

Harrison Race Team

Introduction

Keith Harrison's power boating racing career has spanned over 40 years, from the early days in the mid 60's racing a slightly modified wooden ski boat with a Holden six cylinder engine to today debuting a brand new state of the art, carbon fibre hulled Grand Prix Hydroplane.

In between those years Keith has raced and owned 10 different boats in various classes winning many titles along the way.

In 2007 the Australian Power Boat Association inducted Keith into the Victorian Council 'Hall Of Fame' for recognition for outstanding achievements within the sport. He has also been awarded life membership to his home racing club the Melbourne Runabout and Speedboat.

What is Grand Prix Hydroplane?

Grand Prix Hydroplane as its name suggests hints at the elite.

Grand Prix Hydroplanes are the Worlds fastest automotive circuit race boats with speeds of up to 180mph. The hulls are constructed of the most up to date fibre composite carbon and kevlar material similar to that used in F1 car racing. The craft are propelled by 510ci supercharged or turbocharged engines producing approximately 1600hp and rev to approximately 8 - 8,500 rpm.

For safety drivers or pilots as they are known, are strapped into an F16 style fully enclosed cockpit, fitted with roll cage and bottom hatch, which allows the driver to be extracted in an upturned boat. The driver utilises an on board air supply system which enables the driver breathe in an upside down boat, giving the optimum in safety.

Grand Prix Hydroplanes race on inland waterways over a 2,000 meter oval circuit consisting of four laps with up to six other boats at the one time.

The Harrison Race Team

This team is a family, literally. Today this team is back together again in a brand new Grand Prix Hydroplane after a short break from the sport.

The Harrison race team consists of team owner Keith Harrison, his son and pilot of the craft Grant, brother Geoff and nephew Glenn. Also making up the team is long time friend and race team engine builder and engineer Geoff Sheldrake, Grant Rollason who designed and built the hull and Paul Morrow.

The team began competing in the Grand Prix Class in 1990 and have many titles in their career. Pilot Grant Harrison first campaigned his own limited class boats debuting in 1987 and then in 1994 his father retired from the driving duties and since then the father and son combinations been together.

Highlights

The career highlight for this team was in 2004 when they travelled to New Zealand and won the Union Internationale Motonautique (U.I.M) **World Grand Prix Hydroplane Championship**. The win was Australia's first World Title won by any Australian Power Boat team.

The team also won back to back Australasian Championships in 2004 and 2005, the Australian Championship and Victorian Championships on a couple of occasions and were only beaten once in the four seasons the famous 'GP101' GP Hydro competed.

Disappointments

In 2005 after winning the World Championship, the team's first race back on Australian waters, in testing the craft hit debris in the water, causing a serious accident which left Grant in a life threatening accident and the magnificent GP101 hydro destroyed. Fortunately the safety cell help save Grant, however the boat was left a write off.

The new boat.

GP1 is the craft built by Grant Rollason and the Harrison Race team. It is a Grand Prix Hydroplane hull similar to GP101 but with many subtle improvements, built to latest specialist carbon fibre composite laminate technologies it is very light and strong and comes in at minimum class weights.

The future.

With a 2 successful season's behind them where Grant almost drove GP1 to a miraculous win until a broken propeller blade cost the team victory in the 2009 EC Griffith Cup in their first ever race meeting in the brand new boat. Last season GP1 won the Australian Unlimited Unrestricted Open Championship the 'Hayes Wood Trophy'.

For 2010 the team's focus is on the World Championship to be held on Lake Mulwala late November and to reclaim a title they have once held.

Career Achievements

Keith Harrison – Debut 1966

Keith's achievements, championships wins, speed records reach almost one hundred, making a list here would be almost an essay.

Undoubtable Keith's career highlights as an owner/ driver would have been his win in 1986, in the E.C Griffith Cup Australasian Unlimited Championship. The win was a first for an automotive engine in over 10 years wresting the previous domination away from the aircraft powered engined hydroplanes.

Also as owner the 2003/04/05 years winning every major championship, including Victorian, Australian and Australasian championships as well as creating history being the first to win the U.I.M. World Grand Prix Hydroplane championship in the southern hemisphere.

Career Achievements

Grant Harrison – Debut 1987

1989 Victorian 5.2 litre Displacement State Championship

1991 New South Wales 7.5 Litre Hydroplane Championship

2001 Victorian Grand Prix Hydroplane Championship "*Len Owen Trophy*"

2003 Victorian Grand Prix Hydroplane Championship "*Len Owen Trophy*"

2004 NSW Open Unlimited Open Championship "*Eastway Shield*"

2004 Australian Grand Prix Hydroplane Championship "*Mary & Ernie Nunn Trophy*"

2004 Australasian Unlimited Unrestricted Championship '*EC Griffith Cup*'

2004 U.I.M World Grand Prix Hydroplane Championship

2005 Australasian Unlimited Unrestricted Championship '*EC Griffith Cup*'

2008 Victorian Oz Lite (1.6 ltr) Hydroplane Championship

2009 Australian Unlimited Unrestricted Open Championship "*Hayes Wood Trophy*"



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