

SNAPPED HALYARD FORCES EMERGENCY REPAIRS

Epic day for Point Yacht Club

SPORTS REPORTER

THE young team from Durban's Point Yacht Club had an epic day out on the water yesterday, snapping their main halyard on day three of the Lipton Challenge Cup in Cape Town, forcing them to capsize their L26 yacht.

The PYC Challenger, which was lying in ninth position overnight, had a cracking start as they tackled the rectangular 12 nautical mile course with a cloudless Table Mountain as the back drop on the start line. Sea conditions were fairly flat with the waves hitting against the boats as they tackled the run in a steady 14 to 15 knot south-easter.

The brightly coloured yacht was a little off the pace as they rounded the first marker, but consistently improved when they made a superb tactical decision on the run. Heading towards the weather mark, and lying in a respectable third position, the crew heard a bang and then what sounded like glass crashing on to the deck. Looking up in despair, they watched as their main sail slid down the mast after the main halyard snapped. The crew forced the boat to capsize and did a quick repair operation.

"It was touch and go as we had to be careful that we didn't start taking water on into the hull," crew member Anthony

McMillan stated. The whole operation took the team two minutes to complete and found them lying a boat length from last position.

With the adrenalin pumping, the team then hunted down the pack one boat at a time.

The Point Yacht Club ended their dramatic day in 16th position at the end of race three.

At the top of the log there was a jostle for positions on every leg of yesterday's closely contested race.

The experienced Greg Davis from Colorpress Co-ordination maintained his clean sheet with a third win for the Knysna Yacht Club. Team Intasure Marine Insurance remained in second spot with Andrea Giovannini at the helm. Lake Deneys Yacht Club finished third, their second podium place out of three races, putting them third overall.

Durban entry the Royal Natal Yacht Club's Orion Challenger dropped to fifth, but are fourth overall on the log. Point Yacht Club have slipped another two positions on the overall leader board, now resting in 11th position.

Defending champions and hosts the Royal Cape Yacht Club's entry, Dynamic ID Systems, finished seventh. Led by Dale Kushner, they are lying in eighth overall.

Racing continues at noon today with light shifty winds and flat seas predicted.

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Day three of the Lipton Cup regatta in Table Bay, Cape Town, yesterday saw the Point Yacht Club entry from KZN hit a snag when the team lost the halyard to the mainsail. Being of dinghy sailor mind-set, skipper Luke Wagner flipped the yacht, walked along the mast (now lying in the water) and he and his brother Stephen repaired the halyard while the remainder of the crew, Anthony McMillan, Trent Bingham, Byron Watt and Jean-Marc George hung on to the keel. The yacht was righted and on its way in about two minutes.

PICTURE: TREVOR WILKINS