

RACING ROUND-UP

HILL WINS WORLDS

Despite having an uncharacteristically below par season, John Hill certainly pulled out the stops when it counted. Driving his McEwans catamaran on the Idroscala, Milan, John became the World OE for the second year.

The Italian races, from a driver's point of view certainly appear well-organised with good food, wine and 'mucho' hospitality. For the spectators, it also appears that powerboat racing is the next best thing after spaghetti.

On arrival in the pits on what must be one of the finest race tracks in the world, every driver had his name flag and race number set in position and the friendly face of Angelo Vassena greeted the British contingent of John Hill, Rick Frost and Dave Jerwood.

The championship had certainly gathered the cream of the world's OE drivers with Lasse Strom, Hill, Renato Molinari, Frost, Radaelli and Vidoli racing for OMC; Werner and Jerwood with fuel-injected Mercury and Mariner; and Frochel, Mareth and Mora for Konig. From the 15 competitors the fastest practice times were shared by Hill and Frochel at 58 seconds.

In the first heat, it appeared that Hill, after his problems in the Aspen series at Nottingham, Vichy and S'Hertogenbosch was going to go for broke and he set a blistering pace. Hanging his Evinrude powered Burgess on the limit he clocked 55 seconds for the first lap and after 10 laps he was half a lap clear of Werner in the Liqui-Moly Molinari. Luck at last appeared to be with Hill, for as he took the chequered flag, his gear box blew.

The second heat followed the same pattern but by the third heat, Hill could not get his motor to fire in the warm-up lap. Werner blew his motor on lap four leaving Lasse Strom (Akai) to move into second place.

Then a little controversy crept into an otherwise pleasant meeting. Hill put his boat into the water after replacing his gear box to check the water circulation. He had been granted permission, but after pulling the boat out after a couple of laps, he was informed that a protest may go in, from a driver, because of some obscure rule stating that a boat cannot leave the pits until the next heat is started.

The Italians urged Hill to compete in the final heat, even though he had unofficially won the title, just in case the protest materialised. Hill won the fourth heat.

confirming his superiority, and with no protest being lodged, John brought the title back to Britain again.

In every heat, Hill had pulled 13 seconds on the field within three lap. Dave Jerwood showed great promise with the new Mariner and the Konigs should become a big threat next year. Rick Frost had starting problems but did well to finish fourth in one heat with his Trimite/Johnson. The Italian ace, Molinari was far from happy throughout the proceedings and retired in the third heat.

Results: 1. John Hill — McEwans Lager/Evinrude/Burgess; 2. Lasse Strom — Akai/Evinrude/Burgess; 3. Michael Werner — Liqui Moly/Mercury/Molinari; 4. Alfredo Radaelli — Tecnocar/Johnson/Clerici; 5. D.Jerwood — Kresse Tools/Mariner/Burgess.



John Hill retains his world title

MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE

The final race of the national offshore season will certainly be remembered. For the Peter Stuyvesant Spithead Trophy was held in what can only be described as appalling conditions and the race for the 41 craft who braved the elements had more than its fair share of catastrophes.

The first drama of the day happened

before the start when Robert Cook in Aquaglide suffered a broken con-rod through one of his Mercury outboards which in turn caused an electrical short-circuit and within seconds both the motor and the fuel line were ablaze. Robert and his navigator, Joe Donohoo tried desperately to quell the flames with fire extinguishers, but decided that their best course of action was to abandon ship.

According to one observer, a fire ship decided that the only way to put out the flames was to ram this new hull from

Wright Marine and sink her. But quick thinking from Don Shead's younger son somewhat saved the situation as he leapt overboard and attached a tow line, and what was left of Aquaglide was towed ashore. It remains to be seen to what extent the damage extends, but it appears likely that the only hope Robert Cook has, is the salvage of one or two of his motors.

The rough weather course had been shortened even further, but there were more tragedies in store. Joe and Peter Marengi in Have No Fear, who had rescued Cook and Donohoo from the swirling seas, eventually joined the fray only to nosedive and experience the rescuing expertise of air sea helicopters. Their Phantom, however, was recovered a little less promptly, in fact it was found two days later.

Ted Toleman, in Slick 50, who had achieved more than 98 mph in his successful class I record attempt, could only manage an average speed of 42.17 mph and although he won the Class I event his speed gives an indication of the difficult conditions. Romans Sabre won class II averaging 29.37 mph.

In the battle for Class III honours, Howard Wretham had sewn up the Class III championship and the Lancing Marine Trophy and armed with this knowledge, the IIIC Computer Automation Phantom hull did not take to the water.

For the IIID's, Peter Bloomfield in Pobjoy Mint Two won the National



Howard Wretham celebrates his British Class III win with David Spicer of Computer Automation

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championship despite a first place by Ian Birnie in Miss Avia Watches. Ian was disqualified for missing a buoy but as he later explained 'I saw a few boats going the wrong way, so I stayed with them, and then I turned back and went round Browndown Outfall'. The decision was later reversed but in the championship he finished 19 points behind Bloomfield.

Bill Matcham scored a hat-trick in the IIIB championships and he has driven his Yamaha powered Blu-fin through the most abominable conditions this season to gain this well-deserved honour.

Fifteen boats retired during the course of the race and there were ten non-starters. Not surprisingly, the cruiser class section, which has been well supported all season, found the conditions to their liking and once again, Peter Hewitt in Vergo led the five survivors to the finish line.

David Vine was coerced into conducting the prizegiving with his usual savoir-faire and the Stuyvesant championships certainly finished on an optimistic and happy note.

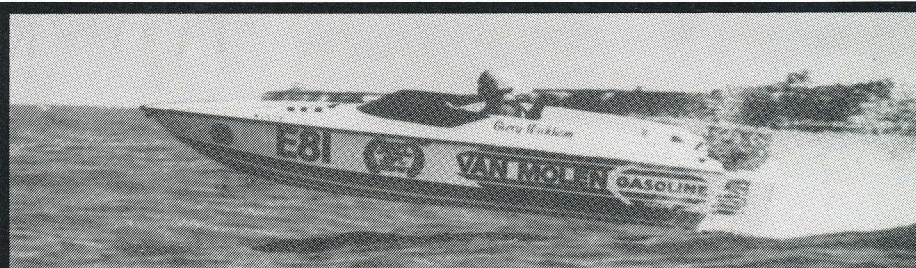
Class III Championship — IIID Drivers: P.Bloomfield — 89 — 1st; I.Birnie — 80 — 2nd. **IIID Navigators:** J.Baker — 89 — 1st; A.Baldwin — 74 — 2nd. **IIIC Drivers:** H.Wretham — 116 — 1st; L.Walling — 96 — 2nd. **IIIC Navigators:** M.Jones — 96 — 1st; R.White — 94 — 2nd. **IIIB Drivers:** W.Matcham — 93 — 1st; S.Pile — 73 — 2nd. **IIIB Navigators:** T.Hedges — 93 — 1st; E.Smillie — 55 — 2nd.

UKOBA Championship: Class I Ted Toleman; Class II Robert Cook; Class I and II combine Robert Cook; Class IIId and III overall Ian Birnie (75); Class IIIC Les Walling (74); Class IIIB Bill Matcham (64); Class IV Derek Mortimore.

GRANDE FINALE

The last race of the John Player World Series at 's Hertogenbosch (Holland) was truly worthy of the title 'Grande Finale'. An exciting two-day competition, where each heat brought more suspense than the preceding one, saw Britain's Bob Spalding (Johnson V8/JPS) in OZ and Norway's Tom-Erik Braaten in OE take the laurels.

It was acknowledged prior to the race that Renato Molinari (not present in



Les Salvidge wins for the second year

1981 CLASS IV CHAMPION

For the second year running Les Salvidge driving a Marshan 16 'Van Molen Gasoline' powered by a 115 hp Mercury, has won the Class IVE National Production Boat Racing Championship.

His main opposition this year came from Tony Sheldon driving a Fonda powered by the new 1981 115hp Mercury, and Eddie Fraser driving a Mariner powered Fletcher. Les Salvidge has had five outright First places, which puts him in an invincible position.

Holland because of preparations for his participation in the F3 World Sprint Championship in Milan could not be beaten on points and would be the final winner of the John Player Special World Series. But it would have been interesting to see how the Italian champion would have reacted faced with the display of power of several Formula 1 drivers at 's Hertogenbosch. A crowd of soaked-through spectators were certainly treated to some very exciting driving.

In the battle for F1 championship points, two of the V6 drivers competed with five V8-equipped drivers and put on a spectacle of skill and tenacity in chasing their bigger-engined colleagues. French JPS-driver Francois Salabert had to settle for 7th place overall, after hitting a turn buoy robbed him of a well-deserved 2nd place in the first heat. But fate was kinder to Arthur Mostert of Holland, who had recovered from his 'flip' the week before at Vichy, and he did well to take 6th place.

In the absence of his team leader Molinari, Italian Lillo Colombo defended the Tecnicar colours by taking 5th place, although he couldn't detract from the four Johnson V8 drivers who made the Dutch Grand Prix an unforgettable event. Bob Spalding, leading driver of the JPS three-men team, drove his black-and-gold Velden rig to triumph by heading the points table from start to finish. But this doesn't mean that his victory was an easy one in any way. His own teammate Tom Percival,

Welshman Roger Jenkins (Johnson V8/Gordon's Gin), and, of course, Cees Van der Velden kept up the most merciless pressure seen so far this season.

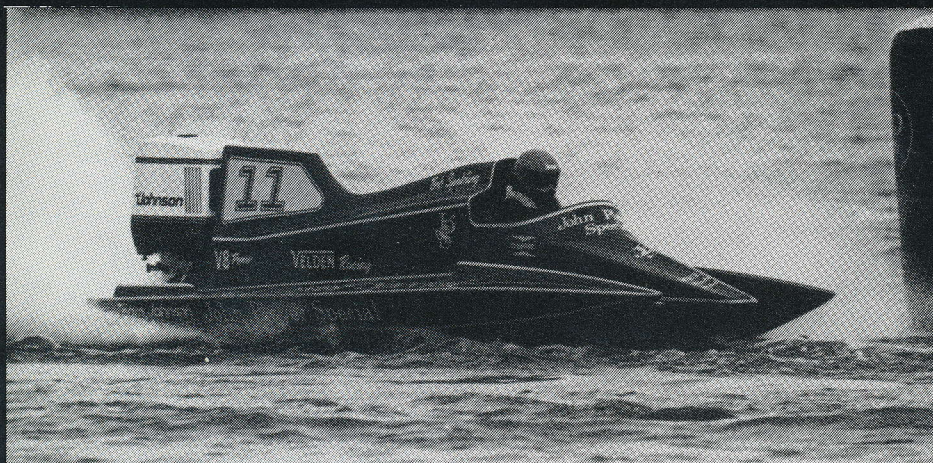
But Spalding wasn't to be deterred, winning both heats on the first day. On the second day, first Van der Velden and then Jenkins had their revenge each winning one heat. The last heat had even the most experienced spectators in the Press Boat breathless with excitement at the pressure of the struggle between Jenkins and Spalding. Their catamarans seemed almost to touch as Jenkins tried to overtake Spalding on the inside at each turn, and it took a few moments before it could be seen that Spalding was still keeping Jenkins at bay. Tom Percival was right on their tails, after Van der Velden had spun around a turning buoy due to a damaged propeller blade.

Spalding became aware that he now equalled Van der Velden in the classification for the JPS Formula One Series, and when Jenkins once again performed another of his daring manoeuvres and managed to break through Spalding's lead, the latter also gave way to his teammate Percival to follow through. But it was too late to catch the 'unchained' Jenkins who went on to claim the heat and earn himself 2nd place overall.

Notwithstanding the presence of the mighty powerboat craft in the Formula One Series at 's Hertogenbosch, attention did not slacken for one moment from the OE Class catamarans competing in the Aspen Formula 3 World Series.

The three outstanding participants on this particular occasion were Swedish Evinrude driver and new World Series Champion Lasse Ström (Akai), Dutchman Cor Krouwel (Johnson), and Norwegian Evinrude driver Tom-Erik Braaten, winner of the Dutch Grand Prix.

This year's Formula Three competition has been marked by, amongst others, the consistent rise to success of Scandinavian drivers. First there was Ove Thorkildsen from Norway who made a promising start to the season, then Lasse Ström of Sweden (Evinrude/Akai) who started dominating the Series at the Nottingham Grand Prix, and last but not least Tom-Erik Braaten of Norway, third in Drammen and now winner of the Dutch Grand Prix. Rumour has it that more Scandinavian drivers are



Bob Spalding won the OZ race in Holland

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preparing to participate in next year's Formula 3 World Series.

Connoisseurs had already predicted a successful future in Formula 3 for Braaten Junior — following in father's footsteps. But even the most optimistic among them had not expected his success so soon. It is true that in 's Hertogenbosch some important competitors were absent (Redaelli, Thorkildsen) and that others were faced with adversity (Hill, Frost), but Braaten's victory was not just some good fortune.

On the contrary, this young Norwegian

Evinrude driver earned the title of winner thanks to meticulous preparation for the race and some dashing driving. Lasse Ström and Cor Krouwel were left in no doubt right from the start of the first heat. With only centimetres between them, Krouwel and Braaten went flying down the straight side-by-side towards the turning buoy. The Norwegian won this first duel and the first heat as well — but was he going to be able to hold his pace?

With each heat speeds increased as each of these three men tried to do better than the others. But at the end of the two days

young Tom-Erik had two 1st places and two 2nd places to his credit, and victory was his! Lasse Ström followed with two 1st and two 3rd places, and for Cor Krouwel two 2nd and two 3rd places gave him 3rd overall.

In the final overall positions for the Aspen Formula 3 World Series, the indisputed winner was Swede Lasse Ström, with runner-up John Hill (Great Britain), Dutchman Cor Krouwel in 3rd place, Dutchman Grootegeed in 4th, and an amazing leap from 15th to 5th place overall for the Norwegian Braaten.



Peter Bloomfield in Pobjoy Mint Two won the IIID championships