

GEOFF'S MEEK BUT NOT MILD AT SEA



SEA KING . . . Springbok yachtsman Geoff Meek, 46, relaxes after winning the J22 class national yachting championship which was incorporated into the Continental Week sailing regatta. Picture: MIKE HOLMES

Springbok yachtsman in easy Algoa Bay victory

By NICK WILSON

SPRINGBOK yachtsman Geoff Meek, 46, has won the J22 class national championship which was incorporated into the national Continental Week sailing regatta.

The regatta ended yesterday.

Meek, from Cape Town, is recognised as one of South Africa's top sailors, having represented the country around the world.

It was the first time he had captained a J22 yacht.

Meek said at the Algoa Bay Yacht Club yesterday that he and his two crew members had won six and come second in three of the nine races they took part in this week. There were supposed to

be two more races in the class yesterday, but Meek and his crew had done enough to win.

Meek, who has been sailing since the age of six, said he had won about eight international regattas. These include the Sardinia Cup, off the coast of Italy, the Southern Cross Cup, held in Sydney, the Cowes Cup, off the south of England, and the Block Island Race Week, near New York.

"The future of South African yachting is looking good," said Meek, adding that yacht clubs were getting money together and yacht owners were lending boats for development programmes.

The Royal Cape Yachting Club, to which Meek belongs, has taught

about 300 previously disadvantaged people to sail. "Our big problem in yachting is if you want to sail internationally at the top you really need lots of money."

He said there was a lack of money in the sport and that television did not support yachting.

But Meek was confident the development programmes were going to help local yachting get more exposure and involve more people in the sport.

He said Continental Tyre South Africa, which had sponsored the event for the last six years, had built the week into the premier yachting event in the country.

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