

FARR 40 WEST COAST CHAMPIONSHIP

Demourkas headlines local entrants

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The Farr 40 West Coast championships will bring top-notch sailors from around the world to the Santa Barbara Harbor. Hoping to send those sailors home empty-handed will be a local man, John Demourkas.

Demourkas and his yacht, Groovederci, headline a short list of local competitors in the championship regatta, which begins today at noon and runs through Saturday out of the Santa Barbara Yacht Club.

"It's quite a marvel," Demourkas said. "My wife, (Deneen), and I have been sailing Farr 40s since 2000, and really the first time we've ever had a regatta in our own backyard. After 14 years, we got one here and it's actually quite extraordinary to be in our own home and have all this activity. We're blessed to have boats from Australia, Italy, the East Coast, the Midwest and Mexico. It's an international fleet and it's quite competitive."

Demourkas recently finished in fourth place on Groovederci in the California Cup, which took place in June. The boat is currently ranked fifth in the International Circuit standings.

The race crew for the four-day regatta will attempt to complete 11 races over the course of the championships, with no more than three races taking place in one day. The Farr 40 boats, of which there are 15 entered into the race, will sail in deep water in the Santa Barbara Channel.

The purpose of the deep-water course will be to avoid some of the idiosyncratic weather along the Santa Barbara coast.

"It's important that we make



CARMEN SMYTH / NEWS-PRESS FILE

Skian Dhu, right (51044) and Flyer, center (104) are two of the local entrants in the Farr 40 West Coast Championships, which begin today out of the Santa Barbara Yacht Club.

the race course fair. Unlike a Wet Wednesday where we use our permanent marks, these are moveable marks," Demourkas said. "We want to get away from what is traditionally a right-handed race course in Santa Barbara. The land has so much affect on the wind that to move the course out and get it more perpendicular is what we want to do."

Demourkas will be joined in the championships by fellow Santa Bar-

bara Yacht Club sailors Dirk Free-land on Skian Dhu and Stanford Shaw on Flyer.

The deep list of entrants includes a strong international contingent. Of the 15 entrants, five are registered outside of the United States.

There is the Italian *Enfant Terrible*, the Mexican *Flojito y Cooperando* and three Australian boats — *Estate Master*, *Kokomo* and *Voodoo Chile*.

Kokomo will be directed by Olym-

pic gold medalist tactician, Hamish Pepper, while owner Lang Walker pilots.

Demourkas will turn to New Zealand native and Newport, R.I. resident Cameron Appleton as tactician. Flyer will be guided by Rob Grant and Skian Dhu will have Jeffrey Grange onboard as the tactician.

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