

YACHTING

We're going to prove who's the boss, says 'Fun' skipper Clarence

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THERE are only two yachts in it for line honours as far as Get More Fun skipper Terry Clarence of Durban is concerned — his boat and The Boss, skippered by Geoff Meek of Cape Town.

He says it is Durban versus Cape Town with the boats almost identical — both recently built of aluminium specially for the Crystic Beachcomber Crossing from Mauritius to Durban next month. Their waterline lengths are almost the same at 19,5m, masts towering to over 20m, twin wheels and twin rudders, similar cockpits.

And there are two very experienced crews — one nearly all from Durban and one nearly all from Cape Town. The Boss owner, Colin Kuiper, is from Durban but the crew are among the best in Cape Town, and indeed in South Africa.

Clarence, aged 40 with 30 years sailing experience including plenty of long ocean voyages — Cape-to-Uruguay and the 1987 Mauritius race — sets great store in an experienced crew. And the bulk of his have been with him since 1981. They sailed the Durban L34 Close Again to class honours and an A Class handicap win in the 1987 Mauritius race.

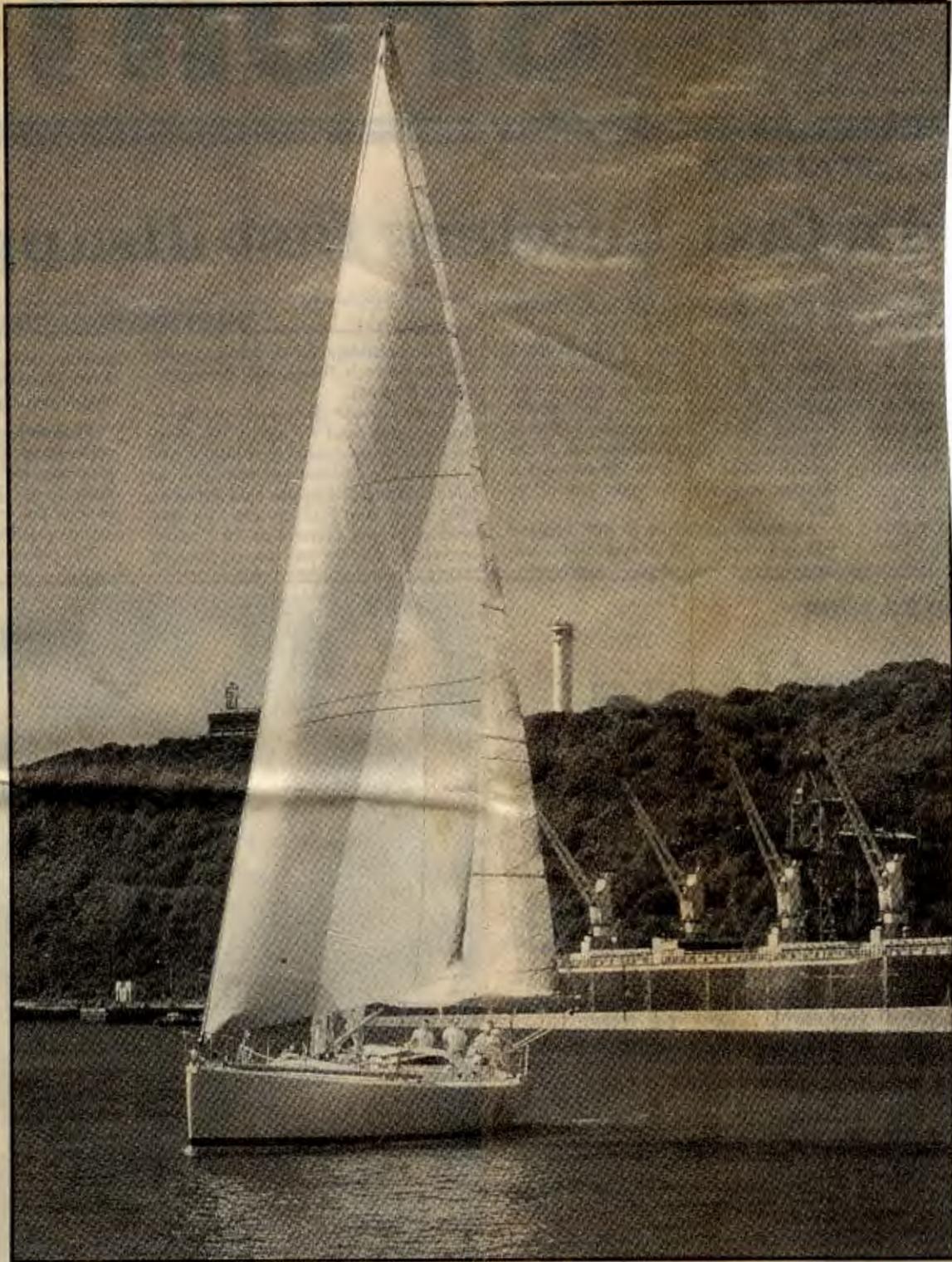
The line-up for the September 16 start of this race, apart from Clarence and owner

Dave Rees, 39, of Durban, is: Richard Bertie, Greg de Beyer, Mark Cawdron, Dave Heridge, Terry Flynn, Dave Heath, Jonathan Swain, Jonathan Leighton and Phil Southwell, who designed the boat. Bertie and De Beyer are watch captains and the latter and Cawdron are responsible for navigation. The watch captains have sailed several demanding ocean races here and overseas.

Durban businessman Rees is a relative newcomer to sailing and has got involved because he wants eventually to go cruising. With a two-year sponsorship for the boat from Telefonken, he intends to race her in the Cape season, next year's Diaz race from Cape Town to Portugal and then the 1991 Crystic Beachcomber Crossing.

"Then I want to have fun in Get More Fun — I'll probably keep the name — and go cruising."

Rees says he went for the best skipper — Clarence was recommended to him by Ry Close. "I'm very happy with the crew — they are great."



□ Get More Fun on her first trial on Durban Bay

He also wants to publicly thank his project manager, Garth Hitchens, who took four months to prepare the boat in Durban after she was shipped up from Cape Town — just a hull and deck. "Garth gave up his job to ensure that a Durban boat wins this race. He has done fanastically."

The Durban-Cape Town rivalry is part of what drives skipper

Clarence. He jumped at the chance to take charge of Get More Fun. He wanted to skipper a big boat from Mauritius this time — and he wanted to beat one of his greatest sailing rivals, Geoff Meek.

He believes he and his crew have what it takes to do that. And with the boats so equally matched, he says tactics are vital. Having the right

helmsmen, who not only can get maximum boat speed but keep on course, is where the race will be won.

Last week the crew had one of their final trial runs to see "what comes loose" not that Clarence expected anything to go wrong. "We are more prepared than most for this race," he stresses.

The boat had a good run but was unable to

do a planned Richards Bay trip because of adverse winds. A torn spinnaker has been a setback but is being repaired and Rees is getting another — just in case.

The owner and skipper of a high-performing yacht of the late 1980s have plenty to be prepared for — but they feel it is worth it for the prestige of line honours.