

# It doesn't get better than this

*For the summer sailing set, the Figawi's just the beginning — but what a beginning!*

By **JOE HOFFMAN**  
SPECIAL SPORTS  
WRITER

**T**HEY travel from all over the country to be here in the summer. Many feel the competition on the waters off the Cape and islands is as good as it gets.

If you're into racing sailboats, there are enough regattas here to keep you and your crew busy all summer long.

The season kicks off with a major event right up front, the 20th anniversary of the Figawi Race to Nantucket on Memorial Day weekend.

A fleet of some 200 boats sets sail from Hyannis on Saturday, May 25, bound for Nantucket. After soaking up the island atmosphere and attending a party especially for the sailors, they will race back to Hyannis Monday, May 27.

For more than two decades, the Figawi organization has become well-known for blending big-time yacht racing with on-shore festivities, making it one of the premier racing events on the East Coast.

Some of the biggest names in sailing have left their mark on the Figawi. Vessels such as Sir Thomas Lipton's Shamrock V, a challenger for the America's Cup in 1930, as well as American Eagle, a 12-meter challenger for the same trophy in the 1960s, have sailed the waters to Nantucket.

Bill Koch, the latest entry in the 1992 Cup sweepstakes in San Diego, entered his award-winning maxi-boat, Matador, in the Figawi in 1986 and '87.

Other notable skippers who have raced for the Figawi trophy have included Buzzy Schofield, Wiley Wakeman and Osterville's John Osmond.

The 67th Edgartown Regatta, July 11 through 13 off Martha's Vineyard, is firmly established as a highlight of the summer racing season. The event annually at-

tracts top-notch sailors.

The competition includes ocean racing and one-design classes and a newly added cruising canvas division. The popular Round-The-Island Race starts on Saturday, July 14.

The 49th annual Hyannis Yacht Club Regatta, which runs from Friday, July 26, through Sunday, July 28, will include a full schedule of races to keep skippers on top of their games. The one-design schedule is, as usual, a complete package of trophy racing for 505s, Collegiate 420s, Lasers, Beetlecats and other small boats.

A new event on the local circuit this summer has the potential to become a major event. The race, Sails Around Cape Cod, was organized by the Harwich Chamber of Commerce and is for boats 30 feet or longer.

The race, Aug. 23 through Aug. 25, will start and finish off Harwich, assuming, of course, that the weather cooperates.

The race course will take the fleet from just offshore Wychmere Harbor, around Monomoy Point, up the ocean side of the Cape, around Provincetown and across Cape Cod Bay to the Sandwich end of the canal.

After motoring through the canal, the fleet will begin racing again in Buzzards Bay, pass through the Elizabeth Islands at Quick's Hole and sail Vineyard Sound to the finish line at Harwich Port.

In August, the Hyannis club has a two-day race to Tarpaulin Cove. That same month, the Opera House Cup Race, for older, more classic-design boats, takes center stage in Nantucket.

In addition to these events, there are racing schedules at many local yacht clubs as part of the Southeastern Massachusetts Yacht Racing Association. Ocean racing boats can always find regular competition at Edgartown, Nantucket, Falmouth, New Bedford and Hyannis.