

Gail Haberlin skips Shennandoah

The racing boat Shennandoah sailed into Lewis Bay Wednesday afternoon. She had her navigator aboard of course, but that was probably not as important this day as it normally is. After all, at the helm was Ensign Gail Haberlin, and she learned to sail in these waters when she was 8 years old.

The Shennandoah, a 40-foot, Holland-design boat, is a unit of the sailing fleet of the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md. Ensign Haberlin is a recent graduate from the academy, and her command for the summer is the sleek Kelly-green and gray racer. She is one of only two women on the academy offshore sailing team this season.

Haberlin is here on an official visit to the Hyannis Yacht Club (HYC) as part of the Navy's program of offering seminars for student sailors on the East Coast. While at her old club, her time is spent acquainting novice sailors with a larger boat than they normally sail, taking young racing skippers out for a cruise, and even inviting the adults to come aboard and take a look.

It's a bit of a homecoming for Haberlin, who was born in Weston, Mass., but spent summers here on the Cape with her parents and five brothers and sisters. It was during those summers that the Haberlin kids began to sail in the program conducted at HYC.

Dock Lines By Joe Hoffman

Those were the days spent in Beetlecats and Cape Cod Knockabouts, and it wasn't until four years ago, after being appointed to Annapolis, that Gail got involved in big-boat racing.

Spending four summers sailing on six different sailboats, Gail describes the experience as both fun and a great learning opportunity. The program offers the midshipmen a chance to do needed public relations work for the Navy, as well as develop leadership qualities and teach good seamanship.

Tomorrow, Haberlin and the Shennandoah will cross Nantucket Sound to Martha's Vineyard, for a rendezvous with their friends at the Edgartown Yacht Club Regatta. The Navy has entered six boats in that regatta and most of the sailing team will be there. The fleet will consist of the Avenger, Elusive, Vengeance, Constellation, and Morning Light. After a week in Edgartown the middies will split again to all parts of the East Coast. The Avenger comes to Hyannis to race in the Hyannis Yacht Club Regatta, and Haberlin will take the Shennandoah to New York and then on to race at Atlantic City.

Ensign Haberlin says she is going to Edgartown expecting to win. Gail is tough in her command when the boat is racing, and her all-male crew of eight will perform as she expects, with the same enthusiasm. Shennandoah's last race was the just completed Newport-to-Bermuda Race where the boat finished fairly well. It was obvious that she would like to do better on the Vineyard.

When the summer is over and Shennandoah is back at Annapolis, Haberlin will begin her Navy career as a civil engineer. She has been assigned to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Me. But don't look for the engineer to even think about not racing sailboats.

Some of the best ocean racers on the East Coast are on their way to Martha's Vineyard this weekend. Monday marks the opening race of the 1984 Edgartown Yacht Club Regatta. This is the 61st time this event has been held and not only is it one of the oldest regattas around, but because of the level of competition, it is one of the best.

Sam Warriner, race committee chairman, has a complete schedule of racing lined up as usual. On Monday, the Osborne Cup is up for grabs for boats entered under the International Offshore Rule (IOR), as well as those racing in



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GORDON E. CALDWELL
GAIL HABERLIN
...Annapolis grad

the Performance Handicap Racing Fleet Division (PHRF). The second race in that series is scheduled for Tuesday, and then on Wednesday morning the same racers head out for the traditional Race Around the Island.

Thursday is a lay day for the big boats but not for the committee. One-design racing gets under way that day and 11 classes have been invited to participate. The J-24s will be there along with 210s, Solings, Shields and the Wianno Seniors. Starting lines will also be

set up for the Rhodes 19s, Laser IIs, Herreshoff 12s, Collegiate 420s, Gems and Widgeons. The class competition will continue on Friday and Saturday.

The IOR and PHRF sailors swing back into action on Friday and Saturday with regatta-day races, and everything is wrapped up Saturday afternoon with the awarding of trophies.

This is the first of three big regatta weeks in the area. From Edgartown the scene will shift next week to the Hyannis Yacht Club Regatta, and the following week the racers will compete in the Buzzards Bay Regatta at the Beverly Yacht Club.

The Coast Guard is looking for cooperation from boaters regarding the use of Channel 16 on VHF radios. The Guard has asked the Federal Communications Commission to prohibit the use of 16 for "radio checks." Such use, says the Coast Guard, clogs the emergency channel and could prevent vessels in distress from getting through.

The new proposal limits operators to using 16 for distress and safety calls, and for establishing contact with other boats before switching to a working channel.

Joe Hoffman is Times special sports writer.