for the race.

Following the awards ceremony, where *Tahoe* driver Chuck Thompson collapsed from a broken rib suffered in early heat action, *Miss Exide*'s owners talked of retiring from the sport after losing their third hull in four years: *Miss Seattle Too* nosedived and blew apart during Seattle's 1962 Gold Cup. The first *Exide*, a new boat, disintegrated at the 1963 Diamond Cup. And now this.

“You can only come back so many times,” said a despondent Milo Stoen.

But they did come back, and *Exide* raced again — later that year, in fact.

And it was in the final race of the 1965 season that Ron Musson closed out *Miss Bardahl*'s career in a blaze of glory. Employing a new self-contained, fresh-water ADI system, he nearly blew the competition off the course to win the San Diego Cup with a perfect score of 1,200 points. In the process, he earned *Bardahl* a third consecutive National High Points crown and shattered every major competition record in the book. His new marks remained unbroken for years: fastest three-mile competition lap, 117.130; fastest 15-mile heat, 116.079; and fastest 45-mile race, 115.056.

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The Stoens finally did retire after San Diego, where *Exide* placed third. Bernie Little later jumped at the chance to buy the proven speedster and campaigned her as *Miss Budweiser*.

Tahoe Miss, much like *Exide* in Seattle, caught fire in San Diego and suffered considerable damage. Her crew took her home for a facelift and signed a new driver. Chuck Thompson then looked for — and found — a new mount, *Smirnoff*. *Notre Dame*'s crewmembers headed north with plans to modify their stock equipment for a faster ride in 1966.

The *Bardahl* team had closed out another year as champions. Besides her Seattle and San Diego victories, *Miss Bardahl* won the Utah Cup on Willard Bay, the Lake Tahoe World's Championship, and ran away from the field in the Governor's Cup at Madison but lost the race on a disputed penalty.

Returning home from San Diego, Ron Musson must have wondered how he could do any better the next year. Perhaps he thought about the new boat waiting for him in Ballard, how its new design might revolutionize the sport, and how he'd love to win a fourth Gold Cup and another National Championship with it. For Musson and the others, 1966 seemed like it might be a monumental year.

Sadly, it was exactly that, but for the wrong reasons.

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