

## Vergenoeg



I confirmed my last crew member at 3 am in the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> of March when I tell you it came down to a flip of a coin between great friends I'm not exaggerating at all, the argument of who would go between the two of them went on for a good hour, there was one spot left in the team and they always sailed together, it was unthinkable that one of them would have to remain behind. Plans of sabotage were hatched to try bump out one of the team members that was

already going. I stood firm, only one of them would go and they had to decide now. They flipped a coin, didn't like the result and deliberated some more. Then came back to me and said "Lindani we have decided Wade is going." Nick made the sacrifice and said his friend should go. Little did I know that would be the tone of the whole trip. Sacrifice. We would all have to dig deep. We were scheduled to leave for Durban on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Getting the team together would prove to be the most challenging part. One never thinks it would be hard to sell a Holiday to Durban to a bunch of teenagers. The time it takes from inception of an idea to actual execution is usually long, in any environment. The Idea of taking a team to Durban for a regatta seemed to be moving at lightning speed, everyone just fell behind it. In less than a month we would find ourselves taking part in three Regattas back to back, all in the name of preparation, all in the name of finding the right team the right mix. If you are a scout and you are tasked with finding talent but not only talent but people that will gel together and believe in a common goal achieve a common purpose, then you have to be just as invested in that common vision. Otherwise you will not see the common thread that runs through the individuals you are looking for. In the end it all boils down to character. I knew this trip would be taxing. We were planning to drive up to Durban in a 15 seater Kombi, stop in Bloemfontein for a few hours of sleep and then hit the road again to Durban. I knew from the get go that would require character more than skill on a boat. I knew the heat in Durban would be unbearable, I knew the conditions would most probably be unfavourable. So my mind was made up I was looking for character.



After a few delays we left in the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup> of April. We headed straight for Beaufort West. We had our first meal at a place called Karushi, pizza was the consensus. After a hearty meal it was time to hit the road at least that's what I thought, but Murphy had a different idea. In our zeal and competitiveness we had



decided to come prepared. We had with us our own Number 3 and a spinnaker to boot. Even though the NOR clearly stated no spinnakers. We weren't having it and just to show them how serious we were, we brought our own pole. Well that pole. That pole somehow went through the back windscreen of the kombi. Yup on our first stop I found myself running around in Beaufort West looking for some way to either get a windscreen or a temporary fix. Now it was rather interesting to say the least. Here

I am this young Black Boy in a taxi with white kids, claiming to be going to some sailing regatta. I was sure cops were coming my way very soon. They would be big and very Afrikaans and they would ask me so many questions I would start to wonder myself if I was telling the truth. Alas we left with a temporary fix and promised to replace the windscreen in Bloemfontein. We arrived in Bloem in the wee hours of the Morning on the 30<sup>th</sup>. It would be a short stay, we slept for 4 hours and we were on the road again. I was right, character would win the day. These kids never complained they just got on with it, they were determined to show up more so now that our window was smashed.



Arrival in Durban was smooth, we found Point Yacht Club fairly easily and we received a warm welcome from everyone. We were given nice spacious Boats to sleep in and everyone was in a jovial mood. The 31<sup>st</sup> of March, first race begins, this was a fun race, test the waters, check out the boat, and find your rhythm kind of race. We are the Royal Cape Sailing Academy, only a couple of days before our arrival in Durban we had won the Admirals Regatta, we expected nothing less on this occasion. Yet uncle Murphy had other plans once more. The guys came

back after racing and were up in arms about the Main. Broken Battens, twisted halyards, dodgy rigging. They were unhappy with the boat. I said "guys it's what we have so let's make it work." The following day we were beaten a few times it just was not our day. When my guys came back you could see the disappointment in their faces. They couldn't talk, frustration was written all over them. Houston we have a problem. I was short on inspirational words, they needed motivation and it had to come quick. The following Day I decided to go out with a rubber duck and watch them. When I got there they had already lost two races of the day. I've never seen such desperation to win as I saw on Robyn Patricks face. I drove up to them and said Guys I'm here let's just keep trying. Words are not enough to describe what would happen next. As I write this I have tears in my



eyes. When they approached the start line they looked like a boat possessed swerving from side to side, dodging and weaving between boats, it was a dog fight the likes of Durban had never seen. The moment that horn went they shot out of that milieu of boats like a torpedo. I couldn't believe what I was witnessing with my eyes. They won that race by a mile, everyone was in shock except me. I knew. Character.



My Guys would later go on to win 3 more races and give a hell of a fight in the whole tournament. We ended up coming second overall. New friends were made, a good time was had, we bonded as a team and real experiences were shared. Now you might be wondering what does the Title of this story mean. As we were driving back to Cape Town, going through the Free State I kept seeing this word VERGENOEG. I know a bit of Afrikaans and my mind told me it must mean "far enough." To my surprise when I google it, I find a pleasant

surprise which I'm still not sure of, in other words the jury is still out on the exact definition. When you google it though, the definition you find is **CONTENT**. I decided on this one because that is exactly how I felt driving back to Cape Town through the Free State, I felt content, we had done our part we had come to the party we had shown CHARACTER.



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