



signed Epic Lass, one of the five Admiral Cup trialists taking part in the Tauranga race. On-board will be Mike McCormick of Tauranga who is considered the best navigators in the world. The yacht is skippered by Peter Walker.

# On again, off again history

THE history of the Auckland to Tauranga yacht race is becoming shrouded in the mists of time but it is known that it was first run around 1935 and was mainly contested by mullet boats.

After World War II the race attracted some of the big Auckland A class keelers with such legendary names as Ranger, Rainbow and Kahurangi.

At this stage the race was held at Christmas, but with the advent of family cruising at this holiday time, interest in the event waned.

Nothing more was heard of the event until an attempt was made to resurrect the Christmas race in 1965 and 1966. However, it met with little success as once again the family cruising magnet was too strong and insufficient entries were received in 1967.

It was again some years before the Auckland-Tauranga race was thought of, but with the change in yacht design and the obvious popularity in short races, two Tauranga enthusiasts decided to have another go.

Bill Faulkner and David Peet decided to organise a race eliminating factors originally responsible for its demise.

Firstly the timing of the race was changed to Easter. Next it was decided to make the race attractive to the average yachting enthusiast with an affordable entry fee, a good welcome, a handicap

system giving everyone a chance regardless of the size of their cheque book, and the involvement of families.

Tauranga is only a couple of hours drive from Auckland so that while dad is out racing mum and the kids can drive down and join in for the weekend.

As with all good plans there were pitfalls. Race organisation requires money and it was important to keep entry fees reasonable.

Enter Malcolm Fowler Motors as sponsor. In fact the motor firm was the only company approached by the two organisers and the local Todd dealers jumped at the opportunity.

History records that the parameters were right and that 68 entries arrived in Tauranga on Good Friday 1982 to make this the largest race to a destination ever held outside of Auckland.

Because of the Tauranga yacht club's association with the Vila race no Auckland-Tauranga race was held in 1984, but it has been established as a bi-annual event.

And following the success of the 1982 race this Easter's event has attracted a record entry of 106 yachts including Digby Taylor's Enterprise New Zealand, plus the five New Zealand Admiral Cup trialists.

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