

V&A adds class to Lipton Cup

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South Africa's premier one-design regatta, the 2004 Lipton Challenge Cup regatta, will be sailed in Table Bay, Cape Town, from August 20-27.

For the first time in the 93-year history of the race, the fleet will set sail from the Victoria and Albert Waterfront in Cape Town.

According to race spokesman Dave Abromowitz, the new venue will definitely add an exciting edge to this year's regatta.

"Spectators will be able to come up close and personal with the yachts and meet the crews participating in this highly competitive event," he said.

The Lipton Cup stands over 1m tall and its spectacular craftsmanship makes it one of the most valuable sporting trophies in the country.

The first Lipton Challenge Cup regatta was sailed in 1911. Except for the period of the two world wars, the race has been taking place annually and last year saw the 50th event being sailed in Durban waters.

The regatta is sailed over a period of a week around Table Bay on several differently shaped courses. As all the competitors sail on exactly the same type of yacht, it makes for wave-crashing excitement and spectacular racing.

The regatta is currently sailed on a L26-class boat, which measures 26 feet (7.9m).

Theewater Sports Club will defend their title, on the yacht Daly's Insurance, in an attempt to take the cup home for the fourth time in the past six years. SA national yachtsman Rick Nankin, a multiple Lipton-winner, is putting together a crack crew to challenge the rest of the fleet. Nankin is hoping to take the title for an unprecedented ninth time.