

Good results from Ainslie

SAILING ROUND-UP ROY DUNSTER

IAN Ainslie is putting in a strong set of results at this year's Olympic Finn European Championships at Hospitalet Vandellos, Spain.

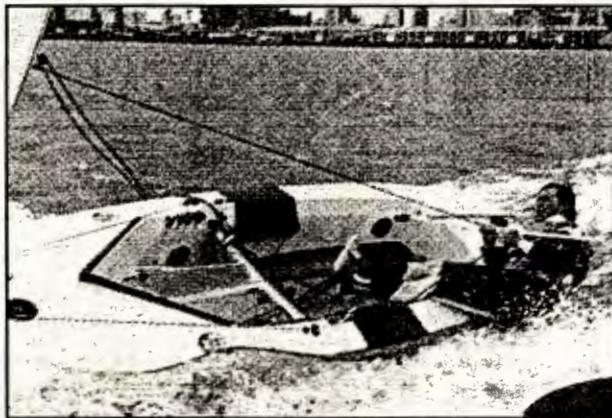
Using a mast borrowed from the current Olympic Champion, Jose van der Ploeg (Spain), he won the second round of the regatta beating 35 other boats from around the world in the process.

In 8-10 knots of breeze, he took the lead at the first gybe mark and never looked back. Rather weaker performances in the other races sailed have him in provisional 8th overall at time of writing, ahead of current World Champion Phillipe Presti (France) in 11th.

Ian's own mast came to an untimely end at the SPA Regatta in the Netherlands and months of working on optimising the mast/sail combination went with it. However, his speed in Spain has demonstrated his ability to bounce back and that he is still very much a medal prospect for Savannah.

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IT IS all systems go for the two regattas to be sailed in Durban this weekend.



BORROWED MAST: Ian Ainslie practises hard
Picture: ROY DUNSTER

The Flying Fifteens, started their nationals yesterday and the other mini-keelboats, most notably the J22s, will join them offshore later today on the RNYC-run course.

The J22s have just completed their Transvaal championships and, after the incredibly light conditions on Haartebeespoort Dam (only four races were completed in two weekends), Durban offshore should be a welcome relief. The Transvaal champs were won by the Durban/Gauteng team of William Voerman/Alec Lanham-Love/Jo

Boy/Felix Scheder-Bieschen on "Macs Shipping".

The KZN Finn Provincials also start today as part of PYC's Single-handed Regatta for dinghies on the Bay. Other classes expected to join in are Lasers and Sprogs.

Interest in the NCS Regatta (6-13 July) continues to grow with new sponsors beginning to start their involvement with individual boats. Winner of the L34 KZN provincials earlier this year, "CMP Close Again", helmed by Patrick Holloway and owned by Schalk de Beer, has just been signed up by two other companies and will now be known as "Portfolio-Plexicor Close Again".

The L34s will sail their National Championships as part of the NCS Regatta and, considering that going into the final day of the provincials any one of five yachts could have taken overall honours, are likely to enjoy close, very exciting racing.

Durban had an interesting visitor this week in the shape of the Russian tall ship "Kruzenshtern" which arrived on Wednesday.

The "Kruzenshtern" is the second largest sailing ship in commission in the world at 114m long. She has four masts and 211 crew from Russia, Germany and Australia.