

Some fog, sun, many flowers, much fun

By BOB SMITH

A World War I biplane and a recreated Sun Tan Special locomotive were the winners Sunday in the 25th anniversary edition of the Capitola National Begonia Festival.

The Depot Hill Association, which built the biplane, and Louis Villareal of Wooden Expressions, who created the Sun Tan Special, were declared the co-winners of the grand sweepstakes prize by the judges following the afternoon Nautical Parade. They each received silver commemorative platters and \$150 cash prizes.

The season's first major rainstorm dampened the area Saturday afternoon and evening, but Sunday dawned clear.

But the rain resulted in a visibly-smaller crowd Sunday afternoon as patchy clouds occasionally blotted out the sun and tongues of fog from Monterey Bay licked over the

Capitola Lagoon.

The rain forced Fidelity Savings, a major supporter of the Festival, to drop out of the nautical parade when a portion of their float — a parasol — collapsed from the weight of water-laden begonias Saturday night.

And the swiftly rising waters in Capitola Lagoon from the runoff from Saturday's rain into Soquel Creek threatened for a while to break the sand dam across the mouth of Soquel Creek. Volunteers struggled for several hours after the parade was over to lift the 21 rafts — valued as nearly \$4,000 — from the creek, but the dam was still in place Monday, waiting for Capitola city maintenance workers to open it as planned.

Judging for the 20 floats in the competition was divided between two divisions — commercial and group.

Winners were:

Commercial: First Place and \$100, Juke Box, Aries Arts; second place, Florence Nightingale at the bedside, Dominican Hospital; third place, an old Santa Cruz County stagecoach driven by "Charlie" Parkhurst, Erik's Deli.

Group: First place, and \$100, Early Capitola as depicted by JoJo's Gang; second place, an 1890s High Wheeler, built by the Howard Carr family; third place, a popcorn vending wagon, the McLean-Gray family.

Cash prizes and trophies were presented to the winners by Fidelity Savings and Loan and the Festival board of directors.

The Mid-County Senior Citizens Band manned a float sponsored by Northern California Savings.

The Brown Bulb Ranch, which supplies all of the blossoms for the festival and the home and commercial

decorating contest, also entered a float this year.

Sweepstakes winner in the home and commercial contest were John Fitzpatrick and Linda Bjondson at 311 River-view Ave. Their theme was a chest of gold at the end of the rainbow.

In the home division, the Woodside family at 317 Riverview Ave. took first place. Jeff Dunn, Conrad Basler and friends, 421 Riverview Ave., placed second, and the Demet and Keely families, 120 Esplanade, placed third.

Gayle's Fine Pastries, Bay and Capitola Avenues, placed first in the commercial division. The French Kiss Boutique on Monterey Avenue was awarded second place, and Cornucopia on Capitola Avenue received third.

Fog moved in on the jet skiers Sunday morning, causing one Las Vegas man to wind up at Manresa Beach before he realized that he'd

missed the turn to Capitola.

But times recorded in the races were far faster than predicted earlier by organizer Leo Riley of Santa Cruz Kawasaki.

Southern Californians went home with the first place trophies and prizes in each of the three racing categories.

In the production class, Doug Silverstein of Balboa, raced to victory with a winning time of 22:56 minutes. Second went to Clayton Jacobson of Manhattan Beach, and third to Miss Ziggi Stardust of La Puente.

In the super stock, Steve Stricklin of Downey captured first with a winning time of 21:54 minutes. Jerry Richardson of Garden Grove was second and Miss Stardust, racing on a second boat, placed third in this race.

Stricklin switched craft and won in the modified race also, with a winning time of 20:14, setting a new world's record

for ocean jet ski racing. He went home with a trophy and a \$100 cash prize.

Second went to Jim Shepherd and third to Tony Crolla, both from Sacramento.

Santa Cruz County racers finished far down in the pack, Riley said.

The highest finishing male racer was Rick Crusan of Santa Cruz, who placed 12th in the modified class.

Josette Winkler of Aptos was the fastest local female racer, placing 11th in the production class, Riley said.

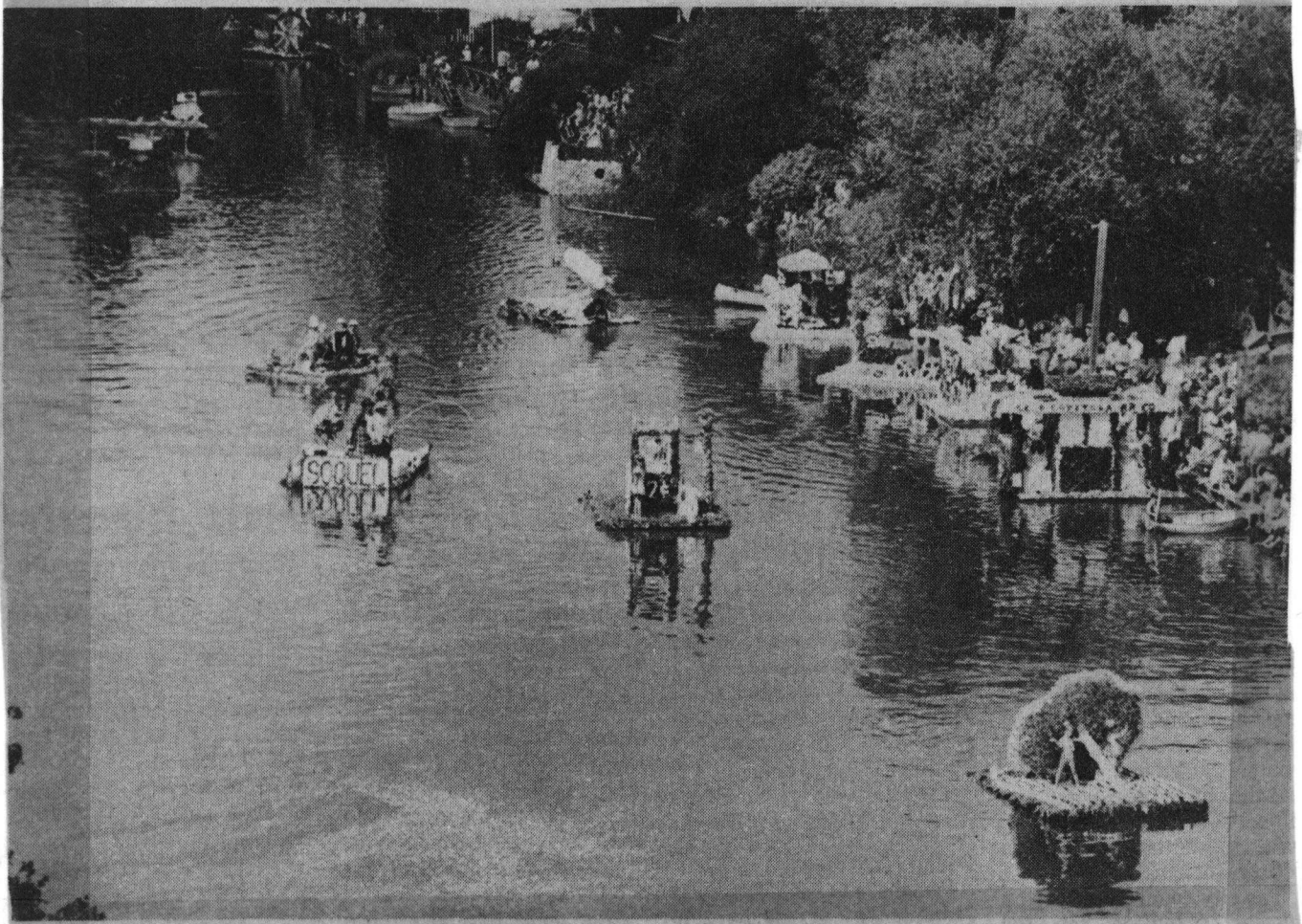
Rain cut down the expected number of entries from Riley's pre-race estimate of 150-200 to 116.

Racers found eight-foot swells off the coast, and fog created additional problems. Only one racer was truly lost during the race, but several found themselves opposite the Santa Cruz lighthouse before they made their turns back to Capitola.

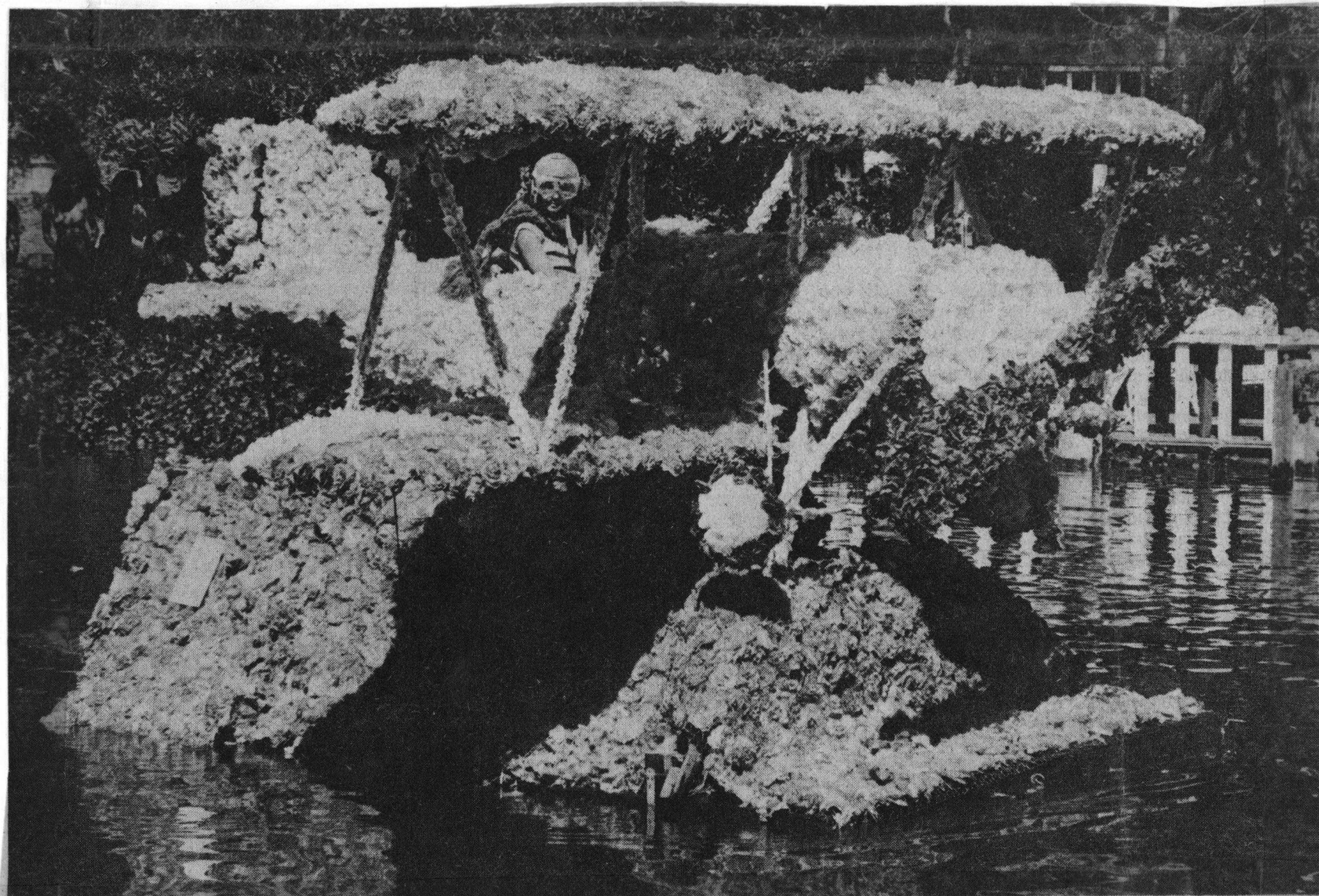


—Photos by Sam Vestal.

The trestle and bridge were favored viewing spots for the Begonia Festival parade.



The floats drifted lazily down Soquel Creek on a foggy-sunny afternoon.



A young pilot flew this float to victory for the Depot Hill Association.