

Venerable 'Old Salts' to race

PORT ELIZABETH's saltiest characters will be out in force tomorrow.

The Old Salts Race, annual contest and get-together for senior yachtsmen has drawn an entry of 16 veterans of salt air, wind and wave, with a combined sailing experience of hundreds of years.

The race will be held in Algoa Bay and will be the second to be held at sea. The previous six were held on the Swartkops River.

The ages of the contestants range from 50 (the minimum qualifying) to mid 70's. The Old Salts will skipper 10 yachts and crews will be the other six entrants and club members. Fifty people will take part.

The race starts at 12.30 pm at the harbour and spectators can see the yachts set off from the tug quay. The course of 10 nautical miles includes the bellbuoy and the coke buoy.

Race organiser Mr Mike Morgan said the event was arranged for senior yachtsmen to get together and enjoy a fun race and camaraderie.

"But that doesn't mean the sailing and competition will not be tough out there," he said.

The winner will receive the Ron Paterson memorial trophy. The trophy was awarded for the first time last year.

One Old Salt who is in his eighties will not be taking part this year. He is Mr "Chatty" Knight, who sailed in the race until last year.

Two veterans taking part are Mr Harold Kohler and Mr Eric Vos, who both have extensive river and deep sea sailing experience.

Mr Kohler, who has been sailing for 56 years, was a founder member of the Algoa Bay Yacht Club in 1959 and a pioneer of deep sea sailing in Algoa Bay.

The first Lipton Cup races were held in Algoa Bay in 1958, Mr Kohler having won the Lipton Cup in Cape Town the previous year.

Mr Vos, who was president of the South African Yacht Racing Association, president of the Algoa Bay Yacht Club and the East Cape Yacht Racing Association in the mid-1970s, has been sailing since 1946.



Enough masts to warm the heart of an old salt. When Mr ERIC VOS (standing) and Mr HAROLD KOHLER started their sailing careers, yachts were not allowed to sail from the Port Elizabeth harbour. Tomorrow, they set off for the annual Old Salts Race from the Algoa Yacht Club.