

National Regatta For Hermanus

One of the finest stretches of sailing water, a handsome clubhouse and scenery in the best Cape tradition (right) are part of the picture for the year's biggest regatta, next January.

By
W. Le BARROW



THOUGH it may read like something out of "Alice through the Looking Glass," the strange thing about the Hermanus Yacht Club is that it didn't happen before it did.

The ideal site, snuggling beneath the towering ramparts of Maanschyn Kop has waited through the centuries for the fulfilment of its purpose—the establishment of a Yacht Club in a beautiful setting on the shore of the magnificent Klein River Lagoon.

Local lore has it that the first yacht proper, the *Daisy Belle*, owned by the Everett Poole family, sailed for a spell at the turn of the century. Later, in about 1906 the well-known schoolmaster Mr. John Longwill and his friends sailed on the lagoon in the *Elna*, but the sparse population of Hermanus in those years precluded the thought of a Yacht or Sailing Club.

So the conditions stayed until after the past War, when Mr. C. J. Benningfield, formerly a keen yachtsman from Natal, and Mr. J. J. Du Toit a local business man, both bought yachts and sailed independently for their own satisfaction.

But a real start was made in 1950 and the phenomenal growth of the Club during the eight years of its existence has been commensurate with its popularity, not only among its 500 members, but also with the neighbouring Western Province Clubs for its splendid sailing waters.

They are evenly deep, free of sandbanks, and so easily take statutory nine-mile courses, irrespective of wind direction. This is vouched for by the increasing number of competitors at the Clubs' annual Easter Regatta.

The crowning achievement, however, is the fact that the Club is to be the venue of the 1959 National Regatta and Olympic Games trials.

To cope with this compliment, a cocktail lounge has been added, terraces built to enlarge the existing and commodious camping sites: the water supply has been augmented, a lighting plant and a public address system installed, as well as many other amenities and facilities for the convenience and comfort of competitors and guests.

A welcome feature will be the large waterfront area cleared so that it is probable that each yacht will have its own launching site to obviate the "After you, Jack" bottle-

neck and queue method so detrimental to nervous systems at large regattas.

For the convenience of campers, the use of additional sites close to and adjoining the Club have been cleared and prepared. Outdoor cooking and other facilities including showers, are within easy reach and—should a doctor or more beer be necessary in a hurry—there is a telephone in the Clubhouse.

Thanks for all this are due to early friends and patrons such as Sir Thomas Sopwith, B. G. Musson, Andy Ovenstone and A. L. McCarthy, architects J. G. Loubser and Denise Stone and her artist husband, Wing Commander C. A. C. Stone.

Any yachtsman contemplating taking part in the National Regatta at Hermanus would be well advised to make early arrangements by writing to the Hon. Secretary of the Hermanus Yacht Club, P.O. Box 47, Hermanus, Cape.



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