

Guns spiked — so the Bay boys splice a mainbrace

By GRAHAM LIZAMORE
Yachting Reporter

WHAT started off as a bar-room joke resulted in a spectacular turnout for the biggest regatta held in Hout Bay.

When "Admiral" Charlie Bates suggested — after a few rounds of drinks — that seeing Hout Bay was an independent republic with its own navy it should have an Admiral's Cup regatta, he did not expect the disciplined seafarers of Hout Bay to see his suggestion as an order. For Bates owns the ex-Navy minesweeper Pretoria, is the head of the Navy and the de facto minister of defence.

But six weeks later Admiral Bates was amazed when rudely interrupted during game of bowls and told a look-out had seen score o' sail on the horizon. His annoyance turned to amazement when he put his eyeglass to his good eye and discovered that his minister of information was indeed telling the truth.

Suspecting an invasion, he immediately issued orders to man the cannons at the entrance to Hout Bay. For several minutes the discipline broke down among gunners when they discovered the cannons could not fire.



Hout Bay's "Admiral" Charlie Bates (left), and the Republic of Hout Bay's President, Len Pothier, with a genuine admiral's sword which was presented to the winning yacht AMC Classic Challenger after the inaugural Hout Bay Admiral's Cup regatta.

"Generations of Transvaalers had stuffed the muzzles with Coke cans and other indescribables," Admiral Bates wrote in his diary that night.

Alarm and despondency were quickly doused when intelligence operatives reported they had seen crewmen on the yachts armed with beers rather than pikes and cutlasses. Somewhat relieved, the peace-

loving folk of the Republic of Hout Bay crowded the finger jetties to welcome the visitors.

It was the start of a thrilling weekend of merriment and sailing in conditions that changed from gale-force winds with four-metre waves to zephyrs that barely flapped a geno-

Ignoring the huge seas and howling wind, some of South

Africa's leading yachts took to the sea. Although 12 of the 28 retired, the rest completed a historic first day, led all the way by the massive Bossanova with veteran Padda Kuttel at the helm.

But the newly launched AMC Classic Challenger stole some of the limelight from the giant racer. Under the experienced hand of Greg Davis she finished the first day third overall and first on handicap.

Sunday saw 33 yachts milling around the starting line waiting for the gun.

Eyes were again on AMC Classic Challenger — but this time to see how she performed against the new Animula, designed by Angelo Lavranos along the same lines as Allied Bank and also built by Ian Martin.

Greg Davis and his polished crew got AMC got off to a good start, crossing the line first, but were quickly overtaken by the maxi Bossanova.

Line honours: Bossanova.

Handicap: 1 AMC Classic Challenger, 2 Corum, 3 Form Flyer, Aventure and Madonna, 6 Touch and Go, 7 Spilhaus, 8 Mr B, 9 Windswift, 10 Sunburst.