

Buzzards Bay Regatta Kicks off with Flukey Winds

The 39th Annual Buzzards Bay Regatta got underway in the waters off South Dartmouth's New Bedford Yacht Club on Friday under clear to cloudy skies but with breezes that remained light and shifty throughout the day. Most early races held were either abandoned or postponed until the afternoon breeze shifted to the Southwest and enabled the 4 racing areas to finish as many as three races. Race officials were put to the test to allow the racing conditions to improve before letting the over 350 boats begin racing in 11 separate classes. At the end of the day, the largest class, the 420 two person dinghy class, completed 3 separate races while the Laser, Laser Radial, and Vanguard 15 racers only were able to compete 1 race before being called in at the end of the afternoon

The atmosphere remained festive and racing was festive on and off the race course with competitors filling the lawn in front of the yacht club at the end of the day to compare notes and tell stories about the challenging light wind conditions that prevailed for most of the day. "We'd love to have bit more breeze", said Ken Van Colen, chairman of the Buzzards Bay Regatta. "But hats off to both the racers and officials for being patient and waiting for the sea breeze to fill in as expected. It's usually a matter of when and not if."

Among local racers having success on the race course were Ryan Walsh in the J-24 class with two first place finishes and Brian Keene from the Beverly Yacht club in the one design J-80 class. Another New Bedford Yacht Club competitor Dr. Albert Signorella sits atop the PHRF Cruise 1 division in his J-100 Sundance after three complete races. Hugh Chandler's Scheherazade leads the 8 boat PHRF Race 1 handicap fleet. Perennial BBR standout Ted Herlihy on Gut Feeling is the top boat in PHRF 2.

Most racers were happy to stay out on the water in the freshening breeze a bit later with several classes still out past 5pm on Friday afternoon.

Racing gets underway again tomorrow at 10:30am Saturday and Sunday. For more information and provisional results from today's competition, visit www.buzzardsbayregatta.com .