

Area sailor tastes the salt

By BOB GROSS

Bloomfield Hills isn't exactly what you'd call a yachtsman's paradise. Just take one good, deep breath. You might catch a whiff of a lake breeze, but nowhere is there the salty tang of the sea.

So how did Barry Douglas, a 1976 graduate of Bloomfield Hills Lehigh, end up spending nine months sailing on Clipper, one of the 12-meter yachts contending for the right to defend the upcoming America's Cup?

Well, it's a long story, almost as long as the boat itself is the distance from Bloomfield Hills to Newport, R.I., where the trials are held.

"I started sailing," said Douglas, "actually at camp when I was 7 or 8."

"My family had about a 25-footer," he said, "and we raced a little bit with that boat, and I started racing with some people I met down at the yacht club."

"IF YOU'RE a good crew member," he continued, "word of mouth travels that you're a good crew member, and you're able to get on other boats."

Douglas started racing in more prestigious competitions as that word of

mouth traveled. He crewed on boats in several different Port Huron to Mackinac races.

And in 1978, he crewed on Agape in the Canada's Cup series contested in the Great Lakes. That experience was the start of Douglas' transition from freshwater sailor to "seadog."

The Agape crew included Paul Fuchs of Grosse Pointe and L.J. Edgecombe of California. Both men had sailed with Ted Turner, the skipper of the 12-meter yacht Courageous, the holder of the last America's Cup, the skipper of the offshore racing craft Tencacious and the owner of the Atlanta Braves and Atlanta Flames baseball and hockey teams.

Douglas took off from school following the Canada's Cup — he's a senior majoring in mechanical engineering at Stanford University — and went south for the winter with Fuchs and Edgecombe to race in the Southern Ocean Racing Circuit.

THROUGH FUCHS and Edgecombe, Douglas met Turner. He earned a berth on Turner's Tencacious before the winter was over.

Word of mouth kept working for Douglas. Turner recommended him to Russell Long, the skipper of the

Clipper. Douglas tried out for the boat and made it.

Douglas started training with Long's crew in September, flying coast-to-coast from California to Rhode Island to go sailing on the weekends. He was with Long from September through the June America's Cup Trials.

Douglas' story, through the June trials, had a fairy tale quality — not discounting all the hard work he put in along the way.

But the fairy tale doesn't have a happy ending.

Clipper didn't do as well as some people expected in the June trials and in the resulting shakeup, Douglas was dropped from the crew.

"Clipper didn't do so hot in the June trials," said Douglas, "so they decided to make a lot of major modifications."

Which was a big disappointment after nine months of hard work.

"We gave everything we could to the program," said Douglas, "and I felt we got cheated by the people running the program."

SO IT'S BACK to freshwater for a while — Douglas had a ride lined up for this past weekend's Port Huron to Mackinac race.

That race is a little different from the America's Cup Trials, and not just

because of a difference in the salinity of the water. The Port Huron to Mackinac race, as the name suggests, is from one point on the map to another — a distance race.

The America's Cup Trials — and the America's Cup itself — are contested over a closed course.

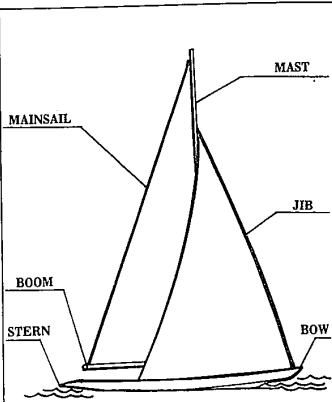
"Supposedly the closed course thing," said Douglas, "is supposed to have more sailing skill involved, rather than the long distance race where there's navigation, knowing the weather patterns and a little bit of luck."

There's also a lot less specialization on a long distance boat. A crew member on a boat in the Port Huron to Mackinac race would be expected to pitch in wherever needed.

A member of the crew of a 12-meter yacht sailing a closed course race is one cog of a highly trained, 11-man team. He has a specific job to do, day in and day out.

DOUGLAS WAS A port tender on the Clipper. That job involves "shaping the sail (either the jib or the spinnaker, depending on wind direction) with various techniques, pulling on different corners of the sail to adapt the sail to the wind, changing the angle of attack to the

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AFT — Toward the rear of the boat; in back of the boat or at the back of the boat.
BOOM — A horizontal pole running along the bottom edge of a sail.
BOW — The front of the boat.
LEEWARD — The direction the wind is blowing toward. To sail to leeward is to sail before the wind.
JIB — A triangular sail stretching from the mast to the bowsprit or the bow (see diagram). The jib is used when sailing against the wind.
MAINSAIL — A triangular sail stretching from the rear of the mast aft and down to a boom (see diagram).
MAST — A vertical pole which supports a boat's sails.
PORT — The left side of the boat; to the left.
SPAR — A pole which supports rigging.
SPINNAKER — A large, balloonlike sail set on a spar that swings out opposite the mainsail. A spinnaker is used on racing yachts when running before the wind, or to leeward.
STARBOARD — The right side of the boat; to the right.
STERN — The rear of the boat.
TACK — 1. The position of the wind relative to the boat's sails. When the wind is coming over the right side of the boat, the boat is on the starboard tack. 2. The act of changing from one tack to another. When a boat sails against the wind, it zigzags, or tacks, as close as possible to the direction from which the wind is blowing.
WINDWARD — The direction from which the wind is blowing.

Charity golf tourney planned for Glen Oaks

Glen Oaks Golf and Country Club in Farmington Hills will host the semi-finals of the annual Metropolitan Detroit Walter Hagen Junior Golf Championship for boys and girls ages 13-18 on Aug. 5.

Sponsored by the American Cancer Society, the Walter Hagen Junior Tournament seeks to perpetuate the memory of golfer Walter Hagen, while raising money to support cancer control programs in the Detroit area.

There will be separate play for boys and girls. Age groups will be split with a masters division for golfers ages 13-15 and a golden masters for participants ages 16-18.

The top three golfers in each division at each course will proceed to the

finals Aug. 12 at Salem Hills Golf Club in Northville. Separate awards will also be presented to the best three golfers in each division at each course.

Tournaments also will be played at Rochester Golf Club, Springfield Oaks Golf Club in Holly, Oakridge Golf Club in Lenox Township, and Godwin Golf Club in South Lyon.

The entry fee of \$20 also entitles the golfer to participate in a clinic conducted by Randy Erskine, the Michigan Open champion, Aug. 8 at Godwin Glen.

Entry forms are available at most public and private courses and at the American Cancer Society office at 29300 Southfield Road, Southfield. Additional information may be obtained by calling 557-5353, Ext. 11 or 15.

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