

Vaal sailors set sights on 'Worlds'

MORE than 100 yachts, many of them from the Transvaal, are expected to converge on Durban in the first week of July for the country's top one-design regatta, **Crystic Week**.

Among them will be a J22, manned by four young Transvaalers hoping to qualify for next year's J22 "Worlds" on

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DAVE BEATTIE

Lake Michigan in the US.

The four — skipper Willem Woerman, Mark Lagesse, Jacques Manten and Chris Hathaway — have landed a sponsorship from Lion World Travel specifically for their world championships bid. All they need to

do now is qualify — which means finishing in the top two in a field of almost 30 contenders.

"We're taking it seriously," said Woerman yesterday. "We're off to Durban tonight to get in some sea time, and the sponsors are allowing us to go down regularly to Durban for training.

"We finished third in

the J22 nationals at Vaal Dam, and now, starting with Crystic Week, we need good finishes in the remaining 'trial' regattas."

Other top Transvaalers taking part in the Durban offshore event are Ewald Stefnagel and Springbok Peter Hishin, and two Cape hotshots, Rick Nankin and Dave Hudson have confirmed their entries in the J22 Class.

The regatta doubles as the national and provincial championships for most classes. The RCOD class will be contesting the national crown, while the L34, L26, J22 and Stadt 23 will be looking at Natal provincial titles.

Other classes competing will be Hunter and J27, a relatively new design in South Africa. It is reputed to be the fastest one-design of its size in the world. A fleet of least ten of these speedsters that have caused much excitement on Vaal Dam, will be competing off Durban.

In the larger L34 and IMS category, the regatta includes a tough 180 nautical mile race to Richards Bay and back.