

(SPEED ZONE)

'05

LAKE HAVASU, ARIZONA

RIDERS
WATCH

Skat-Trak World Finals

As this issue of *Ride* was going to press, racers were still jockeying for slots at the 24th annual USBA World Finals at Lake Havasu, Ariz., on Oct. 11-16, at Crazy Horse Campground. Skat-Trak is the title sponsor for this year's finals.

It looked likely that many of 2004's top contenders would face each other again this year (the qualifying cutoff date was Aug. 28). Look for Steven Dauliach of France to defend his title in the Pro Ski division, while Eric Malone and Chris MacClugage will be looking for gold again in Pro Freestyle and Pro Runabout 1200, respectively.

America will also be gunning for an eighth USBA Nations Cup, which goes to the country with the best finishers in the world championship classes. If Team USA prevails, it would be America's sixth consecutive cup win. Thailand was second and Canada third in last year's Finals.

Bjorn Tangeland, USBA Executive Director, said they were just beginning to tally entries at our press time, and estimated there would be about 800 riders in all classes. Some are new to the sport, just learning their chops, while others are emerging as strong contenders in their classes.

Ride asked Joe McLaughlin of jetskinews.com to scout out an eclectic group of Havasu-bound riders who you will probably see near the front of the pack.

Janelle Barr, Seattle Wash. (Region 3). Racing in Pro-Women Ski.

Sponsors: Blowsion, JSU racing, Skat-Trak, Slippery, UMI, Fly, Hydro-turf, Factory Pipe.

Barr, who is married to pro racer Parker Lund, has been racing since 1997. With two World Titles in hand, she is headed to Havasu determined to claim a third.



JANELLE BARR

"This year is going to be a great year for the women's class," she says. "It is going to be very competitive and definitely one of the best classes to watch."

"I race for self gratification and the exercise. Oh yeah ... and for fun," she says. Her husband has been an inspiration to her: "Parker has been very dedicated to the sport and has always managed to keep a positive attitude," she says. "He and I have been very successful and competitive due to all of his hard work." They plan to retire from racing after this year, "So we plan to give it everything we've got!"

When not racing, she likes to ride Banks Lake in eastern Washington state.

K.C. Heidler, Orange County, Calif. (Region 1 and 2). Amateur Veteran's Runabout 1200 Open.

Sponsors: Tom's Truck Center, Inc. and Suzuki Depot, both in Santa Ana, CA.

Two-time World Champion in the Amateur Veteran's Runabout 1200 Open (2002 and 2003), Heidler is gunning for a lofty goal: to win five Veteran Runabout World Championships. That drive is intensified by having been disqualified last year on a technical rule after winning the event. "The rule has now been changed, in my favor, for 2005," Heidler says.

Heidler has been competing for four years. He started riding Kawasaki on the Colorado River as a teenager. "I do it because I love the water, love PWC and love the physical and aggressive competition. I was inspired by Lisa Messenger, a Pro Women's Stand-up racer who became my fitness trainer and introduced me to the racing circuit.

"I really believe that what makes me competitive is the dedication of my crew chief, Pee-wee Price, and crew members. You can

only win if you have a fast ski and a good crew. The rider is only one-third of a winning race. I really value my crew and their efforts."

The Heidler team practices in the ocean off of Dana Point, Calif., and lists the Long Beach Harbor to Catalina Island run as a favorite.

Duvlaca Holland, Sacramento, Calif. (Region 2). Racing in Pro-Am Women's Ski Limited and Expert Ski Limited at World Finals and regional competitions. She has also raced in Pro-Am Ski Open and Pro-Am Veteran's Ski Open at Regional competitions.

Sponsorships/Endorsements: ULTIMATE Watercraft Performance, TBM Racing, Slippery, Blowsion, Chaney Sports Chiro, and DesertNomad.com.

Holland has been riding for six years and racing for the past three. "I love training and coming home totally exhausted, gaining new skills and having new accomplishments, and the camaraderie of my peers in watercross racing."

She is driven by the desire to continue improving and, ultimately, by her sheer tenacity.



and is vice president of Pinnacle Technical Resources, the family owned information technology firm in Dallas. Pinnacle was recently named 2005 Entrepreneur of the Year Award in the Southwest Region by professional services firm Ernst & Young LLP. Vaca was also recognized by the *Dallas Morning News* as one of the area's most successful young executives.

Vaca's taken a different approach to sponsorship than many rac-



FREDDY VACA

"My first race the weather was thunder, lightning and sleet; I didn't really know anybody or know anything about racing, and I got easily lapped by most of the other competitors and was exhausted when I finished. Nonetheless, I decided that I can *do* this, and I made the commitment to keep racing and become a strong competitor.

"Being competitive by nature, I was interested in getting into racing almost as soon as I got my first PWC. Finally, I decided now or never and just showed up to race."

Her favorite spots to ride include Sherman Island, Folsom Lake, Camp Far West, and the Lake Oroville Afterbay.

Freddy Vaca, Dallas, TX.

Amateur R/A 1200 Open Novice
R/A 1200 Limited.

Sponsors: Coca-Cola of North Texas, American Airlines, Sims Racing, Stadium Yamaha, Full Throttle Energy Drink, Pinnacle Technical Resources, Riva Racing.

Freddy Vaca made a big splash last year in his first season of racing, taking regional first-place titles in Novice R/A 1200 Super Stock Overall, 1200 Limited and Novice R/A 1200 Super Stock, and a second in Novice R/A 1200 Limited Overall. He followed up with a 3rd place national finish in Novice R/A 1200 Limited and 5th in Novice R/A 1200 Super Stock, and capped

the season by coming in eighth in the World Finals in Novice R/A 1200 Limited.

This season, he has been among the top finishers in regional competition and is hungry for gold at the World Finals. He's one of the leaders of the growing PWC riders association, working to enhance the sport in the 21st century.

Off-water, Vaca's a driven entrepreneur

ers, going outside the PWC industry for support from companies such as American Airlines and the regional Coca-Cola bottler. He also works hard to promote the sport, and seek support, within Dallas' Hispanic community.

Young people are the future of every sport, and with youth like 14-year-old Andrew Harris and 17-year-old Eric Hewitt, PWC racing has lots to look forward to:



ANDREW HARRIS

Andrew Harris, Lake Anna, Va.

Junior Division
Stock and Limited.

Sponsors: Ski Worx, Richmond Restorations, The Boat Shop of Lake Anna, Impros prop repair and sales.

In just his first year of racing, Harris rose to be the points leader in the USWRA junior division in stock and limited class. He's a straight-A student and on his high school wrestling team. He and his family live on the shores of Lake Anna in central Virginia, so he is always just a few minutes away from a ride.

Competing in the World Finals will be a learning experience, with the best in the world teaching the lessons. Who knows, Andrew Harris could be head of the class before we know it?



ERIC HEWITT

Eric Hewitt, Placerville, Calif.

Junior 14-15 Stock.

Sponsor: Liquid Militia Apparel.

Turning 17 just before the World Finals, Eric Hewitt only began racing in 2003, but already has an impressive record. He placed 4th in World Junior 14-15 Stock in 2003 and 2004, and is looking to grab some gold this year. With Shawn Alladio as his team manager, Hewitt is well supplied with know-how and motivation, and says he draws his inspiration from his father. He lives by the motto, "Train Hard, Be Fair, Race to Win," which is a pretty good motto for anyone.