

Escapade Crosses Line 1st As High Winds Buffet Yachts

By CLIFF CARPENTER

Ramming through winds that raced up to 40 miles in the gusts and churned Lake Ontario into angry whitecaps, the giant blue Detroit yawl Escapade took the gun as first boat to finish the 377-mile Rochester Race at 10:15 last night.

Then, while throngs of Rochester Yacht Clubbers milled about to congratulate the first finisher, her dog-tired crew relaxed to wait out a David and Goliath yachting drama that had been unfolding during the last leg of the world's longest fresh water race.

The other principal in the drama was Rochester's hope, the defender, George Ford's yawl Venture 3rd.

Even while the 72-foot Goliath of Great Lakes racing, the Escapade, was boiling toward the finish line, Ford's 52-foot yawl was doing a brilliant job of whittling off the rest of the opposition and holding a fighting chance of lifting the principal prize which goes to the boat that wins on corrected time after handicaps have been taken into consideration.

Races Against Clock

Somewhere out in the lake last night, Venture 3rd was racing against the clock. The story of almost impossible victory for her—whether the smaller David could outslug Goliath in the waning hours—would be written by about 4 o'clock this morning when Venture's handicap allowance would have run its course.

There was an outside chance, but only a faint one, that one of the smaller boats with fatter handicaps could slip in to victory. If Escapade saves her handicap as well as coming in first, and thus is the over-all winner of the race, it will give Wendell Jr. and Jack Anderson the brothers who are handling the boat for their dad this race, a complete sweep of all Great Lakes distance racing this season.

Here is the way the final tense hours of the race shaped up:

Escapade rounded Stony Island near the St. Lawrence at 10:05 a. m. yesterday, exactly one hour ahead of the scratch boat, the 70-foot black Kittyhawk of Cleveland. With Escapade not only leading but also holding a 12-minute-and-50-second handicap advantage to boot on the Hawk at that point, the Cleveland was out of the running for either the elapsed or corrected time prize—once again barring breakdowns or wind shifts.

Third boat around Stony was the Venture at 5 p. m., barely 2 minutes ahead of the 60-foot yawl Red Head of Grosse Pt., Mich.

That put Venture approximately 7 hours behind Escapade. But Ford has a handicap of 5 hours, 51 minutes and 41 seconds for the entire course. That meant that if by some minor miracle he could drive the white defender hard enough on the last 81-mile leg to Rochester to shave off 1 hour and 9 minutes, he had the race. It was only a ghost of a chance.

While Escapade had knocked Kittyhawk out of the race, Venture 3rd apparently had done the same thing to Red Head. When Ford's yawl rounded 2 minutes ahead of the Grosse Pt. racer, it meant that overnight, in the wind-whipped 181-mile length of the lake from Hamilton, Venture 3rd had erased a 1 hour and 40 minute lead which Red Head held on her at the Hamilton buoy. So Red Head, with a handicap of but 3 hours and 16 minutes for the entire course, and trailing Escapade by 7 hours, was mathematically out of the picture.

A twin-engine Gannett Newspapers plane, with Russ Holderman at the controls and with the writer and Rochester Yacht Club officials aboard, made a short and fast late afternoon trip to spot and chart the leading boat.

Crammed into Cockpit

Escapade was a picture. She had taken in her mizzen and was boiling along close-hauled under mainsail and working jib alone. The 72-footer was rail-down in the gunshot gusts of wind, almost as much of her bright red underside showing as the blue hull. Crammed into the cockpit for safety in the violent rolling, the crew waved jubilantly skyward as Holderman dipped the plane's wings in salute.

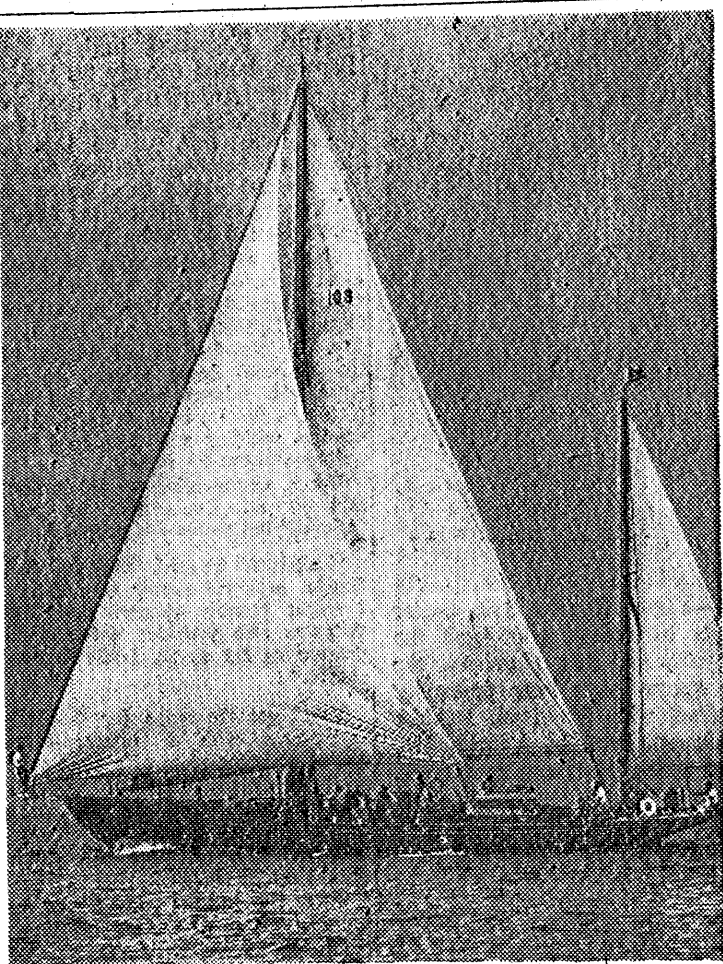
Earlier yesterday it became apparent that winds making up out of the West would give the 16 contenders a taste of far different weather than the gentlest of breezes that marked the race from the 3 p. m. start at Rochester on Sunday throughout Monday. The first leg, 114 miles from Rochester to Hamilton, saw most of the fleet averaging less than four miles an hour.

Unofficial Times

Unofficial times of the boats around the Hamilton buoy:

Monday: Escapade, 4:40 p. m.; Kittyhawk, 4:42 p. m.; Red Head, 5:40 p. m.; Venture 3rd, 7:21 p. m.; Ben Bow, schooner from Grosse Pt., Mich., 9:10 p. m.; Apache, 45-footer from Detroit Y. C., 10:35 p. m.; Bashay, 40-foot Youngstown cutter, 11:05; Sweet Charlot, Youngstown Y. C. cutter, midnight.

Tuesday: Stormy Petrel, yawl from Olcott, 12:03 a. m.; Lady Linden, Arthur M. R. Hughes 40-foot cutter from RYC, 12:05 a. m.; Skookum 3rd, RYC Commodore F. Ritter Shumway's schooner, 12:30 a. m.; Jack, 37-foot 6-meter, 1:40 a. m.; Tiburon of Sandusky, Ohio, 1:43



HOME FIRST! Escapade, giant Detroit yawl, was first to finish the 377-mile Rochester Race, taking the gun at 10:15 last night. The winner of the handicap race will not be known until the other leading yachts finish during the day.

Really Buzzing

Track Record In Downs Inv

By GEORGE

The most talked-about horse many years—perhaps in the entire Downs—is coming up Friday night.

A considerable amount of talk about at a press-radio luncheon yesterday, when drivers and officials of the Downs visited Rochester to discuss the second annual \$10,000 Batavia Downs Invitation Pace.

The veteran starter, A. C. McDowell, who knows the breeding, conformation and habits of every one of the eight entries, flatly predicted a new track record when the pacers go postward in either of the two dashes, over the mile and then the 1 1/16 miles routes.

"They're all potential '2-minute' horses, all fine race horses, the best pacers in the business. With a good track condition, the record goes by the boards," volunteered McDowell.

Johnny Maas, Batavia's racing secretary, echoed the prediction, and added that attendance and mutual records might be shattered, too.

The Batavia pace record for a mile is 2:04 3/5, and the longer distance mark is 2:12. Both are held by The Diplomat.

The attendance record is 10,041, set two years ago on "Proximity Night." The betting record was hung up last Saturday night, when 8,100 fans poured \$228,000 through the windows.

Two of the drivers who will handle Invitation entries spoke up. The veteran Floyd Milton, assigned the reins behind Mac Bingen, a Downs "regular," offered the opinion that the four imports for the race all were better pacers than the four entries which have been on the grounds mopping up all opposition to date. The Downs regulars are Mac Bingen, Linda's Boy, Volo King and Royal Man.

Young Billy Rouse, who has been driving Royal Man with spectacular success, won't be in the sulky behind that horse Friday night. Instead he'll rein the other half of the Eddie Cobb-trained entry, Hodgen.

"I got all the breaks last year," said Billy. "I only hope I get 'em again." It was Hodgen that took both dashes of last year's inaugural Invitation. "Cobb told me Hodgen might not have enough racing behind him this year to handle a field like this," said Rouse. "But he also said the horse was ready to go in 2:04. Frankly, I think the horse that beats Royal Blackstone takes down the money."

The latter statement precipitated a lively argument among Downs officials, as to whether the public would back up the track handicapper who has offered Royal Blackstone as a 5-2 favorite.

Driven by Ernie Sworthwood, the stallion from the Brown Stables of Detroit holds the Buffalo Raceway track record for the mile, and shares the 1 1/16 mile mark. Royal

a. m.; Blue Sea 4th, Vince Mulvey's yawl from RYC, 2:45 a. m.; Desire, Bob Bridges' yawl from RYC, 4:45 a. m.; Heron, Harry Greb's schooner from Royal Canadian YC, was the only boat not to round Hamilton at the time the report was phoned to RYC.

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