

SAM LA BANCO Named as OPC Randy Tilton Award Recipient



During the APBA annual Category Awards Program (January 23, Raleigh, NC), OPC Commission Chairman Mike Wienandt announced that past Powerboat Superleague F3 Champion and Superleague's 2008 Sportsman of the Year, Sam LaBanco (#44, Northbrook, IL) was named the recipient of the 2008 OPC Randy Tilton Award.

Honoring Sam for his contributions to the sport of tunnel boat racing – his numerous accomplishments on the water as well as his willingness to mentor other drivers, to lend parts (keeping teams on the water), and to lead the OPC category in the area of safety by serving as the OPC Safety Chairman and serving on the APBA Safety Committee, and in particular his innovative work with the Incident Investigation reports. In fact, it's a rare occurrence when some piece of critical advice or some part from LaBanco is not behind at least one driver in the Superleague F3 winner's circle. Wienandt noted during his presentation remarks that, "... at one point during an event, Sam walked past the officials saying (very casually) that all he had left to loan was his driving suit."

Sam simply exemplifies the qualities that earned him the award – respect for fellow competitors, mentoring drivers, attention to his racing program, setting personal goals, working to achieve the highest levels of safe and competitive race equipment as well as compliance with APBA safety requirements, and most importantly, being gracious – win or lose.