



Racing to Rio is nothing new for Douglas Makafola and skipper Alan Dando. They've done it before and they will be doing it again early next year.

Pulling weeds led to high-seas racing

HERALD REPORTER

SHIPMATES Douglas Makafola and Alan Dando of Johannesburg, ready as ever for the Cape-to-Rio yacht race early next year, have come a long way since Douglas was employed by Alan as a gardener in 1973.

"I was working in Alan's garden in Bryanston in 1973 when he started building a yacht and I lent a hand," 55-year-old Douglas said in an interview yesterday.

"When the yacht was completed I started learning seamanship under Alan in Durban. Yachting is a great sport.

"With Alan I've been on one Cape-to-Rio race, and I'm even more excited now about being in the next one. It was tough at the winches, working the sails in high winds and high seas.

"Going to Rio again will be great. Only I hope that I don't get seasick."

Is he prone to seasickness?

"I do get a little seasick at times, even though I take my pills. But in a race like the Rio, no sailor wants to be a lame duck because of seasickness."

Now employed as a messenger in a Johannesburg office, he can get to sea only when he has enough leave — and when he can persuade his wife to let him go.

"My wife has objected, but I've promised her all sorts of presents from Rio. She can't resist that."

□ The 17-metre Realty I and her crew are to leave Knysna on December 26 for Cape Town.

The Rio race is to start on January 9.