



IN A TROUGH: Day one of the Lipton Cup being raced in Table Bay yesterday in big choppy swells with the wind gusting to 30 knots

Picture: BRENTON GEACH

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Knysna wins hard first race as Lipton Cup blasts off

Alex Petersen

TOUGH conditions in Table Bay yesterday with winds gusting to 30 knots produced an exciting start to the Lipton Cup Regatta in a fiercely contested first race.

Places among the fleet leaders and down the fleet jumped about as first, the team of young sailors on MSC Donna Mia were 47 seconds ahead at the first mark, followed by

UCT and Knysna, with Lake Deneys in fourth place.

But by halfway through the race the Knysna entry, skippered by Greg Davis, had taken the lead and by the finish had stretched it to 200m over second-placed False Bay Yacht Club, co-skippered by Andrea Giovannini and Markus Progli.

Third was Transvaal entry Lake Deneys, co-skippered by Brandon Smith and Richard Tanner.

In the big waves, the gap between the leading boats and the rest of the fleet was marked, but a major reason appeared to be confusion on the placing of the windward mark, plus a major wind shift during the first leg which had the leading boats overshooting the mark by 300m.

"It was a bloody hard race" said Davis, who was skipper of the winning Royal Cape entry last year, and has won Lipton a

total of eight times.

This year Davis and crew made a surprise switch to Knysna Yacht Club, and if he continues on the winning streak of the last three years, this could see the next contest move to Mossel Bay after almost a decade in Cape waters..

Results, Club and skipper:
 1. Knysna Yacht Club, Greg Davis/ Gareth Blankenberg
 2. False Bay Yacht Club,

Andrea Giovannini / Markus Progli

3. Lake Deneys Yacht Club, LDYC Challenger

4. UCT Yacht Club, Oliver Hobson

5. Transvaal Yacht Club, Ewald Sternagel

6. Point Yacht Club, Luke Wagner

7. Royal Natal Yacht Club, Ricky Robinson

8. Royal Cape Yacht Club, Dale Kushner