

To The Editor . . . *

27-668

Provincial Sprog Championships Dates Defended

SIR,—An article in the "Mercury" of June 24, opposing the dates and venue for the 1968/69 Provincial Sprog Championships has been brought to our attention.

Since the Natal Yachting Association exists only to promote the best interests of sailing in this province, it is indeed a pity that the author of this article, or some of the Sprog sailors whose views he is presumably representing, did not attend the last two meetings of the NYA and present their arguments.

At these meetings the provincial programme for the forthcoming season was fully discussed before approval by the elected representatives of all the yacht clubs in Natal. Individual members of the association are welcome at all meetings and in fact many do attend.

CONFLICTING

Had your reporter been at the meetings, he would also, I am sure, very well appreciate the many conflicting interests which have to be taken into account when making up the provincial yachting calendar. All possible care is taken to avoid clashes with national events for the various classes, with provincial events in the neighbouring Transval and Free State provinces, and with traditional dates used by Natal clubs for their major events.

The Provincial Championships are open events, and it is this association's aim to increase their importance rather than minimise it as your reporter suggests. The Estcourt venue and the dates chosen have been acknowledged by the National Sprog Association and the event is receiving publicity from this source, so that it is hoped that Natal Sprog sailors will meet competition from other provinces. Such competition has not been a conspicuous feature of the traditional Easter event in Durban Bay.

VAAL DAM

It may well be cold at Estcourt over the long week-end at the end of August, but the sailing conditions should be good. On the same dates the Durban Finn class yachtsmen will be defending the Van Nimwegen Trophy on the waters of Vaal Dam, which are not likely to be any warmer, and we feel sure that the Sprog sailors of Durban are no less keen than the Finn' skippers.

And surely your reporter is very unfair to the class when he suggests that boats will not be ready by the end of August. The Provincial calendar was published three months in advance of the date of this event and the overhaul and fitting out of a Sprog for the new season should surely not take more than a month at the outside.

We sincerely hope that the additional publicity which your article will give to this event will provide a spur to the Durban Sprog sailors to have their boats ready and to compete in this major contest on waters other than their own.

J. A. SULLY,
President.

Natal Yachting Association.