

Misbehavin takes series lead

By SEAN LEWIS
NEWS-PRESS CORRESPONDENT

Although it is the smallest boat in the "B" fleet, Misbehavin was among the fastest on Wednesday. The boat, captained by one of its owners, Dale Byers, claimed first place and took control of the series lead Wednesday as part of Wet Wednesdays out of the Santa Barbara Yacht Club.

Misbehavin (35:52) finished a little over a minute behind second-place finisher Rush Street (34:48) and third placer Blues Crews (34:34), but its considerably larger handicap helped give Byers' crew the victory.

"We got a good start, went to the inside first and were able to be right

there with the big boats at the first pin," Byers said. "We were right with them on the second rounding when they started stretching out on us, but I think we got them on (handicap). It was close."

Byers was joined on board by the Hughes family, with father Gary and his two sons Shawn and Randy doing a good job of trimming the sails and hoisting the spinnaker to keep Misbehavin close behind its larger and faster competitors.

Misbehavin's success meant a rough night for the crews of Blues Crews and Rush Street.

"Unfortunately we both owe (Misbehavin) a bunch of time, so they were killing us all night," said Larry Leveille, Rush Street's own-

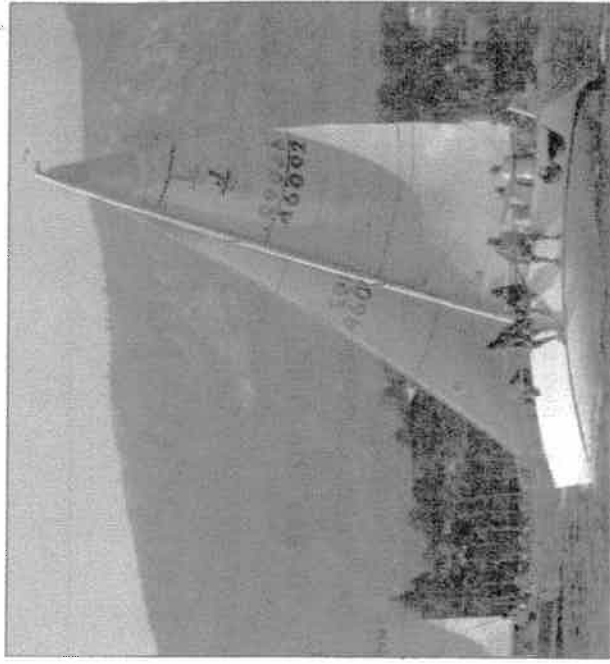
er. "There's no point in fooling with them because they were ahead of us all night."

Instead, Rush Street and Blues Crews focused on their own duel. The similar-sized yachts were close to each other for most of the race, with Blues Crews boasting a narrow lead for most of the evening.

Several times the rival boats were right alongside each other heading down wind.

"It's very exciting and it's important for everybody to stay tuned in to what we're doing on the boat and get the sails trimmed just perfectly with the weight on the boat on the right spot," Blues Crews co-owner Dave Baxter said.

email: sports@newspress.com



MATT WIER / NEWS-PRESS
Rush Street takes to the water during Wednesday's race.