

Sports

Smooth sailing for San Rafael's Easom during Day 1

By Michelle Slade

Marin correspondent

Scott Easom of San Rafael has sailed in so many Big Boat regattas that he can't recall exactly how many. He thinks it's about 33 regattas in total participating in his first Big Boat when he was just 15 years old. This week he's calling tactics and driving the Santa Cruz 52 Kokopelli. Racing in the IRC B division (10 boats), Easom and his crew took a bullet in both races Thursday to sit in first place.

"We had 8-14 knots with smooth water in the first race which are

perfect conditions for our boat," Easom said. "The breeze picked up later in the day and at 12-18 knots was a little windy for us nonetheless it was a wonderful day."

Two Marin boats competing in the Melges 32 class enjoyed a great day on the bay. Philippe Kahn's Pegasus took a fourth and first to place third overall in the division.

Stephen Pugh of Sausalito sailing aboard Taboo, took a fifth and a sixth place, ending the day in fifth overall.

"We could have been better but we were over early in the first race which didn't help," said Pugh, racing in his

seventh Big Boat regatta. "Conditions were light and fluky for us and this fleet is also filled with great sailors. You have to be very good to sail in this fleet."

Also sailing with Pugh aboard Taboo are Craig Healy and Sean Bennett from Tiburon, and PJ Cosgrove, John Collins and David Gruver, all from Mill Valley.

In the 34-strong J/105 fleet, Scooter Simons of Belvedere sailing on Blackhawk sits in a commendable seventh place after a 15th place in race 1 and a well-earned bullet in race 2. After a first in race 1, the

favored Donkey Jack, owned by Scott Sellers of Larkspur, took 20th in Race 2 to end the day in ninth. Kristen Lane on Brickhouse ended the day in 11th. Lulu sailed by Don Wieneke of Sausalito started the day well with a 10th place in Race 1, but a 27th place in race 2 dropped him into 17th place. Tim Russell of Novato on board Aquavit sits in 21st place.

Conditions for Friday calls for patchy low clouds in the morning along the coast with highs in the 60s and west winds 5-10 mph. Friday's Big Boat start is scheduled for 11 a.m., with two races to be sailed.