



# Chaotic opening for fleet

**TOM ZED**

ROUGH weather upset the start of the 59th annual Adelaide Bluewater Classic sailing race to Port Lincoln yesterday.

Several yachts withdrew before the 3pm race start from the Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron at Outer Harbour.

Strong winds and rough seas resulted in the number of retirements growing to 27 by 6.30pm.

One sailor went overboard shortly after the start but was quickly rescued.

Event coordinator Matt Gryst said there had been a collision between three boats shortly after the start and 23 yachts had been forced to retire from the race because of gear failure.

"It was a little windier than we'd hoped at the start, the front was stronger and the forecast was updated from 20-25 to 30-35 knots," he said.

"There was a collision between Lara III, Renegade and Fresh shortly after the start.

"Lara III and Renegade returned to port and were forced to retire. Fresh returned to assess the damage but were hoping to continue.

"Seas are forecast to be in the 2.5 to 3.5m range so it's going to be tough overnight."

At 30m in length, super-maxi Skandia handled the rough start better than the smaller yachts and made a strong start. Skandia is expected to lead the fleet into Port Lincoln this morning.



**BUMPY RIDE:** Farr 42 Lexus bears down on one of its smaller rivals off Outer Harbour yesterday. **Picture: GREG PRATT**