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475 boats enter races

David Branigan

Sailing

Although light airs appeared set to ruin the opening day of the Volvo Dun Laoghaire Regatta yesterday, a growing breeze allowed a full racing programme to be sailed with a mixture of sunshine and rain at times.

Over 475 boats have entered the biennial series with almost half drawn from outside the Dublin Bay area.

Six course areas are being used with the full regatta comprising almost every aspect of the sport in Ireland including one-designs, dinghies, sports boats, and handicapped cruisers.

Traditional boats and classics have also boosted numbers and a rowing regatta to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the harbour is also planned for the weekend.

Results from the opening races show few surprises with the early leaders including John Maybury's Joker 2 from the Royal Irish Yacht

Club taking a comfortable lead in Division 1 thanks to a second and first place yesterday.

Tony Ackland's Dark Angel from Swansea has once again dominated Division 0, marking a very successful foray to Ireland over the past month that included the ICRA national championships at Crosshaven and O'Leary Life Sovereigns Cup at Kinsale two weeks ago.

Among the large turnout for the Coastal fleet that has 32 entries, Paddy Gregory's Flashback from Howth has taken the lead after race one around a scenic route southwards from the start off Dun Laoghaire's East Pier towards Dalkey, out to sea then in towards Killiney Bay before finishing inside the historic harbour at Dun Laoghaire.

Racing continues today — winds permitting.