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Marion Bermuda sailors face “Dynamic” Weather

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By Talbot Wilson

Marion, Massachusetts, June 19, 2009: What started out as an eighteen knot close reach for the class D and C starts turned into an eight knot beat for classes B and A as they raced out of Marion’s Buzzards Bay in the 645 mile Marion to Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race. Forty-three monohull yachts started the race that certainly promises excitement down the course.

In a briefing Thursday afternoon, weatherman Dane Clark said, “ In my thirty years of weather forecasting for yacht races in the Atlantic, this one of the most dynamic weather patterns I’ve seen. Later, some of the navigators were saying that the possible merging of two low-



pressure systems would be like a mini ‘perfect storm.’ Hopefully, the systems will move to the east of the straight rhumb line course to Bermuda before the racers get to the Gulf Stream.

Today through Saturday night Sailors can expect light air, possibly a ten-knot west to southwesterly breeze. Then the fun will begin. The low-pressure system should move across the course bringing a shift to the northwest and increasing wind strength. By mid-day Sunday the

boats should be more than half way to Bermuda and heading across the west side of a deepening low, intensified by the merging of two systems. Depending where the yachts are in the system, winds should be generally westerly at speeds of twenty-five to thirty knots.

The yachts starting Friday were divided into four classes with the smaller, slower boats starting first. The first two starts, D & C were generally laid back with the boats taking a conservative approach to the beginning of a long race. Not so with Class B.

In Class B, the cruisers turned into racers. Three boats... Gian Luca Fiori's *Vivaldi*, Alan Krulisch's *Crackerjack* and Joe Mele's *Triple Lindy* all wanted the committee end of the line. *Vivaldi* tried to protect her position near the committee boat, but put herself over the line as the gun sounded. Further down the line, Martin Jacobson's *Crescendo* got the class start.



Racing continued in Class A. Jonathan Brewin's Big Bear took the end of the line and immediately tacked off onto port to take advantage of the westerly wind shift. To leeward of Big Bear, James Barnes' Lynley III had her nose out slightly ahead of the black boat.

Three boats that were entered did not start: Paul Hubbard's Bermuda Oyster, Stefano Pacini's Galileo and David Kingsbury's Shooting Star. The first boats in the fleet are expected to reach Bermuda on Monday.

Race and activity information for the 2009 Marion to Bermuda Cruising Yacht Race is on-line at <http://www.marionbermuda.com>.

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