

SPORTS



AND THEY'RE OFF – Sailors compete in the 64th annual National Family Island Regatta in Elizabeth Harbour, George Town, Exuma.

National Family Island Regatta 2017 overview

EXUMA. The Bahamas – And they're off!

Despite overcast skies and a short downpour, sailors hoisted their sails in Elizabeth Harbour, George Town, to begin the first Series Race (C,D and E Dinghy Classes) in the 64th National Family Island Regatta.

The race began Thursday, April 27 with curious spectators watching the competition from vantage points at the waterfront,

under trees and from rooftops. Familiar viewers shouted names of the sloops as they passed, some beckoned to sailors, some described the happenings in sailing jargon and others watched quietly through the lens of binoculars.

Some 60 boats were expected to participate in this year's regatta in classes A,B,C,D and E and according to Kendal McPhee, Chairman of the local

Family Island Regatta Committee, sailing is "stiff" and "competitive."

Mr. McPhee said the committee looked forward to a "successful" regatta and expected thousands of visitors to attend the traditional sporting event which wrapped up on Saturday, April 29.

An addition to this year's regatta is the first stage of a new Regatta Village site.

"We now have a new Regatta Village. The area we are on now was water. We're on solid land that was filled in. We worked day in and day out to get it ready," said Mr. McPhee.

"We took all the shacks off the road and put them in one area which is the Regatta Village. One time ago you could hardly walk through the streets because of the amount of people. Now, there is more space and free

movement."

Twenty seven stalls comprising food, drinks and more have been set up in the Regatta Village. Mr. McPhee said there are plans to erect permanent stalls in the future.

Three men who have contributed to the development of boat building and slooping in The Bahamas are being honored by the National Family Island Committee during this

year's regatta. They are: Aulice "Tommy" Thompson from Steventon, Exuma; George Knowles, from McKanns, Long Island; and Joshua Green from Mangrove Cay, Andros.

In addition to enjoying Bahamian dishes, attendees were expected to engage in and enjoy onshore events organized by the local committee including a Float Parade, a Fashion Show, a Cultural Show and performances by the Royal Bahamas Police Force Marching Band.

The local committee comprises the following members, who, each year volunteer their time and talents to assist with organizing the annual regattas. They are: Kendal McPhee, Tamika Rolle, Ken Roberts, Petherina Hanna, Sophia Smith, Perry Rolle, Dallas Knowles, Harriet Crowley, Renae Lawrence and Darvin Mullings.

"We now have a new Regatta Village. The area we are on now was water. We're on solid land that was filled in. We worked day in and day out to get it ready,"

~ Kendal McPhee,
Chairman
local Family Island
Regatta Committee



ENJOYING THE ACTIVITIES – Attendees enjoy activities at the 64th annual National Family Island Regatta taking place in George Town, Exuma.