

# McChord Off Duty

McChord Air Force Base, Wash.

Connecting Team McChord with the Combat Airlift Mission

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## Local hydroplane team races for more than fame, fortune

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It's common for high speed boat races to draw huge crowds, but in the case of one team, it also drew together members of all four services for a good cause.

Namron Racing is a non-profit 5-Litre hydroplane team, led by co-owners and co-drivers Bud and Gigi McKay. The support team is comprised of civilians, active-duty and prior military servicemembers.

Mr. McKay is employed as a civilian in the 62nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office as well as an Air Force Reserve master sergeant at the 446th Airlift Wing's Public Affairs Office. Gigi McKay, a former motorcycle cop, is the security manager and guest services manager for the Kitsap Mall in Silverdale.

Andy Foster, Bud's stepbrother from Auburn, is the team's crew chief. Mr. Foster has worked for numerous automotive drag racing teams in the Puget Sound area. He works with his uncle, Gus Foster, one of the most sought-after race engine gurus in the Pacific Northwest, to build the motors for the Namron Racing Team.

Brandon Payne, a civilian employed at the 62nd AW Operations Support Squadron and a 123rd Fighter Squadron aircrew data manager at Portland Air National Guard Base, Ore.; Mark Cabral, retired Navy; Chuck Burks, a Marine Corps veteran; and John Perry, retired Army; round out the all-volunteer crew for the Namron Racing Team.

All prize money and show money the team earns is donated to charity organizations supporting cancer research. Additionally, at each race site the Namron Racing Team competes in, the team sells raffle tickets for an end-of-season drawing. All proceeds from the raffle will be donated toward cancer research as well.

"Not only is hydroplane racing one of the most exciting forms of motor sport racing that the whole family can enjoy, it's a fantastic platform for touching millions of race fans through marketing," said Mr. McKay. "As well as being competitive racers and ambassadors in the sport of hydroplane racing, Gigi and I want to bring awareness to cancer research and programs like hospice. We're not just racing to win hydroplane races; we're truly racing for a cure of cancer."

The Namron Racing Team plans to compete in 10 to 12 races in the American Power Boat Association's Region 10 area, which includes Washington, Idaho, Oregon and western Montana, as well as the Unlimited Lights Hydroplane Racing Association's "Lighter than Lights" series. The season opener is at Lawrence Lake in Yelm May 14 and 15.

The 5-Litre class of hydroplanes, mostly 18 to 22 feet long, is the most competitive and popular class of all inboard hydroplane racing. Boats in this class can reach close to 120 mph



Bud and Gigi McKay show off their hydroplane Tuesday at Veteran's Memorial Park in Silverdale. This park will be the site for the quicksilver Race August 12-14 — Namron Racing Team's home water.



photos courtesy of Namron Racing Team

**Hydroplane boats can reach speeds up to 120 mph during competition.**

in competition with as many as 10 boats charging into the first turn.

"I can't wait to get out on the course and mix it up a little," Mrs. McKay said. "In this class, we'll be racing at some incredible speeds and very close together. But being competitive is just one goal for our team. Knowing we are racing for a cure of cancer is very personal to me and very important."

Mrs. McKay is a four-time cancer survivor. Two of those cancers were diagnosed as terminal.

"If I can beat those odds, beating the guys out on the water doesn't look so impossible," she said.

The Namron Racing Team is named after Mr. McKay's dad — Norman McKay. Namron is simply Norman spelled backward and the name his dad called his woodworking shop. Norman McKay passed away from cancer in February 2003. A few

Race Dates 2005	
Lawrence Lake, Yelm, Wash.,	May 14-15
Lake Spanaway, Spanaway, Wash.,	May 22
Snake River, Clarkston, Wash.,	May 28-29*
Lake Washington, Renton,	June 4-5
Lake Sammamish, Issaquah, Wash.,	June 11-12 (Lighter Than Lights)
Columbia River, Entiat, Wash.,	June 18-19*
Snake River, Burley, Id.,	June 24-26
Lake Osoyoos, Oroville, Wash.,	July 2-3
Black Lake, Olympia, Wash.,	July 9-10
Black Lake, Olympia, Wash.,	July 23-24 (Lighter Than Lights)
Puget Sound, Silverdale, Wash.,	Aug. 12-14 (Lighter Than Lights)
Columbia River, Pateros, Wash.,	Aug. 27-28
Lake Spanaway, Spanaway, Wash.,	Sept. 10
Lake Chelan, Chelan, Wash.,	Sept. 24-25
Puget Sound, Port Angeles, Oct. 1-2	(Lighter Than Lights)
Lake Sammamish, Issaquah, Wash.,	Oct. 1-2
Devil's Lake, Lincoln City, Or.,	Oct. 15-16
* Tentative race	
Lighter Than Light races featuring Unlimited Lights hydroplane series	

months later, Mrs. McKay lost her "favorite" uncle, Floyd Burks, to cancer as well.

"My dad was a true hydro nut and passed that passion onto me," Mr. McKay said. "Gigi's Uncle Floyd loved anything that was fast and loud and passed that onto Gigi. We know that both of them are cheering us on from their front-row seats," he said.

"When we first started to talk about what we wanted to do with hydroplane racing, we had people asking to join our team before we even had a team," Mrs. McKay said. "There may be teams that have more money and better equipment, but you won't find a team with a heart and a passion to be the best like the Namron Racing Team."

(More information about Namron Racing can be found at <http://www.namronracing.com>)