



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / October 12, 2000

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16 teams to tug in 'Slaughter Across the Water III'

In what promises to be the most contentious struggle in its young history, the third annual Maritime Republic of Eastport (MRE) International Tug-o'-War on Saturday, November 4, 2000, will pit 16 teams of 30 to 34 tuggers on each side of a 1,700-foot-long rope between Annapolis City Dock and the end of Second Street on the Eastport Peninsula. Pep rallies will be held to inspire tuggers and onlookers alike on October 27 and November 3.

Each of the nearly 500 tuggers needs to secure pledges of at least \$15 per tug. Organizers hope to raise as much as \$20,000, all of which will be distributed among local non-profit groups. Each winning team will have the right to designate which non-profits receive 80 percent of the net proceeds from each heat.

The first heat, sponsored by Buck Distributing, will have the employees and patrons of the Annapolis bars tugging against those of the Eastport bars in a contest called, "The Lite Bar Tug." Heat II is a classic grudge match across the harbor pitting the venerable Annapolis Yacht Club against the "upstart" Eastport Yacht Club, which just celebrated its 20th anniversary.

Heat III is Phillips Seafood Restaurant vs. the Chart House Restaurant in the "Battle of the Deep Blue Sea (Food): the Rematch." Heat IV will settle another fundamental struggle: Powerboaters vs. Sailors in the "Classic Chesapeake Bay Rivalry" featuring members of the Chesapeake Bay Power Boat Association and the staff and

sailing friends of SpinSheet Magazine. Heat V is the third rematch of the Annapolis Jaycees Men vs. MRE Men in the “Battle of Testosterone III.” Eastport has won the last two years.

However, the Eastport women have lost the past two years, and Heat VI will give them a chance to seek justice against the Annapolis Jaycee Women’s team. The rematch, titled, “Battle of the Fairer Sex III,” will feature 34 women on each team. The final heat will be the Jaycees Coed Team vs. MRE Coed Team in the “Final Showdown III.”

While there will be safety lines away from the harbor’s edge preventing tuggers from being pulled into the water, a “designated dunkee” from each losing team will leap into the harbor at the completion of each heat. The tugs are so physically grueling, each heat generally lasts less than one minute.

The public is invited to join the contestants and organizers at a pep rally on Friday, October 27, beginning at 5:00pm and another rally on Friday, November 3, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Both rallies will take place at the Chart House Restaurant on Second Street.

For more information on joining teams or viewing the tugs, call Eastport Copy at 410-269-6399, or call up the official MRE website at www.themre.org.

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