



Don Whelan is about to take a bath against his will.

#### HUNTINGTON LAKE NATIONALS 1976

Due to special problems created by the Forest Service the format for this Nationals had to be changed this year. The first race was to be sailed on Tuesday and the series completed by Thursday evening. Rain changed the master plan around a little but the series finished on time, and Steve Gould won the Nationals. Steve and Doug Baird have had a team effort going for the last couple of years and Huntington Lake proved to be just the right conditions for them.

The racing got off to a slow start with the first two races canceled for the day because of lightning. The weather looked bad so Roger and his race committee decided to hold off 'til something happened. What happened was that lightning started hitting around very close and rain came pouring down. The whole Mercury fleet stood under one tree on Lakeshore beach until the races were canceled.

The next day things looked better but still not good. The dry weather in the San Joaquin Valley creates storms in the high mountains around the lake, and this causes problems with the sailing. On the second day the storm had moved back into the higher mountains for the morning race but was with us again by the afternoon races.



Trophy presentation by V. P., Bill Ryon

The third and final day was the best weather of the week. We had a chance to sail on Huntington Lake as it normally is. By the last race the wind was solid but shifty with tacking and reading the wind shifts becoming very important.

On the social side of the regatta, things went as planned even though at times the plans were changed at the last minute. A beach party was planned for Tuesday night but with rain the party had to be moved inside to the China Peak day lodge. Hamburgers and beer were served to more than 100 people and although many of the racers left early some of the serious partiers moved to the China Peak bar. On the second evening, after three races in one day, everyone was ready for at least one cocktail. The Bradley's cabin was the place, and five gallons of Tequila Sunrises were the drink. Everyone was given a straw on arrival and invited to bump heads as they drank from the buckets of Tequila Sunrises or Mai Tai. The 24 hour flu was an uninvited guest to all the parties. Many of sailors spent an awful 24 hours in bed before the bug was finished.

The annual dinner was held outdoors at China Peak on Thursday night. Trophies were awarded that evening to the winners and all the participants received an engraved beer mug.

Tim Bradley



The anchor dragger trophy is hard to win



Trophies on display