

Rough seas greet regatta

By JOE HOFFMAN
SPECIAL SPORTS WRITER

HYANNIS — Gale force winds and heavy rain screamed across Nantucket Sound yesterday morning, all but wiping out the fleet at the 42nd annual Hyannis Yacht Club Regatta.

The storm, unpredicted in terms of its intensity, developed winds that at times reached as high as 55 miles per hour. Most of the races that did get started had to be abandoned as one by one the skippers nursed their crafts back to the relative safety of the yacht club.

Two of the larger boats were forced to seek shelter in Osterville as both Vendetta, skippered by Ton Prizzi, and Charlie McLaughlin's Independence decided that that was the best course of action, considering the conditions. As for the one-design fleet, eight Beetlecats ended up on the beach in Lewis Bay and three of the 505's found the sand at Craigville.

Considering the weather, the race committee moved its patrol boats into action and managed to get the regatta fleet accounted for safely. Only the boats showed the effects of a day not meant for racing.

Regatta Chairman Dennis Sullivan had nothing but praise for his committee and shared with the sailors the hope that everything would look better when things get started again Saturday morning.

The 505 fleet, sailing in a race that counts for their East Coast Championship, managed to complete a course, with Tom Kivney of Gloucester coming in first. He was followed by J.B. Braun out of Marblehead, who two weeks ago sailed to a sixth-place finish in the 505 World Championship. In third place was Mark Wheeler from Annapolis, Md., and the fourth-place finisher was Neal Fowler, who also hails from Gloucester.

The Laser division got one race in before having to quit. Paul Thomson wound up on top, and was followed by Tom Gallagher and Jeffrey Lane. The Lasers are racing to qualify for their World Championship.

As for the cruiser racers, Randy Richmond came all the way from the Stamford Yacht Club in Connecticut to win a first-place trophy in his boat Rampage, a Nelson Marek 41-footer.

No Name, a Syrene 38 skippered by Bob Hitchcock, took a second in the Performance Handicap Fleet (PHRF) Division A, and Fast Lane and Rick Zeoli from the Cape wound up third.

The PHRF B Division only finished one boat and that was a J-24 by the name of Scottish Ire, whose skipper Fred Scudder is enjoying his best year ever, sailing with the PHRF fleet.

Almost in spite of the way things went yesterday, spirits were high among the skippers last night at the Hyannis club, and everyone was up for a better day of racing today.

The regatta will continue through tomorrow, with trophy presentations scheduled for tomorrow afternoon.