

Couple take to the Atlantic

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A TOKAI woman will leave for the adventure of a lifetime when she sets sail from Simon's Town in the Governor's Cup Yacht Race (GCYR) on Saturday.

The Governor's Cup will see 19 boats cross 3 500km (1750 nautical miles) of the Atlantic Ocean from the False Bay town to St Helena, one of the world's most remote islands.

Although the race is downwind and considered to be relatively easy compared to other yacht races, the weather, waves and heavy workload are still expected to give competitors a stiff challenge.

However, Kathy Edmeades (47) says she doesn't fear the wide, open expanse that lies between her and the British colony.

"That doesn't bother me because I am used to the sea. The only thing I might be worried about is if we hit seriously rough seas, but I have been told that it's the milk run," says Edmeades.

"The wind is behind you so it's a lot easier to sail. The closer you get to the equator it's easier to sail because of the trade winds."

Edmeades will be racing in a class one mono-hull boat called *African Renaissance*, along with her partner, Wayne Badenhorst (55).

During the night she and Badenhorst will take two hour turns keeping watch and ensuring the boat stays on course. Ideally a boat's size would have a crew of around four people.

Badenhorst, a Claremont resident, says the lack of sleep and physical exertion that comes with sailing the boat "two-handed" will be the toughest challenge.

"You need to be in peak fitness. It is a technical sport. You can handle things and you have a lot of sea-room out there, so there is space if there is a problem and you head off



HARD TO PORT: Kathy Edmeades and Wayne Badenhorst.

Photo: Liam Moses

in one direction," he says.

"But you still need a decent level of physical fitness to cope with so little sleep over ten days. And to have to eat, clean, shower, navigate and report on the radio is quite a strain on the body."

Although neither have taken part in the race before, Badenhorst is an experienced sailor with close 100 000 nautical miles under his belt and 38 years of experience racing and delivering yachts around the globe.

He co-owns the boat, which he built himself, and Edmeades says having someone with so much experience on the trip has helped to allay what little fear she has.

"The first couple of nights are going to scare me, because we are in the shipping lanes so we have these huge tankers and big fishing boats (around us). You will have to keep a watch, especially at night," she says.

Badenhorst says the boat is capable of reaching St Helena in nine days, even with a crew of only two. The pair have set this and a podium finish as their target for the race.

"If we get the right weather from the first day, we can probably be up there. We are definitely not going for a cruise."