

Local man preparing to tackle big race

GOOLWA - Michael Tromp of Goolwa will line up in the 1999/2000 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race at the end of the year with high hopes of completing the famous race in his self-built yacht Epsilon.

Mr Tromp, who has taken nearly three years to build Epsilon, says the time and effort was worthwhile.

"Every spare cent I had went into building the yacht and now it is ready to sail," Mr Tromp said.

The yacht was recently sailed for the first time and Mr Tromp said everything went smoothly, with only minor adjustments needing to be made to the engine.

"The yacht is moored at

the Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron at North Haven, but I built it in my parent's shed at Goolwa."

Named after the smallest star of the Southern Cross, the yacht will compete in its first race - the Adelaide to Port Lincoln Yacht Race - on February 12.

Six men died in the recent 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race and Mr Tromp expects some safety aspects of the race

safety aspects of the race to be changed.

"What happened in the latest race was bad luck and it could have happened in any sport," he said. "Many small incidences amounted to a difficult and tragic race for

some."

In 1988, Mr Tromp and his parents, Jack and Yvonne, sailed around the world in 'Just Looking 2' and during that time he worked in a boat building yard in Holland for 12 months.

"We were away for six years and spent three years sailing and three years working."

Mr Tromp built Epsilon, a 37-foot (11.5 metre) yacht, to prove that sailing was not an elite sport.

"This has been something that I have always wanted to do and I'd like to thank everyone at the Captain Sturt Marina and Jock and Michael Veenstra for their assistance."



•**LOCALLY PRODUCED** - Goolwa resident Michael Tromp with his 37-foot yacht Epsilon before it was taken to Adelaide last week. The yacht was built at Goolwa.