



The weather was fine but the wind didn't hold long enough for anyone to complete the Cluculz Lake West Island Race. Still, says Bill McFarlane, a good time was had by all. KRISTIN BAILLIE/FREE PRESS

Sailfest fun in spite of doldrums

Blue skies and a light breeze made the fourth annual Cluculz Lake West Island Race a success, with 14 sailboats showing up for the event, plus a number of windsurfers who held their own race.

On the shore at the sail club a dozen or so spectators sat in the sun in their tanks and shorts enjoying the warmth, talking and laughing. Kids played in the sand filling buckets and looking for frogs.

This was looking less like a very serious event than a fun social gathering. Once the skippers and crew were on board and the sailboats had been rigged and readied, they started to meander away from the dock, all staying in the vicinity of the starting buoy waiting for the start horn to blow. It was a beautiful sight, boats of all sizes and description with the mainsails and jibs full of wind, the sun penetrating the cloth making the sails glow.

The air horn was given a blow. There was some confusion: was that a five minute warning blow, what about the one minute warning? "What ya doing out there guy? You're lagging behind. Forgot how to operate that thing?"

The boats started to jockey for position but it was a slow start, everyone getting turned around to head in the right direction after killing time waiting for the start. Calls from

shore and laughter from those on board filled the warm fall air.

Oh well, it didn't matter, really, because one kilometer into the race the wind died and nobody finished the race around the island in the four hour limit. "After the start everything was

going well. Then the wind died and nobody won or placed. I waited the four hours and then I powered back. The catamaran eventually finished but way over the time limit. It was a good time had by all," says Bill McFarlane, the event coordinator.

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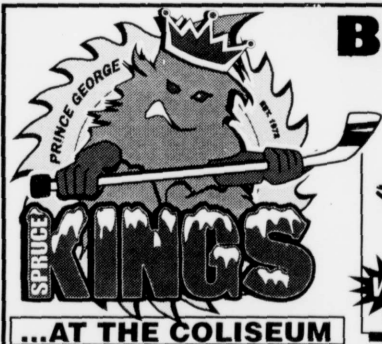
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