

ISSAQUAH PRESS

Ready to roar

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Press photo by Greg Farrar

Dakota Petitt, 5, of Mill Creek, plays with the controls of a personal water craft as hydros roar off in the distance for a Tastin' n Racin' event.

Tens of thousands enjoy festival

PRESS STAFF REPORT

Sunday's sunshine drew a huge crowd to Issaquah's annual Tastin' n Racin' festival at Lake Sammamish State Park, featuring hydroplane racing, food and crafts booths, live music, carnival rides and classic cars.

The event capped a full weekend of hydroplane racing and was also the first race of the 2002 Texaco Unlimited Light Series.

Phil Bonocini of Sammamish drove the UL-72 Budweiser Pocket Mechanic to first place Sunday in the Freddie's Club of Renton Cup.

Bonocini, winners of last year's unlimited lights championship at Seafair, averaged 109.5 miles per hour to win the final. Jerry Hopp in the UL-15 Freddie's Club Casino of Renton boat was second. Hopp averaged 100.35.

Nick Badolato drove UL-21 Plateau Shell, owned by Is-

saquah's Thunder Valley Racing, to a third-place finish. Badolato and his crew almost didn't get the boat in the final. They had barely fixed a hole in the bottom of the boat before the race started.

Five boats in all qualified for the final and all finished.

UL-21 Plateau Shell had the fastest time in the B-main heat, averaging 104.603.

Boats from California, Ohio, Canada and Idaho competed in the two-day event. This was the third year Tastin' n Racin' had the unlimited-light series.

John O'Brien, Tastin' n Racin' co-chairman, estimated there were more than 50,000 people in attendance.

"It's growing and growing," O'Brien said. "There were race officials from around the country here to watch how we coordinate racing with a family festival."