

Reaching for the stars!

DURBAN Springbok sailor Bruce Savage, recently selected to skipper the South African Soling entry in the Olympics feels he and his crew have a reasonable chance of winning a medal.

He and crew members Rick Mayhew and Giles Stanley leave for Europe at the end of the month for a hectic racing spell of nine regattas prior to the Olympics.

He said their confidence had been boosted when they beat four of South Africa's top 10 yachtsmen — Geoff Meek, Greg Davis, Chris King and Rick Nankin — in the trials off Durban recently.

"We have the potential to win a medal. It all depends on how much we learn in Europe," he said.

Mr Savage, winner of the 1985 Lipton Cup who has been racing full-time in the United Kingdom for the past two years, said he was satisfied with his boat.

Brian King

"We've never had a problem with boat speed in any conditions during the trials," he said.

"We're 90 percent up the learning curve, but the other 10 percent is crucial. The main thing now is to train against fast international boats."

After arriving in Europe, the three Soling-yachtsmen — who are still looking for sponsorship — will be sailing virtually non-stop until the start of the Olympics on July 25.

Key regattas they will be participating in in their run-up to this milestone event for South Africa are the World Soling Championships in Cadiz, Spain in March, the Hyeres Olympic Regatta in the south of France in April and the Spar Regatta in Medemblik, Holland in May.