



Tacoma Inboard Racing Association

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NEWS RELEASE

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Hydroplane racers sock it to Katrina

Racing action Sunday on Spanaway Lake offers thanks and hope

TACOMA, Wash. – Be sure to pack your sunscreen and picnic lunch for Sunday’s Neil Yapachino Memorial Regatta at Spanaway Lake sponsored by Sumner’s Sunset Chevrolet. Oh, and bring a new pair of socks, too.

Admission is free to see the nation’s top hydroplane drivers compete on the mile-and-a-quarter course, but unlimited hydroplane veteran and Gold Cup champion Terry Troxell, commodore of the host Tacoma Inboard Racing Association, asks fans to donate a new pair of socks for the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

“You’d be surprised how something so small as a new pair of socks can mean so much,” Troxell said. “We’ve named it ‘Operation Sock it to Katrina’ in hopes these socks help the victims get back on their feet as fast as they can.”

What started out as just an idea from Renee Richards, part of the Richards Racing family that sports the national high point-leading national modified hydroplane — Miss Shoreline Sign and Awning, has left her socked...make that shocked.

“I had originally hoped to raise 200 pair of new socks, but I got that in one day just from my neighborhood,” said Richards. “I have neighbors bringing over toothpaste, tooth brushes, liquid shower soaps – it’s unbelievable.”

It’s Richard’s hope that the donated items will reach a Louisiana shelter being supervised by an East Coast American Power Boat Association member, Ralph Baker.

Baker is currently supervising a Denham, La., shelter for victims of Hurricane Katrina. Baker, a long-time hydroplane official and crewmember from Easton, Md., put the word out for help throughout the boat racing community. His shelter is also taking care of special needs children, babies and people

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who were injured in the devastating hurricane. Shoreline Sign and Awning is paying for the postage to send the donated items directly to the shelter.

On the heels of Operation Sock it to Katrina, the Tacoma Inboard Racing Association is also honoring military members, police officers and firefighters as they observe the anniversary of 9-11. Military members, police officers and firefighters are invited to be honorary crewmembers or flaggers during the race.

Honorary crew members help hold the boats in the water as well as learn what it takes to make a race boat fly over the water at 140 mph. Honorary flaggers will be announced over the PA system for the race and will wave the flags that start the race.

Military members, police officers and firefighters who'd like to be honorary crew members or flaggers can call Bud McKay at 360-275-4211 or via email at bud.mckay@namronracing.com. Deadline is 8 p.m. Sept. 10.

And if that's not enough action for one day, more than 100 motorcycle riders are expected to end their charity Poker Run near the pits of the race in support of Gigi McKay, co-owner and co-driver of the Namron Racing Team's 5-Litre hydroplane. Gigi McKay is one of 40 breast cancer survivors selected from the United States, United Kingdom and Australia to take part in the Harley-Davidson "Changing Gears – The Global Run." Gigi McKay will ride in the United States' leg in Southern California in late September to raise money for breast cancer support programs. Namron Racing Team donates all prize and show money they earn to cancer support and cancer research programs.

Once Gigi McKay arrives on her Harley-Davidson Road King Classic after the Poker Run, she'll get out of her leathers and into her red drivers suit and climb in the cockpit of her hydroplane.

There's still time to join the Poker Run, call Gigi McKay at 360-275-4211 or email her at gigi.mckay@namronracing.com.

Sunday's Neil Yapachino Memorial Regatta is free and open to the public; racing starts around 11 a.m. Twelve classes of inboard hydroplanes are expected for the race – almost 70 boats. Region 10, which includes a four-state area that includes Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana, features the leaders in national high points in almost every class.