

# World Championship for "C" Hydro at Picton – 1961

Article: Ken Kirk

Photos: Alex Gray & Brian Hendrick

The summer of 1961 marked the first time ever that the Union International Motonautique, (UIM), had held the International World Championship races for "C" class outboards in Canada. This annual "C" class World Championship was called the John Ward Trophy race, the trophy having been created in 1926 in honour of John Ward, the founding Secretary General of the UIM.

It was a brilliant idea to have the 1961 John Ward Trophy races as part of the Harmsworth Trophy race weekend on Long Reach at Picton. Miss Supertest III would successfully defend the Harmsworth Trophy for Canada racing against the American challenger, Miss Detroit. The Harmsworth Trophy was also a UIM trophy signifying the World Championship for Unlimited Class Hydroplanes. This was the third successive year that Canada's Miss Supertest III would win the Harmsworth.

For the general public the importance of the John Ward Trophy races was overshadowed by Miss Supertest III and the Harmsworth. However for outboard fans this was a major international event bringing together the best of the UIM with the American Power Boat Assoc., (APBA), and the Canadian Boating Federation, (CBF).

It was agreed by these three governing bodies that the small differences in the specs for Class "C" between

Europe and North America be waived and that any motor classified as a "C" motor by any of the three jurisdictions would be eligible to compete.

This made for a very interesting field of outboards. You had opposed firing Johnson PR's and Hubbel's, 4 cyl. Mercury Mark 30 H's, and from Europe the 2 and 3 cyl. "C" class Konigs. Of course Dieter Konig was there himself to compete.

In addition to Dieter Konig from Berlin Germany, the European contingent included Dieter Schulz from Berlin, Gerhard Von Raffay from Hamburg and Joe Ulrich from Switzerland. MLAOC Member Brian Hendrick was assigned by the CBF to assist Joe Ulrich during the week leading up to the races. Subsequently Brian was asked to assist Konig, Schulz and Von Raffay as well.

The four Europeans did not bring any race boats with them, just their Konig outboards. Dieter Schultz had designed a revolutionary new style hydro called a "cabover". It was the first of the hydros where the driver lay flat on his stomach in the boat with his head virtually at the apex of the shovel nose, the steering wheel just under his chin. On his arrival in North America, Schultz built three of these boats at the Sid Craft boat shop in Edson, N. J..



The start of the first heat of the 15-boat final for the John Ward race. Note the boat in the right of picture which is being driven by Germany's Dieter Konig — it is of new design with the driver in a prone position. Photos by Alex Gray

# World Championship for "C" hydro at Picton – 1961

Brian Hendrik tells me that when the three boats arrived from New Jersey for Konig, Schulz and Von Raffay, the varnish had not yet hardened. The boats needed to be totally rigged, steering and throttle controls installed, tested and adjusted. Brian assisted in the process and introduced the team to the local Canadian Tire store. The Swiss champion, Ulrich, was loaned a Swift "D" hydro by a CBF member. Brian helped Ulrich rig this outfit, even taped a Swiss Cross to the deck, however the "D" boat was just too heavy to be competitive and Ulrich ultimately finished in 11<sup>th</sup> place.

The American contingent was led by Homer Kincaid, Milford Harrison and Bud Wiget. There were 16 entries from the U.S, in all.

There were 7 Canadians in the field including Chuck Simon from Las Salle, Quebec, Ray Ogier from Burlington and Jim Aldridge from Port Union. The racing course was three miles long, the front and back straights being just over a mile in length. Each heat was two laps, a total of six miles. The long straights produced high top speeds. Average lap speeds for the top runners was in excess of 66 mph, (100 kph).

Two elimination heats were held to determine the boats that would qualify for the 16 starting positions in the two heat final.

Germany's Garhard Von Raffay had a spectacular crash in the first elimination heat and failed to qualify for the final. Canadian Jean Noel Herbert from Ville de Lery, Quebec, distinguished himself with a strong second place finish in his elimination heat. Canadians Simon, Glenney and Ogier all experienced motor problems and failed to qualify.

In the two heat final Homer Kincaid took the first heat just three seconds ahead of Dieter Konig. In the second heat of the final, Konig was the winner with Kincaid finishing fourth. This gave Dieter Konig the overall win and the John Ward Trophy. Americans Homer Kincaid and Ted Thompson were second and third and Germany's Dieter Schultze was fourth. Canada's Jean Noel Herbert finished a very strong fifth place overall having kept Homer Kincaid behind him for most of the hotly contested second heat with the top five boats running just seconds apart right to the finish line. Local hero, Doug Thompson, from Wellington in Prince Edward County, finished a very credible 10<sup>th</sup> against this world class field.

*Cont'd pg.6*



Left to right: Joe Ulrich, Switzerland; Gerhard Von Raffay, Hamburg; CBF club director Frank Ardron; Dieter Schulze, Austria; Hans Moosner and Dieter Konig, West Berlin. The European entrants for the Ward race were loud in their praise of the conduct of the race.



Congratulations for Dieter Konig in his John Ward Trophy win were extended by Commodore Jay Sprague (left) on behalf of the Prince Edward Yacht Club of Picton, Ont., co-sponsors of the event, and Commodore Wallace Wood (right) of the Canadian Boating Federation.



# World Championship for "C" hydro at Picton – 1961

*Cont`d*

For myself, it was a great experience to be at the John Ward Trophy Races at Picton in 1961. Through my water skiing exploits I had a contact with Jay Sprague, Commodore of the Prince Edward Yacht Club at Picton, host Yacht Club for the Harmsworth. When Mr. Sprague heard that I was very interested in Miss Supertest and the Harmsworth Trophy races he arranged for me to have Pit Passes for the Harmsworth and for the John Ward Trophy races as well. When I went to Mr. Spragues home to pick up my passes he introduced me to Dieter Konig and Dieter Schulze who were his house guests for their time in Canada. I remember playing several rounds of billiards with the two Dieters. I must admit that, at the time, I did not fully understand or appreciate the significance of the John Ward Trophy or the magnitude of Dieter Konig as a racing outboard designer, builder and driver. It was only later that I realized how fortunate I had been to meet this iconic figure and to witness a John Ward Trophy race from the pits.

Brian Hendrick, who I did not know at the time, had a much closer connection to Dieter Konig and the other racers at Picton, being a fully participating member of a pit crew. I know Brian treasures these memories as well.

The John Ward Trophy Races were held in Canada again, at Valleyfield Quebec, in 1967 as part of Canada's Centennial Celebrations.



Picton's popular race-sponsoring Mayor, Harvey J. McFarlane, presenting the famous John Ward Trophy to Dieter Konig.

**Authors Note:** Much of the factual information in this article comes from an article written by Bob Finlayson and published in the July/August 1961 issue of Canadian Boating Magazine. Also from information provided by Brian Hendrik and from my own memories of the event. The photo's are by Alex Gray and were taken from the same issue of Canadian Boating Magazine.



Dieter Konig, bareback to the camera, setting up his rig in the pits at Picton.



The pits, with a wide verity of "C" Class Mercs, Konigs & OMC based apposed firing twins.