

BUSINESS DAY

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SA to help Welsh youths get a taste of life at sea

CAPE TOWN — Two Welsh youths have been given the opportunity to escape this year's British winter and crew aboard a yacht competing in the biannual Governor's Cup race from Cape Town to St Helena island.

The 1 700-nautical-mile Governor's Cup Cape to St Helena 2000 race starts in Cape Town on December 2.

Eighteen-year-olds Alex Davies and Tom Evans, who will sail aboard Dave Elcock's 16m Solitaire, were chosen by the Prince's Trust, an organisation formed to impart life skills to unemployed British youth, and which is backed by Britain's Prince Charles. Selectors believed both would benefit from the race in terms of character

building and self-development.

Neither have left Wales before and only managed to get their passports a day before departure for SA. Evans's father has a fishing boat and he has some sea-going experience, but Davies has never been to sea.

Both are on Solitaire with owner/skipper Elcock showing them the ropes. They say they hope the experience will stand them in good stead when they look for steady jobs back home.

Elcock has done more ocean crossings and offshore racing events than he cares to remember. In the first five months of this year, he sailed three times between Cape Town and Rio de Janeiro — nearly 12 000 nautical miles. — Sapa.