



RON BERGERON CHECKS HIS EQUIPMENT
... He's Ready For Swamp Race Next Week

Ron's Dream Comes True For Buggies

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Ron has a complete crew working on the project for as he puts it "there is a lot to be done". The park must be done by the first of April because Ron has scheduled a state-wide meet. The meet will cover two days, April 4-5, with over \$1,000 in prize money offered. There will be races held all day with the first and second place finishers of each class meeting on the final day to decide the winner in a final 15 mile race.

"Last year there was a race over in Naples and 15,000 people showed up for it. There was absolutely no facilities for these people, so they just sat on the mudbanks all along the route," Bergeron said. "This type of event can bring that spirit out in people; it is just that interesting to watch. I've known people who have traveled over 25 miles just to come out for an airboat ride."

When Bergeron's park opens, it will be the first of its kind anywhere in the United States. Ron, who is a former high school all-state football player from Stranahan, plans races about once a month. In between there will be rodeos, horse shows, and anything else that comes into the owner's mind that he thinks the people will be interested in.

THERE WILL BE a complete Indian Village run by the Seminoles on the premises. Also planned for the area is a 30 acre camp-site and a complete restaurant and lounge. There will also be airboat rides available and boattramps.

"People don't realize the vastness of this up-and-coming sport," Bergeron said. "There are over 43,000 registered airboats in Florida alone, and many more that people have just not bothered to register. There is an organization set up just for these sportsmen, the Florida Airboat Association."

"I just felt that it was time that someone set up a place for these sportmen to use and compete in. And I am sure that if people come out to watch them and their machines, they will become just as much interested."

Incidentally, Ron Bergeron is also an airboater. Being the kind of competitor that he is, he may just take first place if the others don't watch out.

Ron Bergeron's Dream Now Becoming Reality

By **BILL ZEI**
Sun-Tattler Sports Writer

DAVIE — Ron Bergeron is an individualist. He also is a person with a great amount of faith in himself. Back in 1964 Ron, who was just out of college, started a land development business with just the barest essentials. Working out in the fields alone, he cleared land west of Davie all day long and the nights he would spend under the stars alone.

Today Bergeron is the head of his own land development company which does over a \$ million worth of business a year. From the position of a poor laborer, Ron has advanced in six short years to the point where he can have what he wants when he wants it.

"EVER SINCE I was a teenager, I've dreamed of building an all outdoor recreational park," said Ron. "Now that I am fortunate enough to be in the position to make this dream of mine a reality, I didn't want to waste anytime."

This dream of Ron's, the outdoor park, is currently under construction on Highway 27 halfway between Hollywood Boulevard and Highway 84. The official name of the park is the Florida Airboat and Swamp Buggy Park. Upon its completion, somewhere around the first of

April, the park will have a complete racing track for airboats and swamp buggies. Bergeron is also constructing seating for 10,000 people.

"The racing track is actually more than one track. There is a mile race track, an obstacle course, and a 10 mile racing strip that goes five miles into the Everglades and five miles back," Ron said. "The obstacle course is really something to see. It is a figure-eight setup with a strip of land in the middle. The airboats have to go over the land and when they hit it they really fly."

"Some people wonder why I am putting up seating for 10,000. The reason is simple, I plan to fill them with people. Airboats and swamp buggies are really something to see. The swamp buggies can go 60 or 70 miles per hour and Sid Walker of Miami, who has the fastest airboat in the country, The Needlenose, has been clocked at 96 miles per hour in the quarter mile."

"I TELL YOU when those swamp buggies get going it is really a sight. They send water and mud in the air 40 feet, and that is no lie. We'll have the seats perched up high so all the fans will have a great view of the complete course, mud and all."

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