

☐ **YACHTING:** Petersen's mast breaks

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# BOC dreams shattered

CAPE TOWN—Neal Petersen's dream of finishing the BOC Challenge single-handed around-the-world yacht race was shattered yesterday when, during a ferocious 50 knot storm in the Southern Ocean, huge seas smashed his yacht over 140 degrees and dismasted it.

In a radio interview 300 miles south of Port Elizabeth, the badly shaken and "heartbroken" 27-year-old Capetonian described the ordeal from his 12m Protect Our Sealife as the most "terrifying" experience in 30 000 miles of solo sailing.

"I've seen my childhood dream snap with my mast. My goal was to prove my ability as a sailor and command a sponsorship for the next BOC. I gave it my best shot but the elements beat me ... It would be suicidal the way things are for me to continue," Petersen said.

Petersen, who left Cape Town last Thursday on the treacherous 7 000 mile second-leg of the race to Sydney, Australia, was dis-

masted just four days after race-leader Isabelle Autissier suffered the same fate.

Petersen said the broken rigging was still on deck and he was riding out the storm before he would climb what was left of the mast — up to the first spreader — to construct a jury rig.

He would then sail to a South African port to "try and put the pieces back together and look at my situation."

South Africa's sole remaining competitor in the race, JJ Provoyeur, lying fourth in class 1 on Novell South Africa, said last night he was "terribly sorry" to hear of Petersen's plight.

"I feel very sorry for him. It was his big dream to finish the race, now he will just have to wait a little longer," Provoyeur said.

A Cape Town Radio spokesman said yesterday maritime rescue authorities had been put on alert to monitor the situation and they were running hourly radio schedules to check on Petersen's safety.