

Seven top yachts set off in Cape to Walvis race

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ALEX PETERSEN 11/3/2008

SEVEN of the Royal Cape Yacht Club's crack yachts crossed the start line as the noon gun fired yesterday on the 703 nautical mile haul to Walvis Bay in the Macs Shipping Southern Star race.

They headed off beating into an eight knot north-west-erly for what looks to be a tough and very tactical race, with the possibility of foggy nights and even some rain tomorrow.

The fleet includes the winner of last year's inaugural event, the Fast 40 Gumption, now renamed Crocs, skippered by Nicholas Mace and Patrick Holloway. Crocs is likely to have a hard time hanging on to the top place, with some stiff competition this year through the addition of Eddie de Villiers's Hi Fidelity – a very fast 46-footer, with Geoff Meek as co-skipper, bringing huge tactical and racing skills aboard.

But Geoff will also have to fight off his brother, Rob Meek, who is co-skippering Lobelia, an IMX 40, with owner Gordon Kling, a former Cape Times staffer who has recently taken to sailing with a passion.

Also a competitive wild-card in the event is ocean racer JJ Provoyeur on his 41-footer After You, sponsored by law firm Dykes van Heerden. JJ has on board his daughter, Dominique, and her crew-mate Kim Rew, both selected to sail in the Beijing Olympics, so will have some considerable skills to optimise boat speed.

Updated positions can be seen on www.ctwb.net



FLYING START: The start of the Macs Shipping Southern Star yacht race from Cape Town to Walvis Bay sees the yacht Hi Fidelity lead the pack. *Picture: BRENTON GEACH*

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