

Skippers battle the elements

By Bill Toscano
Day Sports Writer

NEW SHOREHAM, R.I. — The forecast called for rain, fog and generally miserable conditions as the fleet for the 52nd Off Soundings spring race series set sail Friday.

The forecast was right.

"This was one of the most difficult starts ever because of the combination of rain, wind and fog. It was a rugged day for everybody," said race committee chairman Larry Jacobsen.

"We've had days with this much rain, this much wind or this much fog, but never all three like this."

Off Sounding commadore George Hohenstein was the skipper of one of the 108 boats that completed the course from Watch Hill to the mouth of the Great Salt Pond on Block Island.

"It was a long way," said Hohenstein, whose boat Puff was fifth in Class A-1. "The weather made for an uneasy ride and a lumpy motion."

In all, nine racing divisions competed. Six of them raced on a 22.9-mile course and the other three on an 18.2-mile course. The boats will race again today on a planned course around Block Island.

Awards are given for single-day winners and winners over the two-day event. There is also a two-day race to Shelter Island N.Y.

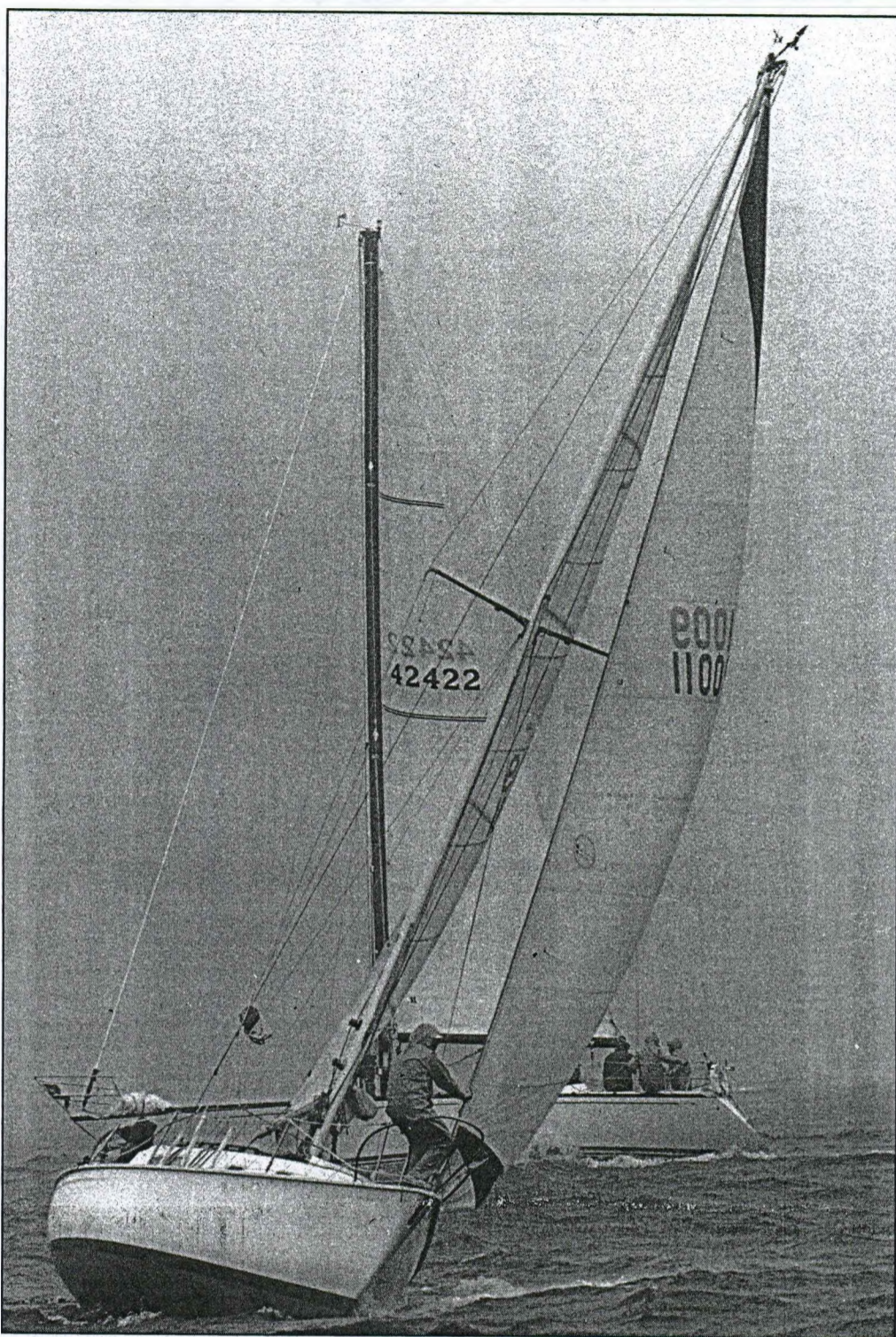
The fastest boat in Friday's racing was Hooligan, an Evelyn 42, which was the first boat to finish the long course and the winner of Class C-1 in a corrected time of 305.79 minutes. Times are handicapped under the PHRF system and boats which have placed in top three of their divisions over the last two years receive an additional penalty.

Neither the penalty nor the weather bothered Hooligan's skipper Peter Brinckerhoff.

"She goes better in heavy wind like this," Brinckerhoff said. "The stronger the wind, the faster we can go."

Gary Bennett sailed J'AI Tu to second place (316.84), followed by White Fire, skippered by J.A. Bardenheier (319.44). White Fire narrowly edged Glide, with Bill Musser at the helm (319.61). Jasmine, skippered by Paul Bradshaw, took fifth in 323.83.

The fastest boat on the short course was one of the smallest boats of the fleet, Windrider II, a Block Island 24, skippered by Russ Brown. Windrider



Shanty, foreground, and Patriot jostle for starting position in the Off Soundings Race

Skip Wisenburger

Soundings/B3

Soundings

From B1

II won Class B with a corrected time of 289.24.

Easy Peace, skippered by Bill Drinkuth took a close second in 290.83. John Saxe and his crew sailed Mandaley to third (306.61), followed by Ed Dieckerhoff in Savilli (316.80) and Alan Anderson in Tigress (328.74).

Chris Field of Noank skippered Maybe sailed the short course and captured the day's tightest race. Maybe edged Hotspur, with Dave Devlin at the helm, 291.74-291.78 in Class C-5.

David Wayland skippered Emancipate to a third-place finish (292.14) in C-5 followed by Marimind, with skipper Wayne Ingersoll (301.73) and skipper Bob Puder and his crew in Wild Flower (307.35).

Cruising Canvas also sailed the short course. In that class, Ack Va Vit, skippered by Bert Olsson took first in 282.28. Grant Rawding followed in Impulse (282.35). Tran-

quillity skippered by Wayne Bur-

Hood in Summertime Blues took fifth (294.63). Despite the rain and fog, the wind was just what the racers wanted, blowing steadily between 20-25 m.p.h. and gusting occasionally above 40 m.p.h. Seas were between two and four feet.

The heavy fog caused the race committee to postpone the scheduled 10 a.m. start by 30 minutes after the first two classes had started, the fog had lighten but moments later a downpour started and stayed with the fleet the rest of the day.

In Class C-2, Mayer Levitt and his crew sailed Nepenthe to victory in 298.74. Not By Bread Alone, with skipper Bill Donovan, took second (314.59), followed by George Martin's Osprey (316.50), Firebrand, with Dennis Posey at the helm in 318.43 and Alan Karenko and crew in Wolverine (324.36).

In C-3 competition, John Roberts skippered Pursuit to first place in 284.23, edging Soul Mate with Len Hubbard at the helm in 284.85. Air

(302.39) and Steve Anderson in Restless (302.78).

Anticipation, skippered by Howard Elston won the Class C-4 competition in 300.29, crossing the line ahead of Neal O'Connor and his crew in Dundee (300.54). Third place went to skipper Lou Devilacqua in Rebel (301.98), followed by skipper Roger Beaudet in Fire Girl (305.20) and skipper Cliff Fisher in Rusty Nail (310.01).

In Class A-1, Peter Ross sailed Tynaje to victory in 286.75. Kanga, with Burt Anderson at the helm, took second (289.71), Bill Fortman skippered Snow Goose to third (299.59), followed by Puritan with Donald Robinson at the helm (300.51) and skipper George Hohenstein with his boat Puff (306.70).

In Class A-2, John Orzech won in Reveille (300.42), followed by Nick Staub and Bow-Wow (304.79), Paul van Dyke in Valiant (309.96), Peter McFadden in Bamboo (313.31) and Robert Gunther at the helm of Arapaho (331.02).

One boat lost its mast during the