

Trophy's story unveiled

Memorial Day boat races continue legacy that reaches back many years

SETH GORDON

Newberg Graphic Reporter
sgordon@newberggraphic.com

The Newberg Boat Club will host the 66th edition of its Memorial Weekend Boat Races May 24-25, making it the second oldest continuing annual outboard race in the country, according to the American Powerboat Association.

But as it turns out, Newberg has a much older tradition of hosting outboard motor races on the Willamette River and the proof has been sitting under the nose of the club for quite some time.

For years, a small trophy, which reads "Second Prize Class A Handicap Newberg Regatta June 4-5-6 1920," had been passed along from member to member, but at some point fell by the wayside.

"It kind of got put on a shelf and forgotten about,"

club member Richard Baker said. "It surfaced again this year through some communication between club members. The whereabouts and the significance of that trophy had been buffaloeing us years. Nobody knew any history."

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Richard Baker

Baker was inspired to learn more about the club heirloom and started digging two weeks ago.

A simple Google search unearthed an article in *Pacific Motor Boat* magazine that mentioned the Portland Motor Boat Club was involved not only in cruising

the river, but also racing events.

The club was set to participate in the 1920 Newberg Regatta, which by that point had "become almost a fixed annual event" that even featured a parade, a queen contest and a ball.

Rather than hauling their boats to Newberg, the article said that Portland club members drove their boats up the river, passing through the locks at Oregon City.

"Learning what that was all about has been exciting," Baker said. "It answers a question that's been up in the air, at least for me, for 43 years: 'What was going on in 1920?' So we do have some information on it and that's great."

This year's races at Roger's Landing will run from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. both days and admission is free.



A piece of history — Until this year, the Newberg Boat Club had no information about the history of this trophy from the 1920 Newberg Regatta. Club member Richard Baker recently learned that by 1920, the Newberg Regatta had become an annual event that included a parade.

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