

## He built a fortune with offshore powerboat racing in mind



A story in a West Coast boating magazine about the legendary ocean racer-boatbuilder Don Aronow made Charlie McCarthy a wealthy young man. Twelve years ago, McCarthy, then 21 years old, saw an article in the now defunct West Coast Boating News and decided that the finest thing in the whole world to do was to climb into a big offshore racing boat and take on all challengers in a no holds barred combat at sea.

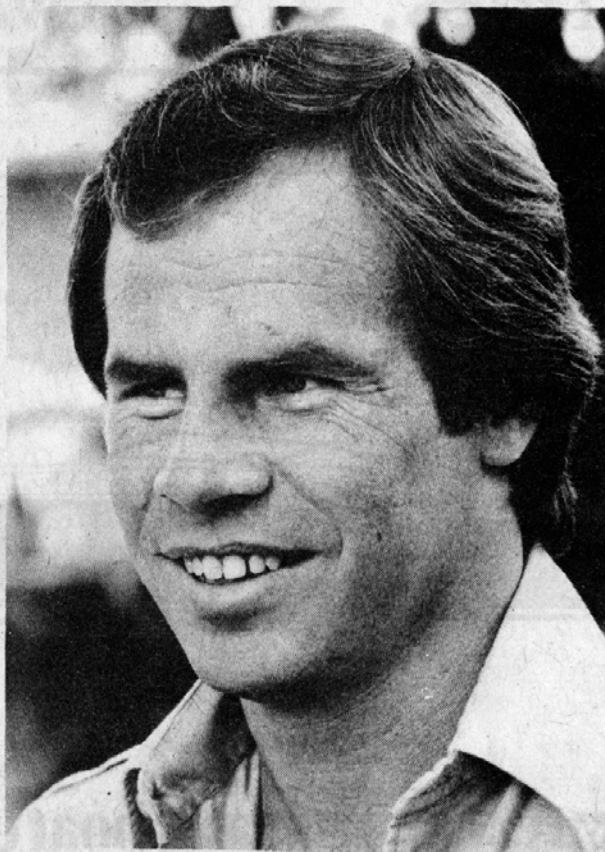
But McCarthy, who as a black belt Karate expert knew all about holds, had one major drawback ... money. "I decided that there was only one way to race powerboats in the ocean ... first class and that meant lots of money. Since I didn't have that I made up my mind that I would get it," the 33-year-old Providence, trucking company executive recalls.

In a move as daring in its own way as driving one of the big sea monsters, McCarthy boldly went out and signed up to do the hauling for a huge manufacturing firm ... without having a single truck! Somehow the ambitious Irishman found the trucks, going on to build a trucking empire which includes eight holding companies controlling some 300 trucks.

In 1976, with the 1965 boating story on Aronow still burning his brain, McCarthy felt he was ready to enter offshore racing the right way. His first move was to visit his hero Aronow at the former world champion's famed Cigarette plant in North Miami Beach, Fla. "I wanted to build my own boats. Aronow had a 24-foot mold he was willing to sell me. He was great. He said I could bring my men down to Florida and even take photos of how he did it!"

Thus the birth of Banana Boat Co. which was named after the long, lean design of the 24' Cigarette mold. Actually, McCarthy got into running races in the 50's when as a kid he used to match wits with the R.I. Department of Natural Resources agents who were constantly after McCarthy for swiping clams out of the state seeded quahaug clam beds. Later joining the American Power Boat Association he raced outboards and inboard runabouts. By the end of the 1976 season he had won the modified production division of the famed Key West Race.

Getting together with successful designer-builder Frenchman Jean Claude Simon, in late 1977 at the world



TOP BANANA ... Charlie McCarthy

championships at Key West, resulted in McCarthy obtaining his first full-blooded open class ocean racer ... a sleek new 38-footer with two huge fuel injected Mer-Cruiser engines which he plans to race on the U. S. circuit. If he collects trophies like he does trucks some bright kid may be reading about him in a magazine soon.