

MAY 6, 1968

Yachting Correspondent

HISTORY was made at sea off Durban this week-end when the first races of a five week-end series for dinghies were sailed.

This is the first time in Durban yachting that a regular series of races over a month, has been organised. The harbour authorities have been reluctant to allow yachts, though safe by Durban's yacht clubs, to sail at sea. The only class of yachts to have previously sailed at sea here are the Flying Dutchmen.

The yachts were subject to stringent safety regulations and only competent skippers were allowed to sail. The weather could have not been kinder. On Saturday, the wind was light, varying from south-east to southerly and on Sunday it was moderate easterly to north-easterly.

Courses were laid to seaward of Vetch's Pier and took in the area from North Pier almost to the West Street groyne. Les Nettleton's yacht Urania was used as committee boat and the Point Yacht Club's rescue boat laid the marks.

The fleet was recalled in the first race and restarted five minutes later. At the start the wind was moderate

A yachting first

but after about a half-hour, it became light. The bulk of the fleet was composed of Finns and Sprogs, with three Spearheads a 505 and a Flying Dutchman.

The fastest yacht around the course, which had to be shortened because of the lack of wind, was John Sully in his F. D., Arete. The 505 beat the first Spearhead by 1min. 10sec. Bruce McCurrach led the Finns all the way around the course and won by almost 2min. from John Howard, second, and Lionel Emmanuel, third.

Nicky Korving sailed his usual impeccable race to be first Sprog. He finished close to the first Finn, which is quite a feat, considering Finns are faster in light conditions. Second was John Drennan and third Cecily Harris.

On Sunday, McCurrach did not have things all his own way. Ernie Shaw won both the morning and the afternoon races. In the morning, he was closely followed by Berry Smith (1min. 20sec. behind) and in the afternoon Shaw pipped Ernie Morrison by 2sec.

In Sprogs, Korving again won in the morning with Stuart Wood second. The afternoon race was won by Cecily Harris, who trounced the opposition by over two minutes. The Spearheads and 505 were locked in their usual battle for line honours. In the morning, the 505 won by a minute and again in the afternoon by three minutes.

Jack Goldsmith sailed an excellent race in the deepsea race on Sunday in his R.C.O.D., Prion. He gained the lead on the first beat and kept the other three One Designs behind him for the rest of the race. Second was Thekwini, followed by Foxhound and Columbine. The first heavy displacement boat after the R.C.O.D.'s was the Lello 33 sailed by Dick Prior.

On the model yacht pond, the Ten Rater fleet sailed for the Diane Cup, donated by Capt. Peter Redhead, a British model yachtsman. This was won by Keith Gerson (Flipper) with 32 pts.