

# Crystic Week fever begins

THE countdown has begun to the country's top ocean racing regatta — 1992 Crystic Week which begins this weekend off Durban.

Hosted by the Point Yacht Club as part of their centenary celebrations, the event will see close to 100 ocean greyhounds on the startline for the first of six races on Sunday.

Entries will close later today and at the moment the biggest section of the field will be the J22 class with 17 yachts.

Competing in this fleet will be Springboks Chris King, Rob de Vleig and Rob Tarboton and two of the yachts will be skippered by Transvalers Dave Rae and Willem Voerman who have just returned from the J22 world championships on Lake Michigan.

They were placed 14th and 24th respectively out of 60 yachts and with this experience they will certainly be the ones to watch.

The J22 world championships will be staged off Durban next year immediately after Crystic Week, and interest in this relatively new class, which so far is strongest in the Transvaal, is growing.

Crystic Week is mainly a one-design regatta in that all the yachts in the various fleets are, within certain limits, identical with just seamanship being the deciding factor.

The one section of the fleet however which is not one-design is the IMS fleet. IMS (International Measurement System) means that all the yachts are different and will race to a handicap system. The first yacht over the finish line will not necessarily be the winner.

This year IMS is very strong with some top yachts. Barcom Seaboard, a Stadt 34 design and which has won the Wilbur Ellis da Gama race for the past two years will be on the startline co-skippered by Micky Taylor and Geoff Williams along with NBS Swimlion with Gavin Smith at the helm which took line honours in this year's race.

Two top Cape IMS yachts — Corum and Ballyhoo — arrived by ship this week and will be skippered by Craig Middleton Dave van Reenen respectively.

One particularly interesting IMS yacht is the Royal Natal



Yacht Club entry Golden Fleece which will be skippered by Gordon Neil. Built in 1975 for the Admiral's Cup regatta off Cowes, the last time South Africa was permitted to compete in the event, the yacht performed well and also won the inaugural Rothmans Week in 1975.

She has not competed for many years and has now been restored to her former glory by new owner Graham Dick. Her performance against the more modern designs on handicap will be interesting.

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THE annual Kiel Week regatta sailed in the North Sea finished this week. Over 1 000 yachts participated in this final international regatta before the Barcelona Olympics.

The Durban team of Bruce Savage, Giles Stanley and Rick Mayhew sailing their Soling class yacht finished 13th overall out of a fleet of 30. They had some bad luck and, by their own admission, made some bad errors. They travel this week to Sete near Marseilles, the headquarters of the French America's Cup campaign for intensive match-racing training with Russell Coutts of New Zealand and Marc Bouet of France.

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The names of four yachtsmen — two Germans and two Danes — have been circulated to all 105 International Yacht Racing Union nations, including South Africa, suspending them from all national and club competitions world-wide. The yachtsmen concerned are: Germans Peter Ringmaier (until September 1) and Manfred Boschman (until December 31) and Danes Torben Christensen (December 31) and Per Risbang (until July 31). This results from incidents off the water, apparently involving fisticuffs, which under Rule 75 constitutes "unsportsmanlike behaviour".