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CONDITIONS NOT FOR FAINT-HEARTED

Spectacular sailing on icy Durban day

By RICHARD CROCKETT

THE country may well have been covered in snow yesterday with freezing temperatures, but solo round-the-world-sailor J.J. Provoyeur summed up conditions on the first day of The NCS Regatta best when he likened them to sailing in the Southern Ocean.

"There was no sun, the seas were big, it was bitterly cold and I expected to have to put my crew on iceberg watch," he said on coming ashore.

But despite the cold and rainy conditions, most competitors raved about the spectacular fast sailing they experienced in the big swells off Durban yesterday. And while conditions may not have suited the faint-hearted, there was some excellent close racing which augurs well for the rest of the week.

In the keelboat fleet BP Umoya Omusha of the Navy took line and handicap honours quite comfortably, although the L 34 Portfolio Plexicor caused an early upset by beating the much-fancied Mount Gay 30s into second place, beating Jan Reuvers Hot Ice by 51 seconds on handicap.

William Voermann and his crew are the hot favourites in the J 22 class, but had to contend with sec-

ond place after the Gauteng team of Craig Lanham-Love, David Rae and Paul Changinon took the gun in a closely-fought tussle, while Richard Wiederhold's Hollard Insurance was third. There was some drama in this fleet when the Mr Price boat skippered by Derick Warne lost crew member Mark Hawksworth overboard. And if that was not bad enough Hawksworth's ankle became entangled in a mass of ropes as he was dragged behind the boat, injuring his ankle to the degree that he had to be taken ashore for treatment.

Drama

There was also drama in the Hobie Cat fleet as due to the atrocious conditions, Jimmy Melville the Race Officer, decided to shorten the course and finish the race early. Blaine Dodds who was leading the race at the time, did not follow the correct shortened course procedure, and dropped to fifth position, giving the race on a platter to Durban's Brent Latter. Dodds has lodged a protest which was heard late last night.

With most competitors feeling the ravages of the weather, our young junior sailors are a hardy bunch who after two races in the morning came ashore for a hot lunch and went back onto the race

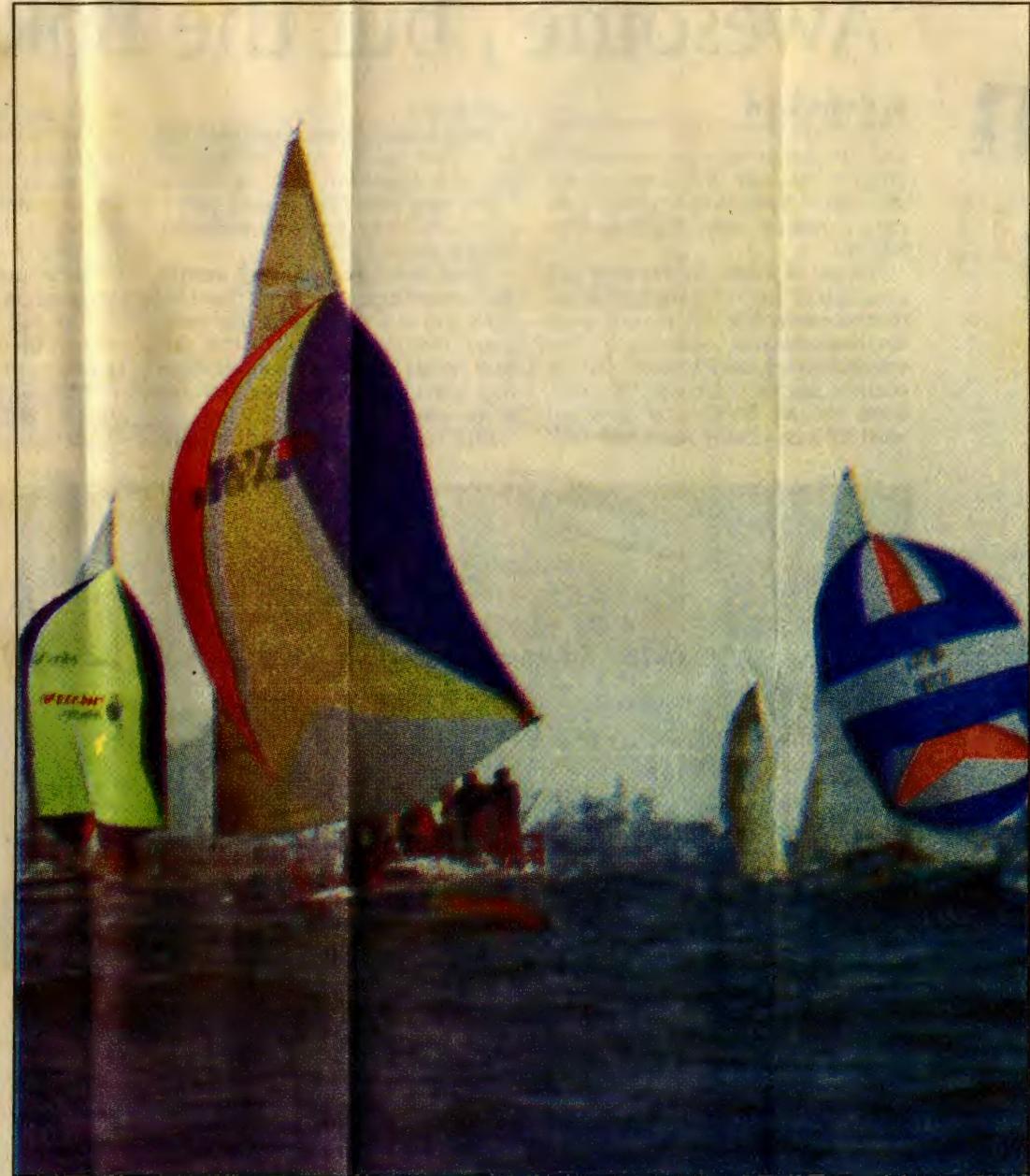
course in the afternoon for more racing. In the Optimist Class Jamie Waters and Paul Wilcox both won a race, with Waters scoring a third and Wilcox a fifth to put Waters ahead overall after two races. Adam Swales of Durban is third overall.

Also on the junior course are the Laser Radials which are being headed by Richard Booth who is just ahead of Masha Zarnack.

It is hoped that the typical Cape conditions which have plagued Durban for the past few days will turn for the better, making way for the excellent warm racing conditions which Durban is renowned for.

RESULTS

Optimist Class 1 Jamie Waters - Port Elizabeth 2 Paul Wilcox - Gauteng 3 Adam Swales - Durban
Laser Radial Class 1 Richard Booth - Durban 2 Masha Zarnack - Durban 3 M van der Water - Durban
Hobie 16 Class 1 Brent Latter - Durban 2 William Edwards - Cape 3 Eric Cook - Gauteng
J 22 Class 1 Wild Card Craig Lanham-Love - Gauteng 2 The Ghost William Voermann - Durban 3 Hollard Insurance Richard Wiederhold - Gauteng
L 34 Class 1 Portfolio Plexicor Partick Holloway - Durban 2 Crossbow Mike Hopley - Durban 3 AFI Warrior Ernie Shaw - Durban
IMS Division 1 BP Umoya Omusha Geoff Meek - Cape Town 2 Portfolio Plexicor Partick Holloway - Durban 3 Hot Ice Jan Reuvers - Cape Town



ICY SEAS: Some of the yachts which braved the conditions in the NCS Regatta off Durban yesterday.

PICTURE: ROBERT D'AVICE