

PE ahoy!

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SP 1400020

SATURDAY's sailpast at the Shark Rock Pier was a huge and spectacular success and it sets the tone for another bright Port Elizabeth summer season.

It was an event to make Port Elizabeth proud.

There were internationally known VIPs like Bertie Reed and John Martin, a brass band, a flypast, bunting, stalls, hundreds of participants and thousands of spectators.

Few could have believed that Port Elizabeth could produce such a flotilla but its four yacht clubs worked together and mustered about 150 craft, ranging from tiny Optimists to large sea-going vessels. There were even some boardsailors.

The pier really came into its own, making an outstanding saluting base for First Citizen Nceba Faku, for the four club commodores, and for the two special guests.

It was a scene reminiscent of the start of the Cape to Rio race

and a good way of signalling Port Elizabeth's plan to become the future yachting capital of South Africa.

Afterwards, Mr Faku called for this to become an annual event.

It should. It's a way to boost Port Elizabeth as a tourism centre where the locals use their imaginations and show what a fun place their city can be. And yachtsmen should heed the words of publicity director Shaun van Eck. Our bay has flat warm water; easy access to the harbour, it's well situated between other centres — and it has good sailing weather.

Now the real holiday season has yet to begin.

Thanks to this event, the people in the tourism business will be geared up for the summer rush that much earlier — and holidaymakers will soon learn that Port Elizabeth is a city where you can have fun all the year round.