



Mr Peter Davidson, a former Durbanite who is now running his own sailmaking business in Corpus Christi, Texas, could be the trump card of the Durban yacht P G Wood (formerly Magic Carpet) in this year's Rothmans week in Cape Town. Mr Davidson's experience in fine tuning sails is expected to make the yacht extremely competitive.

Peter is Rothmans yacht's 'weapon'

THE yacht PG Wood, one of Durban's top entries in this year's Rothmans Week regatta which begins in Cape Town next week, has a secret weapon in the person of Peter Davidson.

In a thick American accent, Mr Davidson (35), a fifth-generation Durbanite, told how he became an expert sailmaker and now ran his own business in Corpus Christi, Texas.

His expertise in fine-tuning sails would provide that extra edge which would make the yacht extremely competitive, skipper Martin Payne said.

The yacht, better

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known under its former name, Magic Carpet, has done well in Rothmans Week in the past and in spite of its relatively poor handicap could spring a surprise on the more fancied boats this year.

Peter, who is visiting relatives, attended Kearsney College, where he was one of the stalwarts of the sailing club, did a two-year course in shoe design in Italy and then worked as a designer in London.

"It was great," said Peter, "but I missed the sea".

Then, five years ago, a friend invited him on a trip aboard his yacht which was based in Corpus Christi.

"It was so much like Durban," he said. "I fell in love with it".

He noticed that the city did not have a sailmaker, so he established a business there with another former Kearsney pupil, Mr Alwyn Zoutendijk.

He worked with professional sailmakers who, so to speak, showed him the ropes. His experience with shoes stood him in good stead as it taught him cutting and a good basic understanding of materials.