

Yachtsmen set to take wind out of others' sails

INTERNATIONAL isolation might have dulled SA's competitive edge in disciplines such as athletics but some other codes have survived with their skills intact. One such code is yachting.

To South Africans, particularly those living inland, the two Daves — Hudson and Kitchen — might not be household words. Bet your bottom dollar they will be by the end of Olympic Games 1992.

Alight

The pair, one a 45-year-old Capetonian, the other a Transvaler, set SA alight with their qualification at last year's Olympic trials. They then stunned Europe recently in their Flying Dutchman, taking the wind out of the sails of reigning Olympic champions Jorgen Bojsen Moller and Christian Gronberg of Denmark.

Hudson hates the idea that their performance in Spain has boosted expectations. He says he would prefer to go in a nobody.

Written off after ending up needing four races to win the Olympic trials, Hudson and Kitchen reeled off four wins in row to snatch victory.

Another lesser-known South African being tipped for a final place and possibly a medal is Peter Williams who competes in one of the most intensively competitive Olympic sports of all — swimming.

The 23-year-old Port Elizabeth-born Williams, with a best time of 22,71 seconds in the 50 m freestyle, is ranked seventh in the world, according to the SA Swimming Association — although his father swears it is higher.

The world record in that event is held by Tom Jae-

ger of America, in a time of 21,81 — under a second faster. Williams is regarded by most as a swimmer who could well surprise at Barcelona.

Having studied from 1987 to 1991 at Nebraska, he is in touch with the American pace-setters, and the tension of the Olympics could spur him to a far better time.

Unranked

Williams is also SA's best in the 400 freestyle — although unranked — with a time of 50,95, just over two seconds slower than American Matt Biondi's world mark of 48,42.

And those in the know believe it is in canoeing that SA has perhaps its best chance of snatching a gold. Keep your eyes on Mark Perrow in the flat water competitions.