



## Tourism

**Yes,** on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

### *Boat Races Bring Big Crowds*

Brightly colored boats, roaring engines and hovering helicopters drew the crowds to Biloxi, Mississippi once again for Smokin' the Sound, the first race of 2009 for the Offshore Super Series Powerboat Racing Association. And this year, racing excitement continued for a second weekend with Smokin' the Lake, drag boat racing on Gulfport Lake.

Premiering on the Coast in 2004, Smokin' the Sound has become one of the area's most popular events, drawing participants and fans from near and far. This year, an estimated 45,000 people watched the high performance racing events from the sandy beach, docked boats and waterfront casinos.

Race teams started arriving to South Mississippi on Tuesday, March 24 and spent the remainder of the week attending meet and greets, displaying their boats and enjoying special parties and activities. Wind and waves delayed some of Saturday's qualifying and racing events, but Sunday brought blue skies and sunshine for six hours of racing featuring seven different classes.

Sunday's big winner was JBS Racing of Wisconsin who overtook the defending champion, Miss Geico, for the Cat Extreme/Turbine title. A 50-foot Mystic equipped with twin turbine engines, JBS hit a top speed of 190.

The boats participating in Smokin' the Lake weren't quite as fast, but they still reached speeds of up to 100 mph and offered a great time for the crowds of nearly 5,000. Activities began Friday, April 3 at The Dock Bar & Grill and continued through the weekend with seven classes of boats racing.

For more information on Smokin' the Sound and Smokin' the Lake, visit [www.smokinthesound.com](http://www.smokinthesound.com).



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