

bour Island Longhaul on Sunday that he may be forced to skip the trials due to the exorbitant costs needed to import a new and competitive Tornado.

"There is no point in contesting the trials on an inferior boat. The wealthiest sailor with the best Tornado has the best chance of making the team," Ferry said.

The point was made during the 75km longhaul over the weekend. Hottentots Holland Beach Sailing Club member, Eddy Beukes, sailed the race on an ageing Tornado — on paper the fastest katamaran in the water — but was well and truly beaten by several Hobie 16's and a few Hobie 14's.

Besides Ferry, South Africa's World Hobie 16 champion, David Kruyt and Michelle Van der Merwe and European Hobie 14 Champion, Aubrey Price, will both not be sailing in the trials.

Alan Lawrence, who was the World Hobie 14 champion in 1987, has recently been sailing on a Hobie 18, which is similar to the Tornado, but even his participation in the trials seems doubtful.

The favourite choice to represent South Africa in Barcelona would undoubtedly be Plettenberg Bay's multiple South African Hobie 16 champion, Blainne Dodds.

Dodds will be sailing in the trials but will be handicapped as his Tornado has seen better days.

This is not the case, however, for Transvaal's Eddie Cooks who will be racing on a brand new imported Tornado. Cooks, a good katamaran sailor, has an extremely outside chance of

making the team under normal circumstances and is certainly not in the same class of the coastal sailors like Dodds, Kruyt, Ferry, Price and company.

Another Transvaal sailor, Ken Phillips, has been building his own Tornado for the trials and inland sailors will be well represented with Jannie Tucker, the top Transvaal sailor at the Hobie 16 World Championships at Club Mykonos, a confirmed entry.

The South African Yacht Racing Association has allowed the 470 class to be contested on the similar Fireball. On this occasion it may have been wiser to have ruled that the katamaran trials will be sailed on Hobie 16's — by far the most popular and competitive katamaran in South Africa.

This would also guarantee a strong fleet with the likes of Ferry, Kruyt and Price and would give young up-and-coming sailors, like Stoddard Lance, a shot at Olympic glory.

Only one skipper and crew can qualify to represent South Africa in Barcelona and once selected — on the basis of skill — the SA Hobie Class could use funds to purchase a brand new Tornado which could be used for the skipper and crew to prepare for Barcelona.

WITH the Olympic sailing trials looming at the end of the month, South African katamaran sailors are faced with the prospect that wealth, as opposed to skill, could ultimately decide on who wins the Barcelona berth in the class.

In South Africa the most popular racing katamarans are the Hobie 16's and 14's, the Darts and Mosquitos, whereas the Olympics are contested on expensive Tornados' — and there are only a handful of them in South Africa.

Cape Town Springbok Shaun Ferry's shock announcement after the Har-

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