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Bay City Native, Amy Green, To Compete at Harbor Beach Maritime Festival

By Janis Stein

Photo's courtesy of Ronny Mac



Bay City native Amy Green is excited to race during this year's Harbor Beach Maritime Festival, the American Power Boat Association (APBA) racing event scheduled for July 12-13. With its prime location on Lake Huron, Harbor Beach is a premier racing site on the APBA National Tour.

Racing on the National Tour since 2004, Green thrills at creating her own action in the water, and no doubt has made more than one head turn as she battles her way, lap after lap. Last year at Harbor Beach, Green beat her competitors in the women's runabout and, once again, walked away a

champion. Competitive racing action also brought home a victory for Green in the women's division for the 2007 National Tour.

Green grew up in Bay City, Michigan, and enjoyed spending many childhood days with her family doing water-related activities. After graduating from Michigan State, Green lived on the banks of Lake Michigan. Green reflects, "I bought my first personal watercraft, and it was a standup Yamaha SuperJet. I started riding in Lake Michigan with my friends."

In 1995, Green moved to California. Since most everyone rode runabouts, Green decided to make the switch, too. After attending a race as a spectator, Green decided to try her own hand at racing in 1998. What started out as racing for fun quickly turned into her favorite pastime. After earning three world championships and nine national championships, she still can't imagine life without the thrill of the race. Along with competing in the women's division, Green has also raced with the regular men's division for years. She is the only woman racing in what is considered the men's runabout, while another female rider races her male counterparts in the standup. According to Green's experience, riding the standups are a bit more difficult; she embraces the speed in the runabout race.

When the competitors hit the water, gender is not an issue. It's all but the thrill of the race. "Initially it might have been a bit unusual to have a female in the mix, but I've been racing so long with a lot of the same guys, it's just the norm. No one really takes any special notice anymore."



How does Green not only keep up to, but often surpass, some of her brawny male counterparts? Training. Training. And more training. Green utilizes both cardio and weight workouts to ensure her physical prowess on the water during races that can last as long as 20 minutes. “I train for endurance for overall physical fitness, because racing takes strength. It also takes cardio ability to maintain your level of riding skill throughout the race,” explains Green.

Regardless of her physical shape, a racer can sometimes be only as good as her machine allows. Having a good mechanic is critical. “My mechanic, Kenny Sims of Dallas, Texas, is one of the best in the country. He builds and maintains all my boats,” adds Green.

Green currently owns three machines; all are Yamaha GP1300R’s. In racing, watercrafts are classified in three categories: stock, limited and superstock. All three of Green’s Yamaha’s are modified to the limited class specs, and each serves its own purpose.



Green uses her fluorescent orange machine primarily as her practice boat, while her white boat and her black boat are geared toward specific track sizes. “I have one boat set up for top speed and one that is set up for acceleration. Courses on the lake can vary from 50 seconds per lap to as many as two minutes per lap if there are longer runs between the buoys. When I’m racing in Harbor Beach, I will race the white boat during the day, during the tour classes and, in the evening, I will race the black boat in the Can-Am.”

Last year marked the first time she raced in Harbor Beach and, for Green, that weekend will forever hold special memories: Green’s 93-year-old grandfather, Lawrence Clemens, traveled to Harbor Beach to watch his granddaughter fly across Lake Huron, racing in the sport that has become her passion. “My grandfather is one of my biggest supports, but because of the locations of the races across the country, he has only had the opportunity to watch me race in person twice, once in Bay City in 2003 and last year in Harbor Beach.” According to Green, her grandfather awaits the Harbor Beach Maritime Festival with quiet anticipation. To say Lawrence Clemens is proud of his granddaughter – and her skill and ability - would be an understatement. “Grandpa will be in Harbor Beach again this year to watch the racing. It’s been on his calendar since they announced the date of the festival. He can’t wait!”

Green has raced at countless race sites across the country and, while it means a great deal to have family present on the pier, for Green, the Harbor Beach race site offers another appeal: small town hospitality. “I absolutely love Harbor Beach. The town really welcomes the whole event and everything about it. The warm welcome makes a big difference to us from an enjoyment standpoint. It makes it fun for us as racers to go to a location where the town has as much fun with the event as we do. Compared to other race sites, Harbor Beach is – by far – the most hospitable race location that I’ve ever been to.”

While Green did walk away with a win in the women’s runabout last year in Harbor Beach, she is expecting even greater success this year. “I had very significant mechanical issues last year in Harbor Beach that prevented me from competing in all of the races that I had anticipated. I wasn’t able to compete in the Can-Am Cup race because we had only one boat that we could get running. Kenny was a new

mechanic for me last year, and he had just built a boat. That weekend we were experimenting with some things..."

Though in 2007, from a performance standpoint, Harbor Beach proved to be one of Green's toughest race weekends, it looks like last year's experimentation might pay off in 2008. "My boats are running real well this year, and they're coming on strong."

That's good news for Green, who is looking to redeem herself from an incident occurring in this season's initial round when racer Dennis Mack – called D-Mack in the racing world – ran into Green and cracked up her boat a bit, along with sending her into rehab for a month. "We've battled back and forth over the last couple of years in the expert runabout class. Harbor Beach is going to be the next race where we're together. D-Mack knows I'll redeem myself!"

Green enjoys racing with the APBA National Tour and offers to lend a helping hand to anyone interested in learning more about the sport. "The race in Harbor Beach will offer beginning classes, and there are many people who will be attending the race that would be more than happy to help. If anyone has a watercraft in his or her backyard and are recreational riders who want to learn how to do this, please contact me, or



Patrick Mell, promoter of the tour. We would be more than happy to help them put everything together that they would need to try the beginner race in Harbor Beach on Saturday, July 12."

With gas prices skyrocketing this summer, why not enjoy entertainment close to home? Harbor Beach is the perfect place to see hot racing action, up close and personal. Amy Green sums it up: "There are a lot of places that are beautiful, but Harbor Beach is a great site for spectators. Harbor Beach has a great pier, plenty of pit parking, a good starting area and the water is deep enough and safe enough for racing. I'm looking forward to returning to Harbor Beach!"

Look for Amy Green (Racer #1) in Harbor Beach as she rips up the water during the Maritime Festival. Green's come-get-me attitude, along with her skill on the water, promises guests on the pier a thrilling race event!

To contact Amy Green for help in getting started in watercraft racing, or to wish her well in Harbor Beach, you may send an e-mail to amyg1@aol.com; enter Harbor Beach Maritime Festival in the subject line. Check out these Web sites for more information on watercraft racing: www.apbaracing.com and www.pwctoday.com.

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