



Picture: GERHARD POTGIETER

# Red sails in the sunset . . .

## Against the wind

By DEBORAH SMITH



**T**ENSION is mounting as yachting clubs countrywide prepare for South Africa's most prestigious regatta — the Lipton Cup.

The Transvaal Yacht Club, who have the honour of being the only inland club to have won the cup, have narrowed down the choice of yacht they intend to two and these — and their crews — are battling for the honour.

Mr Reinhold Antweiler skippering Johnny's Rote Hexe and Mr Ewald Sternhagel skippering Johnny's El et Moi have a fierce battle on their hands as the heats continue and the final decision as to which yacht is to race is finally made.

### BATTLE

Johnny's Rote Hexe is leading the battle, but the yachts are due to leave for Durban soon where they will compete in as many off-shore races as possible. The yacht with the most points will be declared the winner and it will be off to Cape Town in August for the big race.

Each club can only enter one yacht in the Lipton Cup, which has been an annual event since 1925.

The prize, a solid silver trophy, was donated by Sir Thomas Lipton, a previous America's Cup campaigner. It is insured for R250 000 and is contested each year by the

cream of South African yachtsmen and women.

The Transvaal Yacht Club, situated on the banks of Hartbeespoort Dam, won the cup the first time they entered in 1984 in Cape Town.

The following year they chose to defend the cup in Durban, as the Lipton is a blue water race and TYC had to forego their "homewater" advantage and leave Hartbeespoort Dam. The Natal winds were against them — and they lost.

However sailors at the club are fighting fit and determined to win the cup — at all costs.

Racing in the Lipton is not a cheap venture and this year the club was lucky enough to get a sponsor in the form of Mr Johnny Bala.

The yacht has to be in perfect condition which means all the fittings have to be ship shape — the pun is intentional — and new sails which cost thousands of rands have to be bought.

It could be said that Mr Sternhagel has a slight advantage in that he skippered the winning yacht, the Gallactica, in 1985.

There is only one class of yachts, the L26 sailing in the Lipton which means all the yachts are the same and it is a matter of sailing skill and tactics.

**WE ARE SAILING:** Johnny's Rote Hexe could be the Transvaal Yacht Club's entry in the Lipton Cup in August this year. It is the forerunner in the TYC's sail-off to determine the club's entry in the prestigious race.