

## YACHTING

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BY DAVE BEATTIE

It was a gathering of giants. South Africa's three most famous sailors — Bruce Dalling, Bertie Reed and John Martin — met at the SA Mint in Midrand last night to strike commemorative medals for the 1994/95 BOC Challenge starting in America in September.

The 4 oz silver and gold medallions are for the winners and all finishers in both classes in the first leg from Charleston to Cape Town.

The first leg in the "Around Alone" race will be sponsored by Afrox, the South African subsidiary of the \$250 000 event's backers, BOC.

None of the Big Three will be battling it out this time from Charleston to Cape Town, Sydney, Punte del Este and back to Charleston — a distance of 27 000 miles.

But the new South African flag will be flown on two competing yachts, sailed by Capetonians "JJ" Provoyeur and Neal Petersen.

They have some difficult acts to follow. Apart from their single-handed exploits, there is another thread that links Dalling, Reed and Martin. All sailed on Voortrekker, a yacht that was still competitive even when bypassed by technology.

Dalling it was who put SA singlehanded sailing on the map with his distinguished performance in the 1968 Trans Atlantic race.

Reed followed in his footsteps, placing second in the 1982/83 BOC on Altech Voortrekker. In 1986/87, it was John Martin who led the way, finishing 5th on Tuna Marine Voortrekker, while Reed came in 7th on Stabulo Boss.

# Tall masts and three sail giants

The third BOC brought incredible drama involving both Reed and Martin. Martin, the halfway leader on Allied Bank, struck an ice growler in the Southern Ocean and was rescued by Reed, on Grinaker. Reed still went on to grab 8th place.

Grinaker, this time, is in the hands of Provoyeur, and has been renamed Ben Vio. Petersen's "Protect Our Sea Life" is among the smaller yachts in the class2 event.

Martin, who desperately wanted another shot at the BOC, was philosophical about missing out. "We worked long and hard for sponsorship," he said. "The will is there, but without the rest, I can't do the job. Perhaps it was just meant to be that way."

The next big venture for Reed, now running a restaurant in Gordon's Bay with wife Pat, and a sailing school, is likely to be the 1996 Cape to Rio.

Dalling, a private man who likes to keep his life that way, said: "It was great meeting the guys again. I still follow what's happening in sailing, but sailing itself? No, the technology is so advanced now I don't think I'd understand it."

The 1994/95 BOC starts on September 17.