

New flag sails home after 27 000-mile sea journey

Argus Reporter and Sapa

VIEWED by millions during a trip of more than 27 000 sea miles, the new flag of the democratic South Africa travelled around the world with solo yachtsman Jean Jacques Provoyeur, on his yacht Novell SA, during the BOC Challenge.

He proudly presented the flag that has circumnavigated the world to Minister of Sport Steve Tshwete in Cape Town last week.

Mr Tshwete referred to the framed flag as an "historic monument" to South Africa. He also noted that it had many "battle" scars.

Provoyeur agreed, saying 'it was immersed in many oceans when the boat had capsized, had weathered many storms and even seen many icebergs.

The flag was always on display during the 27 000-mile journey that took 133 days, and was seen by millions of people in many countries of the world. These included Barbados (West Indies), Charleston (USA), Sydney (Australia) and Punte del Este (Uruguay).

South Africa was one of 15 countries represented in the race, and Provoyeur reached the end with just seven finishers.

"We were the only African country represented and many people were impressed at the standard of South African yacht manufacturing," he said.

The BOC event has a very high level of public awareness, reaching more than 1,5 billion viewers worldwide.

Provoyeur, who clinched fifth place in the race, set a new South African record by arriving a week earlier than Bertie Reed did four years ago on the same yacht.

He is writing a book about his adventure that will be published in September. The title is *Solo with a new flag*.



TRAVELLING FLAG: BOC Round the World challenge solo yachtsman Jean Jacques Provoyeur, who sailed the stormy seas with the symbol which has united South Africa's people, the first flag of the democratic South Africa. This photograph is signed as a souvenir.

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