

# Rescued Japanese yachtsman honoured by Capetonians

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MASAYUKI KIKUCHI, the Japanese yachtsman rescued last week after a third failed attempt to sail around the world, was honoured yesterday for his spirit of adventure.

He was awarded a certificate of excellence by the Royal Cape Yacht Club and the University of Cape Town's Africa-Asia initiative.

Kikuchi, who flies home today, said he was overwhelmed by the assistance and hospitality of South Africans.

"After apologising to my wife for the worry I caused her, I want to tell everyone back home about the wonderful people I've met here. It is difficult for me to abandon the urge to sail."

Commodore Russell Vollmer said Royal Cape was recognising Kikuchi's achievement of sail-

ing around the Cape and also forging ties with Japan.

UCT deputy vice-chancellor Martin Hall said: "When we read about his heroic attempt to circumnavigate the world, in particular to sail from Asia to Africa, we felt we would like to honour his spirit. It is precisely this spirit of adventure and courage, in people who attempt to link the two continents, that we want to acknowledge. We admire Mr Kikuchi for taking on the natural elements of ocean, storm and exhaustion."

Hall said the Africa-Asia initiative aimed to form partnerships with Japanese organisations and to encourage contact with Japanese universities.

Kikuchi said solo sailors should ensure their boats remained in first-class condition before they took to the seas.

"It may not be significant



**COURAGEOUS:** Sailor Masayuki Kikuchi was honoured by the Royal Cape Yacht Club. Picture: MARK HUTCHINSON

advice, but make extra effort to ensure small things like hatches, fittings and equipment work properly. Sometimes it is the little things that save your life when something goes wrong."

The Japanese consul, Totu

Hayashi, said: "I am happy things have eventually worked out fine for the yachtsman. I think it is good that he was honoured in this way. We also look forward to strengthening ties between our countries."