

EP HERALD

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Yacht survives bid to bar her from race

HERALD CORRESPONDENT

CAPE TOWN — A controversial catamaran entry to the Cape-to-Rio race survived a last-gasp bid to bar her from competing yesterday as race fever mounted in the city.

While the ultra-light catamaran was lifted from the water yesterday for a late weigh-in, the cream of South Africa's yachtsmen and a strong international contingent were fine-tuning and provisioning their sleek racing machines in the run-up to the start on Saturday.

At the centre of a storm is the 15-metre Searose Kwikfit — a super light catamaran which some sailors charge has contravened race rules as she has no interior and does not qualify for the 3 600-mile race as a cruising catamaran.

After passing an earlier scrutiny, Searose was pulled out of the water and weighed yesterday at the insistence of the Race Committee, and given the thumbs up.

The race is the first time that racing catamarans have been allowed to compete in South Africa but the organising committee ruled that only cruising catamarans could sail, fearing that the multihulls could steal the race glory from the monohulls.