

# Yachting finals for EL

## Daily Dispatch Reporter

**EAST LONDON** — East London is moving closer to becoming a vibrant yachting venue with the South African finals of the Nations Cup Match Racing Competition being held here this year.

The race officer, Mr Dave Hart, said yesterday the concept of the race was the same as used in the America's Cup when two identical boats raced against each other at a time, as opposed to a number of boats taking part in a race.

The winner of the event would represent South Africa in the Nations Cup, Africa/Middle East region. The finals would probably be held in Europe.

Mr Hart said the Border Sailing Association, which had been officially recognised this year by the South African Yacht Racing Association, succeeded in a bid to have the South African finals take place in East London this year.

Previously, East London formed part of the East Cape.

"We want to promote East London as a yachting venue and we thought this was a good way to start it," Mr Hart said.

"We must be the most undeveloped yachting venue in South Africa. We want races that start, finish and are maintained here. It is possible."

He said match racing was probably the most exciting and fastest developing form of sailing, and had spectator appeal. It was catching up all over the world and "we are lagging behind".

Competition would start on Friday and the small racing keelboats would be raced in a "round robin" off the East London beachfront opposite Milky Lane.

Most of the top names in sailing would take part including defending champion Geoff Meek, Paul Thompson, Rob Wilcox, Ross Robson and Corack Bradley.



**At the harbour yesterday: John Sheppard, left, Tony Allen, right, and Ian Cunningham, who are part of Border's team in the Nations Cup match racing competition.**